



Athlete of the Week

Kory Parent scored a team-high 28 points in the Lions' 79-69 come-from-behind win over South Umpqua last Friday. The sophomore shot 3-for-6 from 3-point range and was also clutch from the free-throw line, where he went 7-for-10.



Cottage Grove turns back a three-point storm

Lions overcome Johnson, Lancers for a 79-69 victory

BY MATT HOLLANDER
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

South Umpqua's Eric Johnson came in on Friday night, but the young Lions showed poise beyond their years in weathering the early Lancer storm and came away with their most impressive win of the season — a 79-69 triumph.

Johnson scored 19 of his career-high 36 points in the opening quarter, as he went 5-for-5 from beyond the arc. Cottage Grove sophomores Kory Parent and Blake Sentman countered with 53 points, combined.

Despite Johnson's early barrage, Cottage Grove (4-7) only trailed South Umpqua (6-2) by five after the first quarter and had the lead cut down to two at halftime.

Parent said that the Lions realized they

were up against a talented scorer and that they did not panic when Johnson's shots were falling.

"We knew he was a good shooter and that he was going to get his shots, but that's the way it goes — me and Blake are going to get ours, as well. You just got to hope that he's going to miss a few here and there, and that you can capitalize," he said.

And just as the Lions hoped, Johnson and the Lancers started to cool off. South Umpqua shot a combined 60% on field goal and 3-point attempts in the first quarter, but made just 36% of its shots the rest of the night.

South Umpqua did take a nine-point lead midway through third quarter, but the Lions responded by hitting three 3-pointers in a row to go up 51-48 — their first lead of the second half.

Coach Donn Pollard said that after half-time his team started to execute in some very key areas.

"We rebounded a lot better and attacked pretty well in the second half. And when they started to sink [back toward the hoop defensively], we were able to kick it back out for some shots," he said.

The game was tied at 53 apiece heading into the fourth quarter. But the Lancers were unable to keep pace with Cottage Grove, and when they were forced to foul, the Lions converted enough free throws to ice the game away.

"I'm pleased," said Pollard. "That was a big step for a young team. We hung in there until we could get some momentum, and in the end the end we were able to put the game away with free throws."

On the opposite bench, coach Bob Feasel said he was disappointed

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Obstructed view at the Rose Bowl

BY MATT HOLLANDER
AND JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Jon Stinnett: So Matt, we find ourselves on this sunny Friday afternoon basking in the glory of a lopsided Oregon Rose Bowl victory and an undeniable statement by the Duck football team, in addition to a larger but in many ways foreseeable narrative that continues to take shape off the field at Pasadena.

It's also a game and an atmosphere you were fortunate enough to experience yourself. You'll likely want to share details of that experience with readers yourself this week, but in the interest of continuing the conversation we've already started in these pages, I'm curious how your view of things may have compared with those witnessed by folks at home (and later covered by countless media outlets.)

More specifically, the story on Friday morning seemed in many ways to be (or at least to be depicted as) Florida State quarterback Jameis Winston leading a spectacular meltdown by a team that had won each of its previous 29 games, a meltdown deemed by many as some sort of karmic payback for Winston's actions and character both off the field and as a competitor faced with tremendous adversity on the international stage. (Which is not meant, of course, to take anything away from a tremendous performance by the Ducks in arguably the biggest game of their program's history.)

First, did you witness interesting examples of this narrative playing out as a spectator in the stadium, a journalist and Duck fan? Were fan actions and reactions notable for any reason? What was the atmosphere like in the stands on Thursday?

Matt Hollander: The anti-Winston sentiment could be heard loud and clear.

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photo by Eric Evans

Senior Oregon linebacker and Cottage Grove alum Grant Thompson hoisted the Rose Bowl Trophy after the Ducks defeated the Florida State Seminoles 59-20 on New Year's Day. Oregon will play Ohio State on Jan. 12 in Dallas, Tex. for the National Championship.

Thompson, Ducks on to national championship

BY MATT HOLLANDER
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Ducks have been on the winning side of many blowouts since this era of Oregon football began in 2007, but perhaps none was more impressive, or more surprising, than their 59-20 rout of No. 3 Florida State in the Rose Bowl.

The outcome was shocking for one, the stakes: a trip to the national championship game; two, the opponent: the Seminoles had won their past 29 games, including last year's title; and three, the defense forced five Florida-State turnovers and stole more than a few head-

lines from Heisman-winner Marcus Mariota and the Ducks' offense.

Despite their ranking in the polls, however, the Seminoles had shown signs of implosion all season long. Former Heisman-winning quarterback Jameis Winston threw 17 regular-season interceptions, and Florida State had to eke out several close wins in an underwhelming schedule.

Oregon linebacker and Cottage Grove alum Grant Thompson said the Seminoles' lack of ball security gave the defense hope that it could force a few Florida State turnovers, but that five was more than they could have ever asked for.

In Florida State, the Ducks faced an opponent that was extremely hyped — even by comparison to the top teams in college football. But Thompson said that this reality only sharpened the team's focus.

In the first year of the College Football Playoffs, the Rose Bowl served as a semifinal site for the National Championship Game, in which Oregon will play Ohio State on Jan. 12 in Dallas, Tex. And although the Rose Bowl had added significance this year, Thompson said that the experience felt similar to 2012, when Oregon defeated Wisconsin on New Year's Day in Pasadena.

Thompson said that Ohio State is a

great team that has fought through adversity all season. The Buckeyes lost two all-American caliber quarterbacks over the year, but third-string sophomore quarterback Cardale Jones has looked more than competent in wins over Wisconsin and Alabama.

As part of the scout team, Thompson will impersonate Buckeye linebacker Joshua Perry, who had 99 tackles for an Ohio State defense that was one of the best in the country this year.

The Ducks leave for Dallas on Friday, which gives the team just two full days on site, rather than the six they had in Southern California prior to the Rose Bowl.

Practice helps get Cottage Grove back on track

Lions mending from injuries, illness; defeat Lancers 60-28

BY MATT HOLLANDER
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

With a full compliment of players available for Friday night's game against South Umpqua, eight different Lions scored in a 60-28 rout of the visiting Lancers.

Prior to Christmas, Cottage Grove (6-5) was beset with illness and injury. At times the Lions were down to six or seven players. This lack of depth was an obvious factor in blowout losses to Philomath and Henley, but it also limited Cottage Grove's ability to practice.

"It's been difficult to do some of the things in practice that we need to do in order to bring it to a game. We just haven't had the numbers to do so," said coach Kerry Clawson.

Against South Umpqua (1-10), Cottage Grove showed the benefits of preparation as it played with improved patience and spacing on offense. The Lions scored on their first three possessions as they built a 19-6 lead through the opening quarter. Senior Conner Borigo was once again unstoppable as she scored 10 of her game-high 20 points in the opening frame.

Clawson also commented that the team showed significant improvement with unforced errors. "[South Umpqua] isn't a team that's going to have an intimidation factor," she said. "But you can still commit unforced errors against a team like that."

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Hall seeks nominations

The Athletic Hall of Fame at Cottage Grove High School is seeking nominations for its 2015 class, which will be inducted this spring. The Hall of Fame selection committee will ultimately choose five athletes, a coach, a team and a community contributor. To be eligible, an individual athlete must have graduated from CGHS at least five years ago.

Interested persons can pick up a nomination form from CGHS, or contact sports secretary Pam Ewing by Jan. 14. Please have the following information available:

Nominee's name
Nominee's current address (if available)
Nominee's phone number
Dates of attendance at CGHS

The 2015 class will be the eighth inducted to the Hall of Fame. Last year's class was comprised of athletes Butch Wicks ('68), Steve Hilgendorf ('79), Daryl Dapron ('84), Kelli Hollenbeck ('91) and Bryant Sentman ('07); longtime football coach Bob Heckman; the 1977 boy's track and field team, which placed second at the state meet for the school's highest finish ever, and Becky Venice, for her work with the local Special Olympics chapter.



photo by Matt Hollander

Cottage Grove's Hannah Arnold scored nine points in the Lions' 60-28 win over South Umpqua.