

Lions survive Sisters with buzzer-beater; spread the ball out to roll past Sweet Home on Friday

Cottage Grove had its hands full against the Outlaws, but the Lions put on a show against the Huskies and put themselves atop of the Sky-Em League

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Hunter Gipson (right) and Tucker Porter (left) were both strong contributors against Sweet Home after having a relatively quiet game against Sisters.

Photos by Gary Ordway

Last week we reported that a key to the Lions' success on the court was their ability to spread the ball around and have a variety of players scoring 10 points or more. While that may hold true for the majority of the season, it was not the case last Tuesday when Cottage Grove hosted the then-third-ranked Sisters Outlaws in a sluggish and slow defensive battle that came down to the wire.

In the 40-39 victory, Blake Sentman scored 29 points on the night, the third-highest scoring game he's had this season. For Cottage Grove, however, it was the lowest scoring game the team has had all season, yet they still managed to pull out the win.

Sisters struck first and hard with 16 points in the first quarter, holding the Lions to only six. But Cottage Grove responded and had a 16-point quarter of its own and held the Outlaws to eight points. At 24-22, Sisters, the game had the potential to go in any direction, and after the third quarter, nothing had changed, at least not that much.

The Outlaws and Lions combined for just 10 points in the third quarter, where Cottage Grove edged Sisters by just two points (6-4). This put the teams deadlocked at 28, accounting

for just 56 points in the three quarters. In the fourth quarter, Sisters took a 39-38 lead with seconds left on the clock. Reminiscent of the playoff game against Baker City last season, Kory Parent took charge to sink a buzzer-beating shot to win the game.

The 79 combined points marks the lowest scoring game of the season thus far. The Lions were 15 of 34 from the field, eight of which were from beyond the arc, making Cottage Grove's three-point shooting account for over half of

the points. The Lions only had two free throw attempts, which came from Sentman. Although Parent's spectacular poise won the game in crunch time, Sentman's free throws (the only free throws) may have also been exactly what kept Cottage Grove alive. With his 29 points, Sentman shot 10 for 15 from the field, which includes sinking seven of 10 from the three-point line.

Parent was the second-highest scoring player from Cottage Grove with just four points, although those points were far

more impactful than they appear on paper. And while Sentman carried most of the scoring weight on his shoulders, the rest of the team made up for their lack of offensive production with stout defense, including significant blocks from Hunter Gipson and Jesse Ellingworth.

Cottage Grove then hosted Sweet Home in a game that saw no such low numbers and resembled a more typical Lions' basketball team. Cottage Grove never trailed the Huskies and ran away with the game with a 19-point fourth quarter to win

68-50.

Here were once again the Lions Cottage Grove knows so well. Sentman led the team in scoring yet again, but this time with 14 points. Tucker Porter, who had a strong overall performance himself, followed with 12 points. DeJean Alonzo had 11 points and Parent had 10. That's four players with 10 or more points.

The Lions once again found their rhythm and for the most part were in sync with each other.

The two victories put the Li-

ons on a three-game win streak, exactly how they needed to respond after a two-game skid. The wins also put Cottage Grove at the top of the Sky-Em League and back at 10th in the OSAA rankings. But the defending league champs will have their crown challenged once again as Sisters (now ranked seventh in the OSAA rankings) will host the Lions for a rematch.

Cottage Grove travels to Sutherlin this week before hosting Junction City.

Lady Lions see best week of the season with two blowout victories at home



Photo by Sam Wright

Hudson Weybright (right) was quiet on offense but loud on defense against Sweet Home with four steals and seven deflections.

Lions finish week with 21-point and 35-point victories in two of the best games the girls have played in all season

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The Lady Lions have just come off what could quite possibly be called the more impressive week of the past two seasons combined. Head Coach Kevin Yoss and his team not only defeated their opponents this week, they routed them in a dominating fashion.

First up was Sisters. Following a miraculous buzzer-beating victory from the boys, it would've been hard to have just as memorable of a performance, but the girls' team did not disappoint.

The Lions held their lead from the start, outscoring the Outlaws in every quarter, slow-

ly building a lead until the game was out of reach for Sisters. Cottage Grove had a 19-12 lead at halftime, but then they went on a 16-4 run in the third quarter. The Lions then finished off the Outlaws with a 10-8 fourth quarter and sent the Outlaws home with a 45-24 rout.

Cottage Grove shot 17 of 44 from the field and, more importantly, improved their free throw game, shooting at a rate of 55.6 percent.

Once again, the Lions reached their rebounding goal by out-rebounding the opponent by 12 or more. This time it was well beyond their goal as Cottage Grove came away with 45 rebounds and Sisters finished with 28.

Keara Murphy led the team in scoring on the night with 14 points. The junior shot 50 percent from the field and was one-for-one from beyond the three-point line. She was also 83.3 percent from the line.

Freshman Reilly Kelty followed Murphy with 13 points, shooting 45 percent from the field and 75 percent from the free-throw line.

Though Cottage Grove seemed to have cleaned up a lot of its issues, turnovers still persisted as an issue. The Lions had 27 turnovers and the Outlaws had 25. Two-thirds of the Outlaws points came off of turnovers. The score could have been a lot more devastating to Sisters had the Lions limited

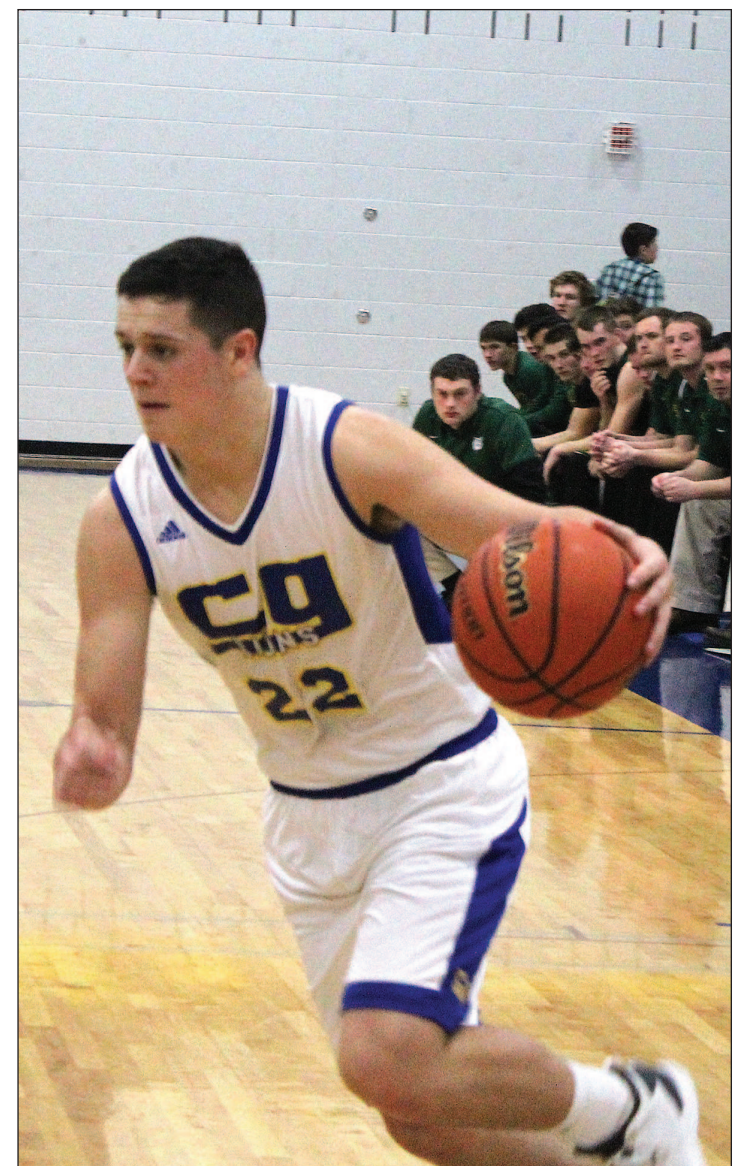
turnovers.

Though 27 turnovers might not have been great for Cottage Grove, the team seems to be moving in the right direction. On Friday, the Lions managed seven fewer than the previous game and allowed no points off of those turnovers.

The Sweet Home Huskies were in for a really rough night at Cottage Grove High School. The Lions started things off early by going up 13-0 at the end of the first quarter, and Sweet Home wasn't going to score much after that. In the second quarter, Cottage Grove outscored them 16-4 then 16-7 in the third quarter. Then finally,

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Blake Sentman leads Lions with 29 points over Sisters



While it was Kory Parent who sank the buzzer-beating field goal to beat Sisters 40-39, Blake Sentman carried his team with 29 points, outscoring the next Cottage Grove high scorer by 25 points. The senior accounted for nearly 75 percent of the Lions' points that night and shot 10 for 15 from the field and shot 70 percent (seven of 10) from beyond the three-point line. Sentman led the Lions in scoring against Sweet Home but this time with only 14 points. He is currently Cottage Grove's top scorer with 299 points on the season, well over twice as many as the next leading scorer. His highest scoring game was against Montesano where he scored 37 points on the night.

BLACK
YELLOW
MAGENTA
CYAN