

Outlaws split games on hardwood

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws started their week with an exciting 57-42 win in overtime against the Falcons at Elmira on Tuesday, January 27. Three days later Sisters suffered a 39-31 loss at home to Sutherlin.

Sisters battled in a very tough game at Elmira. The Outlaws have been riddled with injuries and sickness, and went into the contest with a skeleton crew.

Coach Rand Runco said, "Elmira is a tough team and the best rebounding team in the league. They have struggled winning, but are full of seniors and were picked early as one of the top teams in the league."

The Outlaws went down 16-4 in the first quarter, and had to battle back in the second to close the gap to one, with a score of 18-17 at the half.

In the third, Sisters went down by 10 and once again had to work hard and fight back.

"Our kids never let up and continued to play very hard," stated Runco.

Sisters started to creep back in and close the gap in the fourth, but it didn't look as if they would be able

to catch the Falcons. The Outlaws kept attacking the basket and got to the free-throw line, which kept them in range.

The Outlaws made some big steals in the final period, and Justin Harrer really came alive. Harrer scored eight points and took over on the boards. With 1.6 seconds left on the clock and down by two, Harrer took the ball and was fouled at half-court. Harrer hit two pressure free-throws that sent the game into overtime.

Sisters held onto their great momentum and attacked the Falcons in overtime. The Outlaws outscored the Falcons 15-4 in OT for a great come-back win.

"Everyone played great defense to keep us in the game and then we offensively exploded at the end of the game," said Runco. "We are most impressed that we played through injuries and sickness. Hayes (Moore) played limited minutes with a knee and ankle injury and we were missing Tysen (Gill), Logan (Schutte), and Lane (Gladden). We were undermanned, and the kids really persevered."

"A key to the victory was that we were able to get the ball inside and drive to the

basket, allowing us to shoot 41 free-throws, mostly by attacking the basket," added Runco.

Connor Schaab, who played the game on a strained hamstring, did a great job on the defensive glass against the aggressive Falcons. Isaac Mackenzie played well in both the third and fourth quarters. Mackenzie sparked the defense and was a key factor in several steals.

Steen Johnson also played great defense and hit key free throws for the Outlaws, and Harrer, Mackenzie, and Schaab held their own on the glass.

Keagan Greaney scored steadily throughout the game and finished with a season-high 23 points. Harrer recorded 13 points, Schaab tallied eight, and Mackenzie added six.

In Friday's match-up, the Outlaws battled in a hard-fought game against new league opponent, Sutherlin.

The Outlaws got behind early and just couldn't catch up. At the end of the first quarter the Outlaws trailed 17-9.

Runco said, "Sutherlin has a very good point-guard that controls the ball, and they have four very good shooters. We did a good job containing



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Keagan Greaney drives in to score vs. Sutherland.

the point-guard and limiting most of the shooters. One of their shooters got away and we were so focused on their point-guard we were late getting to him."

Sutherlin's Carson Taylor hit five three-point shots in the first half, which made it a game of chase for the Outlaws. The Outlaws struggled on offense and missed several shots at the basket. The Bulldogs closed out the half with a 25-14 lead.

"It should have been closer at the half, but we were just a step off," said Runco. "We did a solid job on the glass and defended them well after the three-pointers."

The Bulldogs' guard play was very deliberate, which made it difficult for the Outlaws to come back. Sisters tried to get the ball inside but had trouble getting it to fall through the net.

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