

Outlaws coach steps away from court

By **Jim Cornelius**
News Editor

A passion for women’s basketball followed Julianne Horner from Portland to Sisters and put her on the hardwood for five years as the Lady Outlaws head coach. Now Horner is stepping away from coaching for the first time in more than two decades to enjoy more time with her children.

“This is my season in life to be a mom,” she said.

Horner was a veteran coach when then-principal Bob Macauley tapped her for the Outlaws slot. But Horner says she may have gotten more out of coaching in Sisters than she did anywhere else. In a small 4A school, she did not have the luxury of choosing from among dozens of athletes to form a squad of experienced players. Every Outlaw has to be a contributor.

“Here I’m teaching them the game,” she explained. “You really have to figure out how to motivate each individual. I think I’ve grown more as a coach in Sisters than I would have ever thought possible. I’m super-grateful for that.”

Horner started playing basketball at the age of 8.

Something about the sport tripped the trigger for the girl who grew up wrassling and fighting with brothers.

“It was a great way to have that physicality and still be feminine,” she said.

A successful high school career in a top program was followed by success at Portland State University. She stayed with the program for a year after she graduated and worked in recruitment and as a defensive coordinator.

She founded a company called Top Prospect to help girls get placed in college hoops programs. And she went on to coach in the Portland area.

“I just fell in love with the sport — and I knew what it did for me,” she said.

She wanted to give that back to other young girls.

Horner did not intend to coach when she moved to Sisters. In fact, she and her husband, Cort, did not plan to stay in Sisters beyond two years. They had come here to help with a family construction business after her brother died suddenly. Then her father died, and settling the business affairs took longer than expected.

Then they decided they didn’t want to leave. They wanted to be in Sisters.

So, Horner was receptive when Bob Macauley came knocking on her door.

The Lady Outlaws have been successful on the court, making post-season play four out of five years, with a couple of the girls going on to play in college.

They’ve worked hard off the court, too.

Coaching in Sisters requires a great deal more than putting together the Xs and Os on a white-board. Horner and the athletes raised more than \$70,000 during her tenure to keep the program going. The girls worked with events like the Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show and the Episcopal Church’s Country Fair to earn money, and Horner could not be more pleased with the reputation the girls in the program have earned.

“Most everything our team touches, people come away feeling very proud of these girls,” she said.

Stepping away from coaching is difficult, and Horner knows it. Come next November, she expects it to hit really hard. But she knows



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Julianne Horner has led the Outlaws for five years.

the time is right. Her children are in their teens now, and her daughter Nina will be heading off to college in a year. She was missing too many activities due to program commitments.

And being a coach and being a mom don’t always go together well.

“I coached (Nina) for the first time this year,” she said. “It was tough. What I found is that I have to be her mom longer than I have to be her coach.”

Horner is sure that the

basketball program will be put in good hands.

“I’m very confident that they’ll find a good person,” she said. “If I wasn’t I wouldn’t have stepped away. This town produces talent. This town brings talent.”

One of the best aspects of her job, Horner says, was working in a culture where everybody worked together through adversity.

“Everyone works arm-in-arm and I’ve been really blessed to have been able to be in that environment,” she said.

The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday, April 2
Noon & 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3
Noon & 7 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY

April 5, 8:30 a.m.
Ecumenical Service with Communion
10:15 a.m.
Episcopal Service with Holy Eucharist

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