

# Boys basketball splits games

By Rongi Yost  
Correspondent

The Outlaws started their week with a 48-38 loss at home to Cottage Grove (CG) on Wednesday, January 20, but bounced back two days later to post a 51-38 road win at Sweet Home.

Sisters' loss to CG on Wednesday was the Outlaws' second tough loss in league play. Coach Rand Runco told *The Nugget* that the Sky-Em is the best league in the state from top to bottom, and the most competitive league in the state this year.

"CG returned their entire team, and we knew they would be tough to handle with their guard play, and two really good shooters, and a good post," said Runco.

CG averages about 60 points per game, and Sisters held them to under 40 — until they had to foul.

The Outlaws started off great and jumped to an early lead. Scott Waddell hit some jumpers, and Tyler Head got some great boards and put-backs. It was a very close first half, but when the buzzer sounded, Sisters entered the half down by two, 20-18.

CG outscored the Outlaws 28-20 in the second half to earn the win.

Overall, Sisters did a great job on defense, but did struggle in one area. The Outlaws had a hard time containing Blake Sentmens' three-point shooting in transition, and lost

track of him a few times.

Sentmens went three-for-four from behind the arc, and was five-for-six from the line in the final quarter, which hurt the Outlaws down the stretch.

"We did not play with great energy, our timing and execution was off, and we did not shoot the ball well from the perimeter," said Runco. "They packed it in a bit, which hurt our execution, and we shot the ball poorly. The boys didn't quit, but we did not have that usual effort that we have seen."

Sisters did beat the Lions on the boards, and outscored them on in-bounds plays. Each team hit 17 field goals on the night. CG hit four threes, but the real difference was at the line. The Lions had 12 shots from the line compared to Sisters, who only had four.

Scott Waddell led the Outlaws with 14 points. Connor Lake did a good job of hitting the offensive boards, and according to Runco just keeps getting better and better.

"With two tough losses to start league, we need to focus on us, and go on the road and get to work," said Runco. "We need to play more consistently against our league. We have very good veteran guards in our league, and they do not make a lot of mistakes. I am pleased with our improvements, and if we keep working hard we will step up to our league opponents."

Two days later, Sisters

played selflessly on both ends of the court, and was rewarded with a big win over the Huskies.

Sweet Home attacked with a half-court trap, which the Outlaws quickly adjusted to. After a couple of possessions, Sisters shredded the press for lay-ins by Keegan Greaney and Tyler Head. Sisters held a 12-8 lead to close out the first quarter.

Steen Johnson and Ben Saba started to knock down shots from the outside, which made the Outlaws a threat both inside and out. Sisters pushed to a 26-15 as teams headed into the half.

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— Rand Runco

Sisters continued their balanced attack and defended great. The Huskies cut down the Outlaws' 15-point lead in the fourth. Sisters answered with a couple of great assists and finishes, which put the game away. Junior varsity players came in and played the final minutes of the game.

"It was a nice team win and a great effort on both ends," said Runco. "We played a good game and just

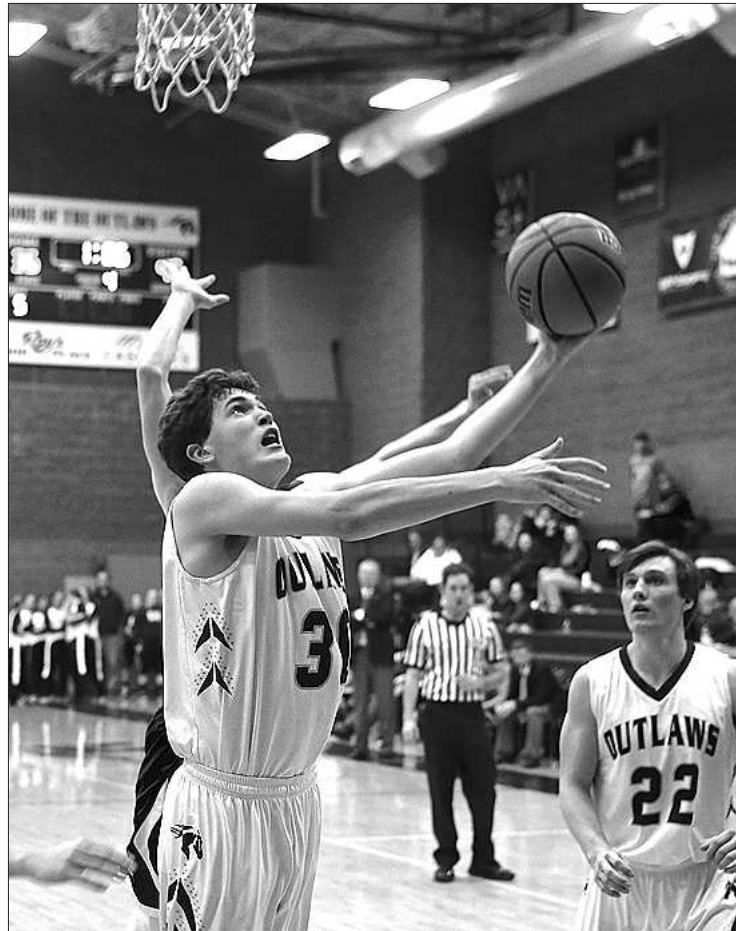


PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Scott Waddell scores against Cottage Grove.

need to work on taking better care of the basketball. We would have knocked them out earlier, but we had too many turnovers that let them stay in the game."

Greaney, Johnson, Hayes Moore, and Ben Saba all did a great job breaking the Huskies' traps, and the Outlaws' inside boys finished and rebounded the ball well.

"Scott (Waddell), Connor (Lake), Tyler (Head), and Isaac (Mckenzie) really were a force and completely took their inside game away," said Runco.

Johnson and Head each scored 11 points for the

Outlaws, Greaney recorded eight, and Waddell and Saba each contributed seven. Greaney had five assists and five steals, and Moore pitched in with four assists.

Runco commented on Hayes Moore's play.

"Hayes had a very good game in court leadership," said Runco. "He had multiple great passes, and really kept the team focused on the court. He finished with multiple assists and steals."

The Outlaws were to play at Junction City on Tuesday, January 26. Sisters will play at home against Elmira on Friday, January 29.

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