

Outlaws win crown at Cascade Invitational tournament

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The volleyball team went undefeated at the Cascade Invitational held on Saturday, September 12. The Outlaws beat Newport, Yamhill-Carlton, and Corbett in pool play and went on to defeat all their opponents in bracket play to claim the top spot.

Sisters beat Junction City 25-10, 25-9 in the quarter-finals. The Outlaws played well and served the Tigers off the floor. In the semi-finals, the Outlaws defeated Seaside with scores of 25-17, 25-21. Coach Rod Jones told *The Nugget* that the Lady Outlaws didn't play very well in that contest and fluctuated back and forth between good moments and bad moments throughout the match.

The Outlaws matched up against a very good Tillamook team in the championship match. Jones changed up the line-up and Sisters picked up their game, got aggressive, and handled the Cheeseheads with scores of 25-13, 25-9.

Hawley Harrer had an outstanding day and turned it up a notch in the final match of the day, both in hitting and serving the ball. Ashlynn

Cantwell and Kendra Sitz also had an outstanding day. The duo did a great job of hitting from the outside.

Alex Hartford, in her rotation at setter, hit the ball really well. Hartford did a great job moving the ball and getting her hitters involved. Jesse Brigham also had a strong performance playing defense at the libero position.

The wins were a total team effort and according to Jones, everyone played well.

"The girls had a long, trying week, but they grew from it and finally put it all together at the end of the tournament," said Jones. "The win against Tillamook was so impressive. They played with passion and joy. They executed, and played like they should, and beat a good team. The morale was good and the team spirit was great. I was very, very pleased."

Earlier in the week, on Tuesday, September 6, the Outlaws suffered a tough loss to Bend High, but two days later pulled out a win at Summit that went five games.

Sisters fell in four games to Bend on Tuesday. The Outlaws took the first game 25-21, but then lost their concentration and focus and lost

the next three games, 23-25, 11-25, and 22-25.

Bend gave the Outlaws some tough competition, played solid throughout the contest, and made fewer mistakes. Sisters made many physical and mental mistakes, which got them into trouble.

“ We had a great crowd. One side of the bleachers was full of our fans, and that was fun.

— Rod Jones

Coach Rod Jones said, "We lost our poise and Bend took advantage. Everybody competed hard and contributed some positive touches, but we all made mistakes. All the mistakes are correctable, and the girls are excited about being in the gym tomorrow and so am I. The kids need these kinds of hard matches, and they will only get better from them."

Jones added, "We had a great crowd. One side of the bleachers was full of our fans, and that was fun."



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Brooke Knirk with a defensive dig versus Summit.

At Summit, the Outlaws were once again backed by a big crowd of fans. The Outlaws started strong and aggressive and took down the Storm 25-14. From there, the team unraveled and errors ensued. Sisters lost a second close game 23-25, and came back in the third to earn a 25-23 win. They lost the fourth 21-25, but pulled it out in the final set with four great plays at the end to win the match.

Jones said, "The girls had some great dynamic plays, but they were often followed

by a mistake. We're just making too many unforced errors. We're not getting the momentum we need because we're not consistent. We gave up way too many points, and the girls got tight and nervous. But, we were relieved and excited to win in hostile territory. Summit played hard, pushed us, and didn't back down."

Sisters was to play at Ridgeview on Tuesday, September 13. The Outlaws will play a home in an endowment game against Sutherlin on Thursday, September 15.

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