

Outlaws play tough against Valiants

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws put up a hard-fought fight at home against Valley Catholic on Friday, September 13, but were unable to move the ball on their last possession of the game and lost by three, 22-19.

Valley Catholic may have hit Reed Stadium with thoughts of rolling over the Outlaws like they did last year, but this year the Outlaws were ready. The Valiants discovered the Outlaws were defensively prepared and able to contain the potent offense of quarterback Daniel Pruitt and running back Trey Eberhart.

The Outlaws had a terrible first quarter, and their offense was stifled as the Valiants came out in a different defense than what they'd played in the past. At the end of the period the Valiants were on top 14-0, with the aid of an onside kick that was recovered near midfield.

With 2:47 left in the half, Sisters made a big stop on fourth down. Hunter Spor and Ethan Martin ran the ball up the middle, Hayden Sharp had a big 43-yard outside run, and then Taylor Fendall wove his way through traffic for an 11-yard TD run. At the half Sisters trailed 14-6, but were in sync on both sides of the ball.

Sisters opened the second half with a balanced attack with in-and-out runs, pitches and various combinations which allowed them to march down the field. The drive culminated in a pitch to Gator Haken for a four-yard TD run that narrowed the margin to 14-13.

The Valiants drove the ball to the Outlaws one-yard line where a fumbled snap led to a recovery by Anthony Randolph at the two-yard line. Sisters first play from the two was a loss and the situation looked grim.

Coach Neil Fendall made a gutsy call. He called a play



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

The Outlaws made a valiant stand against Valley Catholic, but ultimately fell 21-19.

action from the goal line, complete to Hayden Sharp for a 98-yard TD score for the Outlaws' first lead of the game, 19-14, with 5:34 left on the clock.

Sisters forced a punt, had a three-and-out, and punted again. The Valiants faced a fourth down at midfield, but were able to get behind the Outlaws' pass coverage for a long TD and a two-point conversion with just under two minutes left in the game.

The Outlaws were unable to move the ball on their final possession and suffered the heartbreaking loss.

Coach Fendall said, "I'm really proud of the guys. It was a lot of fun. In terms of how we competed I think we're back to where we were last year. We're playing scrappy and hard. The guys did a lot of great things. We fought and came back and offensively found traction."

Randolph was an irresistible force for the Outlaws and lived in the Valiants' backfield for much of the game. He finished the night with a sack, a tackle for loss, a fumble recovery, as well as several assisted tackles.

Randolph commented on the difference in the team's play from the previous week.

"This week we worked a lot more on defense because we saw we were pretty weak in that area," said Randolph.

"We knew we just had to wear them down because we're ironmen and we go strong the whole game."

Liam Elesio played sideline-to-sideline from his linebacker spot. Elesio finished with five solo tackles, a tackle for loss, and a highlight-reel interception, where he bobbled the ball three or four times before securing the pick.

Elesio explained how the interception unfurled.

"It was just crazy," said Elesio, laughing. "The ball deflected off Hunter Spor and then hopped up in the air. I just kind of went off my two weeks of receiver training that I had early in my freshman year before getting switched to lineman. I just tried my best and it worked out well."

Garrett Kersavage had a key interception on the one-yard line that saved a score. Ethan Martin was a bulldozer on defense, and Hayden Sharp's speed was too much for Valley Catholic, Hayden ended the night with one reception for 98 yards as well as 66 yards rushing.

The Outlaws will travel to Crook County on Friday, September 20.

Outlaws earn top honors at tournament

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Lady Outlaws participated in the South Eugene 11-team Volleyball Tournament on Saturday, September 14. Sisters was the lone 4A team in attendance, along with four 5A teams, and six 6A teams. The Outlaws proved they could play with the much larger schools and defeated 5A North Eugene in the championship game to win it all.

In pool play, Sisters faced 6A Roseburg and 6A McNary. They beat both teams and finished pool play 5-1. This placed them in a four-way tie for first place with Grants Pass, North Eugene, and Silverton, and after calculating points the Outlaws finished fourth in the eight-team Gold Bracket.

Sisters faced Roseburg again in their first match of the afternoon. In the morning the Outlaws struggled to find consistency against the Indians, but came out strong the second time around. They served hard and their fast-paced offense kept Roseburg out of their system. Sisters beat the Indians 2-0.

Sophie Silva led the Outlaws with eight kills, 10 digs, and four aces.

Coach Rory Rush said, "Sophie played smart defense along the net and made

the Indians pay for over-passes with calculated put-backs, and had their defense scrambling."

In their next match against South Medford, the Outlaws' strong serves and their calculated offense proved to be too much for the Panthers to handle. South Medford would never see a lead in the match and Sisters defeated them 2-0. With the win over the Panthers, the Outlaws advanced to the championship match, where they faced undefeated 5A North Eugene.

Ellie Rush served strong and the Outlaws took a quick 5-0 lead, which caused the Highlanders to call an early timeout. Sisters never trailed in the first set and easily posted the win. The tide changed and the Outlaws had a rough start in the second set and found themselves trailing 7-1. After a timeout the Outlaws calmed down, refocused, and battled back to tie it up. The score went back and forth until Sam Silva gave Sisters a six-point lead with three service aces, and the team sailed to a championship victory.

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