

Boys basketball split games on the hardwood

By Rongi Yost
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The Outlaws hoopsters started their week on Monday, January 31, against the Riverdale Mavericks, who are located in Portland near Lake Oswego, in a non-league game rescheduled from earlier in the season. Sisters walked away with a 44-37 victory.

On Thursday, the Outlaws lost on the road to top-ranked Stayton 28-52.

In Monday's matchup, the Mavericks came out smoking hot and quickly took a 7-0 lead against what Coach Chad Rush called an "uninspired Outlaw defense." Jessey Murillo broke the scoreless stretch with a free-throw almost two minutes into the contest.

The Outlaws began to execute their offense, and at the close of the first quarter held a 12-0 lead. Max Palanuk and Jamen Schwartz both hit long balls in the period to help the Outlaws during their 12-2 run that closed out the quarter.

In the second period the Mavericks pulled ahead early off of several Outlaws turnovers that they converted into fast-break layups. Ricky Huffman scored six points, and was the lone Outlaw to score in the quarter. At the half the Outlaws trailed 18-22.

Sisters regrouped at half-time and came out in the third,

put pressure on the Mavericks, and went on an 11-2 run in the first four minutes. Huffman and Palanuk scored all of the Outlaws' points in the quarter, eight from Huffman and seven from Palanuk.

The fourth quarter started even with both teams trading baskets. The Mavericks cut the Outlaws' lead to one point at 37-38 with just over a minute left on the clock, but those proved to be the last points they would score in the game. Sisters buckled down on defense and hit four of five from the charity stripe to seal the victory.

The Outlaws went 11-14 at the free-throw line, which Rush told *The Nugget* was a huge lift for the team when they were trying to get going offensively early, as well as keep the lead late in the game.

Huffman led the team in scoring for the second straight game and finished the night at 16 points. Palanuk scored 14, Mehkye Froehlich tallied seven, Murillo four, and Schwartz added three.

"I was very proud of our team for finding a way to win tonight," said Rush. "There were several moments when the team was able to take momentum from the Mavericks and stop their run. That is something we have been working on and talking about for several weeks now, so that was good to see."

Thursday's matchup against the Stayton Eagles marked the first game of the second half of league play, and Stayton's stellar play showed why they are the No. 6-ranked team in the state. The Eagles shut down the Outlaws' offensive rhythm and held them to just 28 points in the game.

The first quarter started off slow for both teams and half-way through the period the Outlaws trailed 1-6. Sisters' only point came from Murillo, who hit a shot at the charity stripe. Later in the quarter, Froehlich followed his own miss for a put-back layup to score the only field goal of the period. At the end of one, Sisters was down 3-11.

The second quarter didn't bode well for the Outlaws. The team was held scoreless until midway through the period when Schwartz hit the triple-try and broke the scoring drought. On the flip side, the Eagles forced multiple turnovers with their defensive pressure and scored 12 points in transition off of the



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Mehkye Froehlich goes up for two against the Mavericks.

Outlaws' turnovers. At the half, Sisters found themselves down by 25.

Sisters had their best scoring quarter in the third. They were a lot more patient, while still being aggressive against the Eagles' defense. Despite their effort they were still outscored 13-23 in the quarter.

Due to new rules, the fourth quarter was a running time clock because the lead was at or over 30 points. Despite a quicker than usual quarter, the Outlaws buckled down and held the Eagles scoreless for the entire eight-minute period, which Coach Rush told *The Nugget* was a

positive way to end the night.

Palanuk scored seven points, followed by Huffman who put up six. Murillo contributed four points, Froehlich had three, and Taine Martin added two.

"This was not the outcome we had in mind when we traveled to Stayton tonight," said Rush. "However, I was proud of the team for never quitting, and for continuing to play hard for the entire 32 minutes. We will regroup in practice this week and get ready for Sweet Home on Tuesday."

The Outlaws will hit the road again on Friday, February 11, for a game at Newport.

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