



GARY HOROWITZ/STATESMAN JOURNAL

The Kennedy High School girls basketball team places third in the 2A state tournament.

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The Kennedy High School girls basketball team thrives on its pressure defense and it was on display Saturday against Imbler in the OSAA Class 2A girls third-place game against Imbler at Pendleton Convention Center.

No. 3 seed Kennedy limited No. 5 seed Imbler to 22 percent from the field and forced 19 turnovers en route to a 39-30 victory.

“Our defense is definitely really good and teams seem to struggle when we press them,” junior guard Kaylin Cantu

said. “They can’t get through it.”

The Trojans (17-11) flashed offense at an opportune time and it proved decisive.

Cantu made back-to-back 3-pointers in a 20-second span that extended the lead to 29-15 with 2:27 left in the third quarter. Her first long-range field goal was the first 3-pointer of the game from either team.

“I wasn’t gonna take the second one and then I was wide open so I thought, why not,” said Cantu, who scored 11 points and had a game-high five steals. “I just shot it and made it.”

Imbler (16-7) never got closer than

nine points the rest of the way and placed fifth in the tournament.

Kennedy sophomore forward Kalysa Kleinschmit joined Cantu in double figures with 10 points. Junior forward Hannah Arritola added six points, seven rebounds and four steals.

Kennedy, which lost to fellow Tri-River Conference member Western Mennonite in the semifinals Friday, was the defending state champion.

A third-place finish despite the graduation of Lakin Susee, last season’s 2A Player of the Year, was impressive.

“It feels really good cause a lot of people thought we wouldn’t be able to (get

this far)” Cantu said. “They thought we’d struggle a little so to get third, that’s a lot for us. We’re really proud of it.”

KENNEDY 39, IMBLER 30

Imbler: Robertson 11, Smith 9, Rudd 6, McGinness 2, Stirewalt 2, Hassan, Kilpatrick. Totals: 9 11-19 70.

Kennedy: Cantu 11, Kleinschmit 10, Arritola 6, Brown 4, Carley 3, Jaeger 2, Traeger 2, Frey 1, I. Gomez, Y. Gomez, Garcia, Seiler. Totals: 13 11-17 39

Imbler - 7-8-5-10 - 30

Kennedy - 15-6-12-6 - 39

3-point field goals: Imbler 1 (Robertson); Kennedy 2 (Cantu 2)

Silverton girls basketball cruises into quarterfinals



MOLLY J. SMITH/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Silverton coach Tal Wold talks to the team at the end of the first quarter against Dallas on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at Dallas High School. After a close second half, Silverton won the game 35-33, in OSAA Class 5A action. The Foxes, who are the defending state champions, will face Hillsboro at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at Gill Coliseum in Corvallis.

Santiam boys win first state title since 1974

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STATESMAN JOURNAL

PENDLETON - Santiam High School boys basketball coach J.D. Hill captured the euphoria of winning the OSAA Class 2A state championship.

During an on-court celebration with players and fans, Hill reflected on Saturday’s 57-54 victory over No. 2 seed Stanfield at Pendleton Convention Center.

“That performance we had tonight, it just blows my mind,” Hill said,

No. 4 seed Santiam (23-4) had only won one boys state basketball championship prior to Saturday, and that came in the Class A Division in 1974.

The Wolverines were making their first state championship game appearance since 1976, decades before any player on this season’s roster was born. But players knew how much this victory meant historically.

“It’s for the whole community,” said senior guard Julian Downey, who scored 15 of his game-high 33 points in the fourth quarter. “It feels good to bring a trophy back home.”

Downey, who grew up in Mill City, played on Silverton’s 5A state championship team in 2015. He transferred to Santiam for his senior year when his family moved back to the area, giving him the opportunity to play with his younger brother Jonah in high school



E.J. HARRIS/SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

The Santiam boys basketball team celebrate after defeating Stanfield 57-54 in the state 2A basketball championship game on Saturday in Pendleton.

for the first time.

Jonah Downey, a sophomore guard, scored 21 points in the championship game.

“I’ve been playing with (Julian) forever, against him one-one-one outside,” Jonah Downey said. “It’s amazing I could win it with my brother.”

The Downeys combined for 54 of Santiam’s 57 points and were selected first-team all-tournament.

Santiam, which lost in the Tri-River Conference district championship game to Western Mennonite, brought momentum into the title game against Stanfield. The Wolverines defeated No.

See **SANTIAM**, Page 2B