

Eagles get refocused, drop 31 points in third to roll

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

Head Coach of the Joseph Eagles girls basketball team Lance Homan had to refocus before he could help his team get on track after they walked into the locker room at halftime tied with the Cove Leopards at 13-13.

"I wasn't a great coach the first half, so (I had) to be honest and refocus myself. I can't expect kids to refocus if I've got something on my mind," Homan said.

It worked. Both Sabrina Albee and Madelyn Nelson scored 15 points in the second half, and the Eagles exploded for 31 points in the third quarter to shake off the slow first 16 minutes in a 57-31 road win over Cove Tuesday in Old Oregon League play.

"Our heads weren't in it, and we weren't working together," Albee, who scored a game-high 22 points, said. "But in the second half we were working together."

Joseph's normally high-powered offense couldn't catch a break in the first half. The Eagles shot just 11 percent (4-for-38), scored



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Joseph's Camille Crenshaw, center, drives to the hoop against Cove's Rebekah Farrell, right, during the Eagles' 57-31 win at Cove on Tuesday.

four first-quarter points and trailed 12-8 late in the second quarter after a 3-point play by Cove's Maggie Frisch, who had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

But Albee hit a 3-pointer with 23 seconds to play in the half to knot the score.

"Her 3 was pretty big," Nelson, who had 17 points and nine steals, said. "We all got

more excited, and shots started to fall in the second half"

Nelson's 3-pointer early in the third gave Joseph the lead for good. She then helped swing the game on her own in a 30-second stretch with a rebound and putback, a steal that led to an Albee layup and her own steal and layup for a 26-15 lead with 4:49 to play in the third.

Albee and Nelson both hit two more 3-pointers in the period, and before the dust settled, Joseph had dropped 31 points and had a 44-19 lead headed into the fourth.

"We were all into it more, and we just finished harder," added Nelson, who had 15 points and six steals in the third quarter alone.

Joseph pushed the lead to

as much as 31 points in the fourth and shot 50 percent in the second half (15-for-30).

"It wasn't surprising in the second half," Homan said of the hot shooting. "I think that's Joseph basketball to a point. We always have someone who scores well. We don't know who it's going to be, but we expect someone to shoot well."

The Joseph defense also played well, holding Cove to 12-for-33 shooting and forcing 43 turnovers. Camille Crenshaw and Jill Hite both had five steals to go with Nelson's nine. Hite also had six assists.

Lilly Perry added four points, 10 rebounds and three steals for the Leopards.

Cove stayed in the game in the first half despite 24 turnovers due to Joseph's rough shooting and some strong rebounding. Frisch scored on a layup for a 5-4 lead midway through the first, then later fed Kierra Moore for a 7-4 advantage after one.

"Doug (Girdner) does a great job with Cove, especially with the players he had out," Homan said of the Cove coach. "They played hard."

Joseph (17-2 overall, 7-0 OOL) travels to Pine Eagle Friday, while Cove (8-9, 2-5) visits Elgin Friday.

Also
BUCKAROOS HOLD OFF LA GRANDE IN OVERTIME

Balanced scoring in overtime gave the Pendleton Buckaroos girls basketball team enough to outlast the La Grande Tigers Tuesday in Pendleton, 53-47.

Five different players scored in the extra session for Pendleton as it avoided a season-sweep at the hands of La Grande, which won 43-37 when the teams met three weeks earlier.

The Tigers shook off a 10-point deficit after one quarter to pull even at 23-23 at halftime, and took a 34-30 lead into the final quarter. But Pendleton pulled even late and the teams went into the extra session tied at 40-40, where the Buckaroos pulled ahead for good.

Camryn Collman scored 24 points to lead La Grande, while both Jacie Howton and Ella Dunlap had seven points.

La Grande (11-5 overall) travels to Powder Valley Thursday.

Joseph finds needed balance in key OOL victory at Cove

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The Joseph Eagles boys basketball team is starting to show some of the consistency and balance Head Coach Olan Fulfer is looking for.

Mason Ferré led the way with 15 points as the Eagles broke the game open with a 19-0 run on their way to a 62-34 road win over the Cove Leopards Tuesday night in Old Oregon League play.

The game was a stark contrast to the extreme highs and lows that have defined many of Joseph's games this season.

"That's exactly what we're looking for. The ups are amazing, but I'm really looking for level-headed play throughout (the game)," Fulfer said. "Taking good shots every single time, reacting better to turnovers, and then just playing consistently. This game was definitely the most consistent we have played."

Both teams entered Tuesday's game at 4-2 in the OOL and looking for a win to help solidify their spots in the respective halves of the

league — Joseph in the North and Cove in the South.

But what on paper had the inkling of an even battle turned into a decisive Eagle advantage early. After a slow first few minutes, Kade Kilgore began what ended up being the game-turning run with a putback to tie the score at 5-5 midway through the first.

An avalanche of points from Joseph followed.

Ferré hit a 3-pointer and a layup for a quick five-point lead, and a putback late in the quarter by Hadley Miller put the Eagles up 17-5 after one. Chase Murray's fadeaway jumper early in the second capped off the rally for a 22-5 edge.

"We've been stressing in practice every day that we need to be less selfish (and) we need to work harder on defense," Ferré said. "I think (the concepts) just finally got to our heads."

Cove went more than eight minutes without scoring at one juncture, and found itself down by

22 in the first half before finding a spark. Blake Witten, who led the Leopards with 19 points, connected on a 3-pointer to trigger a half-ending 7-0 run and cut the margin to 30-15. But the shooting struggles that plagued them in the first half — a 5-for-27 effort from the floor — carried over while Joseph continued to fire on all cylinders. A 3-by Kilgore early in the third pushed the lead back to 22, and Cove pulled no closer than 18 points the rest of the way.

In addition to Ferré's 15 points, the Eagles got 11 points from Kilgore and nine each from both Trey Wandschneider and Tyler Homan. Homan also had nine rebounds and six assists. Joseph was 8-for-21 from the 3-point range, and shot 41 percent (21-for-51) overall.

"(We need) everybody being able to score at any time," Fulfer said. "We gotta share the ball a lot better, but it's getting better. That's what we're looking for."

Wacey Fite added seven points



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Joseph's Mason Ferré, left, scores two of his 15 points Tuesday.

for Cove, which shot 20 percent (12-for-60). Witten led the team with eight rebounds, and Dawson Gaertner registered five blocked shots.

Joseph (12-7 overall, 5-2 OOL) visits Pine Eagle Friday, while Cove (11-6, 4-3) heads to Elgin Friday.

Also
BIGTHIRD QUARTER BOOSTS PENDLETON PAST LA GRANDE

The La Grande Tigers boys basketball team rallied once to pull even at halftime, but couldn't do so in the second half of a 67-49 home loss to the Pendleton Buckaroos Tuesday night.

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