

Pendleton pulls away from La Grande

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — La Grande head coach Mark Carollo said the inconsistency that has plagued his boys basketball team this season showed again Tuesday in the Tigers' 62-46 home loss to Pendleton.

He was also quick, though, to point out Pendleton's play made a major difference.

"I'm never one to not give another team credit," Carollo said. "Pendleton's a good team, they got a good record on the year, they got some good players, so a lot of the credit goes to them."

The inconsistency showed most during a pair of Pendleton runs, one early in the third and one in the fourth, that allowed Pendleton to pull away.

Greyson Sams hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer to give the Buckaroos a 29-21 lead at the half, and they pushed the margin to 14 early in the third quarter, taking a 35-21 lead on a steal and layup by Lane Maher, who had 11 points for Pendleton, with 5:37 to play in the third.

It was that early second-half stretch that Pendleton coach Zach Dong said was key.

"We preach to our guys coming out (of the locker room) the first three minutes of the second half is the most important, and they came out and played well," he said. "Defensively we made some adjustments. We got some easy buckets in transition because of it, and that created that gap for us that we needed."

La Grande got back within 39-29 less than 90 seconds later when Cristian Mendoza hit a 3-pointer to cap a mini 8-4 run, but Pendleton pushed the margin back to as much



Staff photo by Ronald Bond

La Grande's Lukas Schelin, right, drives to the hoop to attempt a layup Tuesday during the Tigers' home game against Pendleton. The Buckaroos won 62-46.

as 18 in the period before taking a 47-31 lead into the fourth.

That's when the Bucks put the game away for good. Stockton Hoffman, who also had 11 points, scored seven during a 9-0 run that extended the lead to 58-34 with about five minutes to go. The Tigers got no closer than 16 the rest of the way.

Carollo said he has emphasized multiple points to the team to shore up the inconsistent play.

"I'm trying to get them to think out on the basketball court. That's a very important aspect of any player is to recognize and read and react to different things that approach you," he

said. That's one of the aspects. Another aspect is being patient, not being in a hurry, I told them in the first half, (Pendleton's) running and jumping (at us). That's hurrying us up for no reason. We have no shot clock, we have no reason to rush into these things."

La Grande did force 18 turnovers and collected eight steals — getting three apiece from Justin Jenner and Brady Hutchins. But the Tigers were outbounded 42-35 on the night and committed 16 turnovers, including 11 in the second half.

Kaleb Myer scored 16 points to lead the Tigers in scoring and also grabbed a game-high 11 rebounds.

Jenner added 11 points and Mendoza scored 10.

Jenner individually sparked a run late in the first half that cut a 10-point margin in half, including getting a steal and layup to make it 26-21 with 32 seconds to go before halftime before Greyson Sams' 3-pointer swung the momentum.

The Tigers (1-10 overall) open Greater Oregon League play Friday when they host rival Baker.

"That could be a little bit of a silver lining for us in a sense of really buying into these league games and trying to salvage our season," Carollo said.

LOCAL SCHEDULE

- Friday**
PREP BOYS BASKETBALL
Baker at La Grande, 7:30 p.m.
Union at Pilot Rock, 7:30 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Enterprise, 7:30 p.m.
Griswold at Joseph, 7:30 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Powder Valley, 7:30 p.m.
Wallowa at Elgin, 7:30 p.m.
Imbler at Pine Eagle, 7:30 p.m.
- PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL**
Baker at La Grande, 6 p.m.
Union at Pilot Rock, 6 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Enterprise, 6 p.m.
Griswold at Joseph, 6 p.m.
Nixyaawii at Powder Valley, 6 p.m.
Wallowa at Elgin, 6 p.m.
Imbler at Pine Eagle, 6 p.m.
- PREP WRESTLING**
Elgin, Enterprise at Orofino Maniac Invitational, Orofino, Idaho, all day
- WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL**
Eastern Oregon at Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington, 5:30 p.m.
- MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL**
Eastern Oregon at Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington, 7:30 p.m.

— Subject to change

LHS girls fall in 2OT to Bucks

By Brett Kane
EO Media Group

PENDLETON — Both sides of Warberg Court expected an intense battle in Pendleton and La Grande's first meeting of the season, and intensity is exactly what they got.

After Pendleton junior Natalie Neveau put back an offensive rebound for a bucket at the tail end of regulation, the Buckaroos girls basketball team survived two periods of overtime to clinch a 56-53 nonleague win over the visiting Tigers on Tuesday night. Pendleton sophomore Muriel Hoisington gave the Bucks their final lead two minutes into the second overtime period, and two points at the line from Neveau and sophomore Daisy Jenness sealed the win.

"We're very well matched against each other," La Grande head coach Brian Wright said. "We didn't handle things as well as we would have liked, but we responded well in overtime. I don't ever fault the kids' efforts. They were playing as hard as they could. And credit to Pendleton — they didn't give in."

Hoisington and sophomore Josie Wilson scored two straight 3-pointers to open the game, but the Bucks allowed a 12-point La Grande run that gave the Tigers their first lead.

Jenness notched a basket with 2:25 remaining in the second quarter for a 23-22 game, and Hoisington scored on a steal to take a 24-23 Pendleton advantage. La Grande sophomore Grace Neer reclaimed the lead 30 seconds later, and Pendleton senior Carissa Cooley scored two at the line to clinch another Pendleton advantage.



Observer file photo

La Grande's Camryn Collman, shown in a game earlier this season, scored 23 points Tuesday in Pendleton.

Tigers junior Lauran Rinker hit a shot at the line in the final eight seconds for a 26-26 tie at the half.

"Our team handled it really poorly," Bucks head coach Kevin Porter said. "We had leads late in the game, but lost them with our carelessness."

The Bucks opened the second half with a five-point streak that put them up 31-26 as the Tigers were held scoreless in the opening five minutes. But the Tigers managed a 33-31 lead at the end of the quarter.

Neveau scored two at the line to even the score at 41-41 with 1:08 left in regulation, and sophomore guard Chloe Taber hit a 3-pointer to give Pendleton a 44-41 lead. Tigers junior Camryn Collman, who finished with a game-high 23 points, knotted the score with a basket and a free throw with 15 seconds remaining, and Neveau's last-second bucket forced overtime.

"I was expecting a tough game," said Taber, who had 13 points on the night, "but we didn't really come out like we needed to. We needed to

just calm down and move the ball. La Grande is tough. They have great players. They're super scrappy."

Pendleton took two leads in the first overtime period — the first coming from Jenness at 3:45, and the next from another Taber trey nearly two minutes later.

Tigers senior Alexyssa Chamberlain scored two free throws for a 51-50 game with 49 seconds left, and Hoisington responded with a free throw of her own 20 seconds later. Collman scored two more at the line to tie the game at 52-52 and send it into double overtime.

"(Collman) is a fantastic basketball player," Porter said. "She's got some great players to help her out, too."

The Tigers got one point at the line from senior Kenzie Williams to open the final overtime period, and Pendleton scored four more points — two of which came from the line — to escape with the win.

The Tigers (9-4), who saw their seven-game winning streak end, open Greater Oregon League action at home Friday against Baker.

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