

VHS Winter Sports Report: Lady Loggers Qualify for State Tournament

Vernonia loses in District championship game

The Vernonia Lady Loggers advanced to the OSAA State Girls Basketball Playoffs as the 2nd place finisher in their District after falling to Portland Christian 51-44 on February 16.

Vernonia will enter the State Playoffs as the #15 seed and will face a hard road in the first round, traveling to #2 seed Monroe on Saturday, February 23. Monroe won the Central Valley Conference with a 13-1 league record and are 22-3 on the season.

The Lady Loggers entered the District Playoffs as the 2nd seed after struggling a bit down the stretch of the regular season. The girls lost their final game to 1st place Portland Christian 41-30 on February 7 and finished the season with a 13-3 record in Northwest League play.

The girls opened the District play-offs against the City Christian Lions, who finished the regular season in 3rd place with a 12-4 record. The Lady Loggers split their regular season match-ups with City Christian, winning 53-27 early in the season, before falling 48-37 in mid-January. City Christian defeated Nestucca 45-36 in their first round of the District Playoffs to advance to the semi-finals and face Vernonia; Vernonia received a bye in the first round.

The evenly matched teams faced off on February 14 at the Vernonia gym, with a spot in the District finals on the line; the teams were ranked #17 and #18 in OSAA standings ahead of the match-up.

The game was a hard-fought affair, with both teams playing tight defense, with the Lions playing especially tough and taking away open outside shots for the Vernonia girls, something they have excelled in all season. The Loggers led 21-20 at the half.

Both teams struggled to put the ball in the basket in the second half as the lead changed hands several times. The Lady Loggers finally earned a little breathing room when freshman Brooklynn Walters and senior captain Joyce Everett both sunk a pair of free throws, and the Vernonia girls hung on for a 38-36 win.

Brooklynn Walters led the Lady Loggers in scoring with 15 points. Everett led the offense from the point guard position and chipped in 7 points, and Lauren Ely also scored 7, all in the first half, for the

season, 41-21 on January 15. Portland Christian defeated Neah-Kah-Nie 58-23 in the District semi-finals.

The final was once again a defensive battle early as both teams had trouble getting the ball to drop into the basket. Brooklynn Walters picked up her third personal foul at the start of the 2nd quarter. Walters sat the rest of the 1st half, and Vernonia struggled to find the key to unlock Christian's defense. The half ended with the Lady Loggers trailing 22-20.

Walters picked up her fourth foul midway



L-R: Brooklynn Walters, Joyce Everett, Jordan Walters

winners. Junior captain Jordan Walters was guarded closely all game and was held to just 5 points, but hit an important 3 pointer late in the 3rd quarter to keep the Lady Loggers in the game. Sophomore Jayden Hartman played tenacious defense and scored 4 points, and junior Jessica Butcher added some needed relief off the bench, especially when Brooklynn Walters had to leave the game for a few crucial minutes in the middle of the of the 4th quarter with a bad leg cramp.

The Lady Loggers faced Portland Christian in the District finals on February 16 in Vernonia. Portland Christian finished the regular season with a 15-1 Northwest League record and a 20-6 record overall; they were ranked #8 in OSAA standings. The Lady Loggers handed them their only loss during the regular

through the 3rd quarter, and again had to sit, and Christian finally started scoring, opening up a 12 point lead. Walters came back in the 4th quarter to score 9 points and help pull the Lady Loggers to within 6 at one point, but it was too late.

Brooklynn Walters led the Lady Loggers in scoring with 15 points, Jordan Walters scored 12 and Jayden Hartman added 8 for the Lady Loggers.

Following the game, All League selections were announced. Lauren Ely and Joyce Everett were named 3rd Team All League, Brooklynn Walters was named 2nd Team, Jordan Walters was named 1st Team, and Everett was named to the All Defensive Team.

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