

Sports



(Photo courtesy of Kelli Augustadt for The Illinois Valley News)

No. 23 sophomore Aundrea Miller shoots for two during the home loss against Hidden Valley. The Lady Cougars sit at 1-2 for the season.

Girls show promise early on in the season

By
Jenna Larkin
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With three pre-season games in the bag, the Lady Cougars can move forward knowing that they have what it takes to be competitive in what head coach Serena Barry calls some tough competition this year.

Wednesday, Dec. 3 IVHS hosted their first home game against the Hidden Valley Mustangs. With the new team motto "We, not me" fully in play, the Lady Cougars fought a hard battle against the Mustangs, but fell short of a win. The Mustangs were able to overcome IVHS in the last half, taking the win with a final score of 61-43. Head coach Serena Barry feels that the score was in no way a reflection of how the girls really played.

"At halftime we were only behind by three points," said Barry.

Alex LaFlamme scored 17 points and Allison Primeau ended up with 10 points.

With a lack of inexperience and nerves, IVHS fell into foul trouble in the second half, allowing the Mustangs to grab a big lead. The Mustangs were able to gain ground with agility and speed which caused the Cougar guards to get more fouls, leading to the Cougars downfall at the end of the game.

Friday, Dec. 5 the Lady Cougars had a more promising game against North Valley while at home. The Cougars were able to lead the game all the way into the fourth quarter. Despite IVHS being up by seven points, North Valley had the upper hand in experienced players and was able to finish the game out strong and overcome IVHS with a close win of 45-40.

"The girls are still learning how to finish a game. They just got frantic," said Barry.

With a game well played, Barry is proud of how the girls performed all the way to the end.

"These are big rival games and the girls played really well under the circumstances," Barry said of the last two games.

Saturday's home game against Bandon proved to be a little scarier for the Lady Cougars. The girls came out not quite into the game and started with low intensity and soon found themselves behind in the first quarter. By halftime the Cougars woke up and tied the game 26-26. During halftime, the goal was to fight through and stay strong in the second half. With that goal in mind, IVHS was able to do just that and by the end of the third quarter the game was tied again 37-37.

"It was a very physical game on both

sides," said Barry. "The girls were patient and played with heart to the end."

Barry feels that some the bugs and kinks were fixed during the first two games and that the girls will be able to move forward more confidently as the season progresses. That confidence showed in Primeau's game, scoring 19 of the 51 points scored, helping to secure the Lady Cougars first win of the season. The final score was 51-44. Primeau also had plenty of rebounds and went 4-4 at the foul line.

In the coming weeks leading up to the regular season, Barry wants to focus on being able to play a full game without fatigue setting in during the second half. Barry is positive that the girls are capable of stepping up the challenge.

The Lady Cougars were scheduled to go up against Prospect Charter Tuesday, Dec. 9 at home.

Boys off to rough start, lack defense

By
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The IVHS boys' basketball squad is off to a rough start in the pre-season.

With only five seniors and a new head coach Matt Knight, the boys are having a difficult time in getting their game under control. Already this past week, IVHS has had three games against some tough competition and lost all three.

Coach Knight is confident that with more practices and time to prepare for games, the Cougars will be where they need to be when regular season games start.

"I have been working with these boys for the last five years and this year I have never seen them work harder," said Knight. "The boys are becoming more focused."

With this being Knight's first year as head coach, not only does he have a few inexperienced players, but he himself has had to learn the ropes as leading the pack. In the past, Knight was an assistant alongside longtime head coach Jeff Winters. Winters

had coached the Cougars for eight years, five of which Knight was by his side.

The Cougars had their first game Wednesday, Dec. 3 against longtime rival Hidden Valley while at home. IVHS fought hard during the first half of the game, but soon lost steam coming into the second half and were unable to hold the Mustangs back. Hidden Valley took the game with a final score of 82-29.

Not all was a lost, though. sophomore Andrew Sherier was the leading scorer with a total of 10 points. CJ Manning was not far behind with a total of five points, while teammate Triston Hostkoetter scored four. Skylar McLanahan, Tyus Tree and Trent Jensen each scored three points for the Cougars.

The Cougars hosted the North Valley Knights Friday, Dec. 5. Once again, the boys fought hard, but fell short of a win. The Knights took the game 81-26.

"We have seven players that get us off to a great start, but then the boys get worn out and fatigue sets in and we get tired in the second half," Knight said.

With only two weeks of practices under their belts before games began, and three games per week, endurance is a big issue. Knight is hoping to get the team through this next coming week

when things should start settling down and then really start to focus on getting the team's endurance up with strong practices.

With their closest game so far, IVHS missed taking the win by 18 points Saturday, Dec. 6 against Bandon while on homeport.

"It was a battle to the end. We had a long first week of games and we just fell apart near the end," Knight said. "Offensively we did a lot better, we still have to work on the defensive end."

The boys were able to keep pace with the Bandon Tigers for most of the game. Michael Weaver was able to keep the Cougars alive with 12 points on the board. While fellow teammates Skylar McLanahan scored 11 and CJ Manning put up four.

With three games behind the Cougars, and the pre-game jitters out of the way, Coach Knight is looking forward to the hard work and commitment each player shows every day at practices and during games. Knight knows that when league play comes around, all the kinks will be worked out and the Cougars can look forward to a successful season.

The Cougars were scheduled to compete against Prospect Charter at home Tuesday, Dec. 9.

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