

Blazing St. Mary's test Cougars mettle

Girls' basketball splits 2

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In their second meeting in four days due to schedule changes because of the earlier heavy snows, the Lady Cougars hosted the Rogue River Chieftains Tuesday. Rogue River secured the opening tip-off, but after that their luck ran out.

Illinois Valley's talented ball handler Aundrea Miller, played unselfishly, dishing out passes, getting assists for several scores before taking advantage of some open lanes and scoring a few herself. Two of those assists were knocked in by Courtney Scott in the first 20 seconds of the game. By the end of the first quarter, Aarika Brooks had scored eight, including two free-throws to make the score 21-4. In the second period, it was clear that the Cougars were hitting on all cylinders, making their shots and confounding the Chieftains with strong defense; it was 32-9 at halftime. In the third, the scoring was spread around with Bailee Moore getting the hoop and the harm for a 3-point play; the period ended at 48-12. In the final period, the scoring continued, even though coach Serena Barry gave some playing time and experience to her bench as she had earlier before halftime. Diamond Murphy made the final shot to end the game with Cougars 61, Chieftains 19. Scoring was as follows: Brooks- 16, Miller - 11, Scott-10, Roza Jonas-nine, Tori Johnson-nine, Moore-three and Murphy-two. The Cougar JV girls also won their game - 32-10.

Friday night, the visiting St. Mary's Crusaders were on fire. At the start of the game they blazed from 0 to 11 with a high shooting percentage. IVHS coach Serena Barry called a timeout and made some adjustments, and by the time sharpshooter Tori Johnson had hit a 3-pointer, the Cougs were only trailing by 3. Though the hometown

girls were drawing fouls, they were not converting at the freethrow line, like they had been recently, and the first period ended with the Cougars down 10-18. With a flurry of scoring in the second, the home team looked like they might salvage their Senior Night game, and at halftime, it was 34-31. In the third, the Cougars could only muster four points and with Johnson on the bench with four fouls, they could only keep pace with St. Mary's. Despite a valiant effort in the fourth quarter by Aundrea Miller and Johnson being back in for part of the period, they were still down. At the end of the fourth, Aarika Brooks made a shot to cut the lead to 8, but there were only 16 seconds left and the game ended with a score of 45-56. Miller was high scorer with 13, Johnson-12, Courtney Scott-nine, Brooks-seven and Bailee Moore-four.

The Lady Cougar's league record is now 5 and 2. The Cougars travel to Medford to play a big game with Cascade Christian Tuesday, Feb. 7, then at Bonanza for a nonleague game, Saturday, Feb. 11.

Cougars play hard, win 1 out of 2

Tuesday found the Cougars on their home court playing the Rogue River Chieftains. The first period found Skylar McLanahan missing shots early and Tanner Davis hitting a two and a three. With Cougars mascot prowling around the Ken Mann Gymnasium and the student body cheering their team on, the boys made up for lack of scoring with rebounds and defense, and the quarter ended tied at 10. In the second, the Chieftains reeled off six unanswered points before McLanahan found his range for a 3-pointer, and then a rebound and two points off Elijah Polk's free-throw miss, for the

lead 17-16. The second period ended 19-20 after McLanahan hit two free throws. In the third, McLanahan helped take the lead with a 3-point play on a foul, then Caleb Hess hit two free-throws to retake the lead by one with 2:24 left on the clock. McLanahan again hitting a shot to tie and Hess with a go ahead shot. Rogue River called a timeout trailing 30-35 and then pulled within two on a four-point play, then tied the game at 36. McLanahan then took over, shooting two free throws for the lead and building on that lead for the next four minutes with the help of Hess, who finished his scoring by tipping in a missed shot to make it 47-39, with two minutes remaining. After

some fine free-throw shooting by McLanahan, the game ended with a score of Illinois Valley 52 Rogue River 42. Scoring went: McLanahan-30, Hess-10, Davis-five, Polk-five and Cody Box - two.

The Cougars did their best to slow the St. Mary's Crusaders from Medford who had superior height and a deeper bench. By the end of the first quarter, they hadn't found an answer for the Crusaders' twin towers and the score was 6-12. The Cougars had more success with some adjustments by coach Matthew Knight and drew some fouls. They got within one point with three minutes left in the half, but the half ended with the Crusaders leading 28-

22. Though the hometown team gave it everything they had and made some amazing plays, the depth of the opposing team proved too much and the third quarter score was 30-43. The Cougars were only able to score seven points in the final period while the Crusaders continued to stretch their lead and the game ended with a score of 37-57. The hardest working man on the court, senior Skylar McLanahan, was high scorer for the Cougs with 16, Caleb Hess had 8, Bryce Bruner - seven, Elijah Polk - six, and Cody Box - two. The team will play at Cascade Christian Tuesday, Feb. 7, and then Saturday, Feb. 11 at Bonanza.



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Roza Jonas (left) along with fellow seniors Aundrea Miller and Tori Johnson Friday, Feb. 3 prior to their final home game at Ken Mann Memorial Gymnasium during Senior Night.

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