

Sports

3 back-to-back wins for Lady Cougars

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After a nine-day holiday break, the Illinois Valley girls basketball team is back at it again with three consecutive wins and just one loss, putting their overall record at 8-5. However, their first league game was a loss, putting that record at 0-1.



Aarika Brooks (No. 22) was high scorer for the Lady Cougars against Bonanza Friday, Dec. 29, with 12 points.

Returning to a home court with rested legs and lifted spirits after their previous victory against New Hope Christian, the Lady Cougars

played Bonanza Friday, Dec. 29, a team with an overall record of 6-5, and won with a final score of 39-31.

“As a team, we shot only 34 percent from the field so we missed a lot of shots,” said head coach Jonathan Valenzuela-Reece, “but we made them when we needed them.”

Leading the team in points and rebounds was Aarika Brooks with a double-double who scored 10 points and grabbed 12 rebounds. Bailee Moore was also on top of her game with 11 steals.

On Tuesday, Jan. 2, in the first game of the new year, the girls gave it to Glendale (0-12) like no other in another non-league game which ended with a mind-melting 93-11 victory for the Lady Cougars.

Top scoring players were Brooks with 32 points and 10 rebounds earning herself another double-double, Alexis Navarro with 20 points and Courtney Scott with 17; and as a team, the girls grabbed a grand total of 40 steals.

On the following day, Wednesday, Jan. 3, the girls traveled to Bandon to play the Tigers (1-11) for their final non-league game of the season and ended up with a 42-15 victory.

Brooks scored 15 points putting her on top once again, with 9 rebounds, leaving her just one shy of another double-double. The next highest point-earner was Moore who scored 10 points.

Next the girls played Friday, Jan. 5, for their first league game against Lakeview - a team with an overall record of 11-6 and a fresh new league record of 1-0 - with the final score resting at 32-49.

“They’re a tough one for our league,” said Valenzuela-Reece. “They’re very well coached. They have a lot of strength and you can tell.”

Top scoring Lady Cougar was Brooks with 13 points and 12 rebounds, earning that double-double and Navarro scored six points. Scott scored two points and grabbed six rebounds, holding the team together defensively.

With the official league now in full swing, the girls are set to play Bandon again at home Wednesday, Jan. 10, at 5:30 p.m. and then Friday, Jan. 12, St. Mary’s (3-11) comes to town to play the Lady Cougars at 5:30 p.m.

The boys also picked up three wins and one loss since the break, winning their first league game against Lakeview (5-12) with a final score of 62-30, giving them a league record of 1-0 and an overall record of 9-6.

The boys’ team will also be playing Bandon (5-7) Wednesday, Jan. 10 and St. Mary’s (5-10) Friday, Jan. 12 here at home. Both games are scheduled to begin at 7 p.m.



(Photos by Michelle Binker, Illinois Valley News)

Cody Box (No. 12) contributed 7 points to the Cougars’ winning score Friday, Dec. 29, at home against Bonanza.

IVHS football player given chance to compete Down Under

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

Dane Alvarez, a talented football player on the Illinois Valley High School (IVHS) team, was one of two students selected to represent Oregon in the Down Under Bowl, a competition held in Australia. The second student, Elijah Polk, declined the invitation. Alvarez, now a senior, has been playing football since he was six and plans to apply to South

Oregon University after graduation with the hopes of out shining the competition.

Alvarez returned to the Valley, after spending a handful of school years in Utah, as a junior. Unfortunately, his return came after the conclusion of the football season so he had to wait until senior year to compete on IVHS’s team. Alvarez plays as a running back and middle linebacker.

Some professional players

who’ve competed in the Down Under Bowl include Jake “The Snake” Plummer (Denver Broncos), Ahman Green (Green Bay Packers), Rob Morris (Indianapolis Colts), Dave Dixon (Minnesota Vikings) and Jesse Williams (Seattle Seahawks).

The event was founded in 1989 by George O’Scanlon, a New Zealand native, whose love of American Football led him in his mission to bridge the gap between the continents.

Since the trip is relatively costly, Alvarez unfortunately must raise money to pay for expenses. However, those who donate are eligible to submit a “thank you” raffle ticket to Down Under Sports. Should their name be drawn they’ll win either an all-expenses-paid-for-two trip to the Down Under Sports Competition in Australia or a five day cruise for two.

Those who’re interested in donating money to Alvarez’s

cause may do so online at <https://downundersports.com/payment/0690-2769-3264> or via telephone at 435-753-4732. Should Alvarez’s fundraiser fail to meet its quota, all money will be refunded to the donor but their respective thank you tickets will still be eligible for the raffle.

“I’m honored to be an ambassador of not only my community and state but also our country,” Alvarez said.

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