

Late free throws sink Astoria, 44-42

Seaside takes the Cowapa League title

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

The loss will sting for awhile, but the Astoria Fishermen were still "accenting the positive," following a dramatic defeat Thursday at the Brick House.

Valley Catholic's Avery Jones made two free throws with 3.1 seconds left to give the Valiants a 44-42 win, sending the Fishermen to their second-straight loss, and a second-place finish in league to go with it.

Still, "We're the No. 2 team out of the best league in the state, we're going to get a home playoff game against one of the lowest-rated teams, and we could have a home (state playoff) game, even though we're a No. 2 seed," said Astoria coach Kevin Goin, whose program will host a regional/state playoff game for the first time since the 2007-08 season.

"The opportunities are still there," he said. Still, what might have been ...

Astoria held the lead for the entire second half in Thursday's game (including a 34-28 advantage late in the third quarter), until Valley's Shankar Krishnakumar connected on a 3-pointer just feet from the Valley Catholic bench to knot the game at 42-42 with 59 seconds left in the fourth.

The Fishermen had two good looks at the hoop from close range in the final 40 seconds, until Derek Jarrett drew a foul with 26 seconds left.

Jarrett missed the front end of a one-and-one, and the Valiants took possession.

Valley Catholic worked the ball inside with five seconds to go, where two shots came up empty, but Jones drew a foul on the third, with 3.1 seconds remaining.

Jones made both free throws for Valley's first lead since the opening seconds of the second quarter.

And following a time out, the Valiants' came up big on the ensuing inbounds pass, tipping the pass to force a scramble for a loose ball. The Fishermen finally gained possession near mid-court, but a desperation 3-pointer was off the mark as time expired.

"We still did some good things," Goin said. "We had a wide open lay-in and short-armed it a little; we had free throws to win it and didn't put 'em in; and we didn't defend very well down the stretch.

"We didn't get to their shooters. We did a pretty good job on 25 (Andrew Plambeck) after the first quarter, but No. 5 (Krishnakumar) got hot."

Astoria had 7- or 8-point leads "a couple times, with the ball, and didn't make very good decisions on those possessions," he added. "Down the stretch we left (Krishnakumar) open numerous times. And you have to give it to him — he hit great shots. That comes back to haunt you in close games."

Jarrett led Astoria with 15 points, followed by Olaf Englund and Justin Fruiht with 10 apiece.

"We controlled the whole game, except for the fourth quarter," Goin said. "We didn't play our best, but played well enough to win, and that's where those details come in. That's the difference between winning and losing games."

Still — coming off a loss to possibly the best team in the state, "the kids responded well," he said. "It was a home game for a share of the league championship, and we did everything we wanted to — we just didn't take care of the details down the stretch.

"It sucks to lose those," he said. "We would have loved to have a league title or had that opportunity, so in that we're disappointed, but you have to accent the positive. We're the second-best team in the best league in the state.

"We're not scared of anybody. We've played tough games against tough teams,



Astoria's Derek Jarrett, No. 34, and Justin Fruiht, No. 23, react after Astoria's 44-42 loss to Valley Catholic on Thursday.



Jeff Ter Har/For The Daily Astorian

The Seaside boys basketball team, following their league title-clinching win over Tillamook.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Valley Catholic's Vlad Katin, No. 32, pulls down a rebound away from Astoria's Fridtjof Fremstad, No. 12.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Astoria's Kyle Strange, No. 2, drives to the basket around Valley Catholic's Shankar Krishnakumar, No. 5, in the fourth quarter.

and if you had told me we'd go 7-3 this year in league, I'd say that's pretty good."

Gulls 72, Cheesemakers 37

SEASIDE — Things were much less dramatic in Seaside, where the Gulls put their game away early, and finished strong to defeat Tillamook 72-37.

The Gulls had to wait for a final score from Astoria, then the celebration was on, as Seaside — which trailed the

Fishermen by one game in the standings with two games left — secured a spot in the Sweet 16 and will take the OSAA's No. 2 ranking into the state playoffs.

Seaside finishes the regular season 20-3 overall, their first 20-win season since 2011-12, when the Gulls won 26 and shared the Cowapa title with Scappoose.

Hunter Thompson had his second-straight 20-point game for Seaside, which led



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Astoria's Kyle Strange, No. 2, attempts to get a steal from Valley Catholic's Shankar Krishnakumar, No. 5.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Astoria's Justin Fruiht, No. 23, drives to the basket during the basketball game against Valley Catholic Thursday.

46-20 by halftime.

Jaxson Smith added 15 points for the Gulls, who had 10 players in the scoring column.

Loggers 36, Bobcats 33 CLOVERDALE

Nestucca swept Knappa during the league season, but the Loggers won the only game that really mattered Thursday, posting a 36-33 win over the Bobcats to advance to the Northwest League tournament.

Knappa will play Life Christian at 3:30 p.m. Saturday at Dayton High School.

Dale Takalo and Colton Weirup combined for 25 of Knappa's 36 points, and the Loggers overcame a rough third quarter to hold off the Bobcats in the fourth.

Defensively, Knappa's Mitch Geisler, Michal Goodman and Ethan Rubus held Nestucca's Brett Elder to just six points, after averaging 18 points per game.

Jason Miller added a big all-around game for the Loggers, finishing with seven points, 11 rebounds, seven assists and six steals.

Girls Basketball Valiants 58, Lady Fish 36

Senior Night did not go as planned for the Astoria girls basketball team, as Valley Catholic left with a 58-36 win over the Lady Fishermen, in a

Cowapa League regular season finale at the Brick House.

Astoria was within striking distance of the ninth-ranked Valiants in the first half, trailing 25-15 at halftime.

But Valley Catholic went on a 10-3 run in the opening minutes of the third quarter, then closed it out with an 11-2 run midway through the second half.

The Valiants (7-3 in league) finish second behind Banks and tied with Seaside, while Astoria (4-6) takes fourth and will play a Regional Play-in game, place and time to be announced.

Astoria seniors Mykka Abrahams, Chloe Hunt and Taylor Mickle were all in the starting lineup, and helped the Fishermen to a quick 4-2 lead.

The Valiants answered with a three-point play by Molly Danielson, and Mady Moore and Jessi Beyer added 3-pointers to help Valley Catholic take the lead for good.

Danielson had 18 points for the Valiants, while freshman Samantha Hemsley scored nine points off the bench for Astoria, which struggled from the field in the first half (5-of-28), and finished 2-of-16 from the 3-point line.

Hunt had 17 rebounds and Kaylee Mitchell added 10 boards for the Lady Fish.

SCOREBOARD

PREP SCHEDULE

TODAY

Swimming — OSAA State Meet, Mt. Hood CC, TBA

Wrestling — District 1/4A Regionals, Crook County, 10 a.m.

SATURDAY

Boys Basketball — Life Christian vs. Knappa, 3:30 p.m., at Dayton HS

Swimming — OSAA State Meet, Mt. Hood CC, TBA

Wrestling — District 1/4A Regionals, Crook County, 10 a.m.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Valley Catholic 44, Astoria 42

VC (44): Shankar Krishnakumar 14, Jones 10, Plambeck 6, Katin 5, Parthasathy 3, Welsh 2, Haggerty 2, Robbins 2.

AST (42): Derek Jarrett 15, Englund 10, Fruiht 10, Palek 3, Strange 2, Arnstorf 2, Fremstad.

Valley Catholic 10 11 10 13—44
Astoria 12 12 10 8—42

Seaside 72, Tillamook 37

TIL (37): Ian Collett 12, Berge 10, Johnson 5, Oldenkamp 4, Maloney 2, Mendez 2, Moore 2.

SEA (72): Hunter Thompson 20, Smith 15, J.Januik 9, Babb 7, Eagon 5, Hoekstre 4, Marston 4, Lewis 4, Olson 2, C.Januik 2, Cazarez, Westerholm, Thompson.

Tillamook 13 7 8 9—37
Seaside 20 16 28 8—72

Knappa 36, Nestucca 33

KNA (36): Dale Takalo 13, Weirup 12, Miller 7, Severson 2, Rubus 2, Geisler, Goodman.

NES (33): Raymond Jackson-Cruz 8, McKillip 7, Elder 6, Nix 4, Morgan 4, Strober 2, Zeller 2.

Knappa 7 16 4 8—36
Nestucca 6 11 5 11—33

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Valley Catholic 58, Astoria 36

VC (58): Molly Danielson 18, Beyer 14, Nguyen 5, Mannen 5, Kawaguchi 4, Flemmer 4, Moore 3, Jones 3, Duyck 2.

AST (36): Samantha Hemsley 9, Hunt 7, Mickle 6, Mitchell 5, Wallace 5, DeMander 4, Dalton, Rogers, Abrahams, Gimre.

Valley Catholic 11 14 17 16—58
Astoria 7 8 12 9—36

Seaside 45, Tillamook 29

SEA (45): Sydney Villegas 16, Utti 9, P.Ideue 8, Westerholm 6, J.Ideue 4, Trott 2, Babbitt, Brown, West.

Tillamook 10 9 9 5—29
Seaside 7 16 14 8—45

Gulls 45, Mooks 29

SEASIDE — Seaside's string of league championships came to an end, but the Lady Gulls still finished strong, ending the regular season with a 45-29 win over Tillamook Thursday at Seaside.

Valley Catholic and Seaside (both 7-3) will play a tie-breaker Tuesday at Clatskanie (time to be announced) for the Cowapa's No. 2 and 3 seeds.

The Gulls trailed after one quarter Thursday, but took command by outscoring Tillamook 30-14 over the second and third quarters.

Sydney Villegas scored 16 points to lead the Gulls, followed by Maddi Utti with 9 points, five rebounds, five assists and four steals.

Ilwaco 50, Onalaska 29

The Ilwaco girls continue to steamroll the playoff opposition, as the Fishermen cruised past Onalaska Wednesday, 50-29.

Ilwaco advances to play Wahkiakum at 8 p.m. tonight, in Rochester.

A win will put Ilwaco in a game Saturday for the No. 3 or 4 seed; a loss will have them playing for fifth or sixth.

Hannah Ellsworth and Makenzie Kaech scored 16 points apiece to outscore Onalaska in Wednesday's game, in which Ilwaco built a 24-12 halftime lead.