

Columbians sweep past Warriors

By GARY HENLEY
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Breana Edwards and the Rainier volleyball team set the tone early, then did just enough to hold off Warrenton in all three games Thursday as the Columbians scored a sweep over the Warriors, 25-18, 25-21, 25-9, in a Lewis & Clark League match at Warrenton.

Edwards, Rainier's big junior middle blocker/outside hitter, had blocks at the net for the first three points of the match, sparking the Columbians to an 11-2 lead in Game 1.

The Warriors kept it fairly even from there, at least for the first two games.

"Yeah, we lost in three, but I was proud of our girls for not backing off," said Warrenton coach Jim Hackwith, whose team lost for the first time in

league play. Rainier improves to 3-0.

"The way it started didn't look good for us, but we didn't get scared," he said. "I was proud of the way we played. It was a good match to see where we're at."

Even after falling behind 11-2, the Warriors battled back to within 20-18, off three kills by Landree Miethe, and a big block by Katelynn Blodgett on Rainier's Kyla Howell.

But Howell came back with a couple of ace serves, and the Columbians scored the final five points of Game 1.

Warrenton rallied from a 5-1 deficit in Game 2, and grabbed a brief 9-8 lead with the help of a kill by Claire Bussert off a set from Sierra Lyons, the only lead of the night for the Warriors.

Rainier responded with three straight points, and never trailed again.

Edwards blocked Miethe for a point, had a jump-serve ace and later added a kill from the back row.

Game 3 was all Rainier, and most of it Edwards, who had more ace serves, more blocks, and back-to-back power kills that served as the exclamation points to close out the match.

Lyons was 10-for-11 serving, Miethe had six kills and Bussert added 10 digs for the Warriors.

Sophomore Morgan Blodgett finished with three blocks and Bussert had four kills for Warrenton, which takes part in the Vernonia Tournament Saturday.

Elsewhere, Portland Christian (3-1) defeated Oregon Episcopal (3-1), putting the Columbians into first place in the league standings.

The Warriors won two of three games in the junior varsity match, 25-22, 25-18, 11-15.

Oracle: 'These settlements are very challenging to resolve'

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the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland, includes only \$35 million in actual cash. Of that, \$25 million will go to legal costs. The other \$10 million will go toward science, technology, engineering and math education in public schools, to be branded as "Oracle STEM Education Grants."

The state's \$105 million valuation of the settlement also includes \$60 million in free customer service support for yet-to-be-obtained Oracle software.

State officials were expected to notify the federal government of the settlement Thursday, Brown said. Brown declined to answer a question about whether the state will be required to give any of the settlement money to the federal government.

"We received a very limited amount of cash as you will see; the cash is \$35 million," Brown responded. "These settlements are very challenging to resolve, and all of the parties had to do some give and take in order to resolve the matter."

The federal government contributed \$305 million for Cover Oregon. But federal officials may find it hard to recoup any part of the settlement's ostensible value. Not a penny of the amount will go to repay the state for the \$240 million it paid Oracle in connection with the project, or reimburse the state for any of the related damages cited in the state's lawsuit against Oracle.

Kristen Grainger, a spokeswoman for Brown, said the settlement was "carefully" and "creatively" constructed to let Oregon

keep as much of it as possible, hopefully the whole amount.

"We are hopeful that (the federal government) will see that the needs of consumers are met," she said.

Sharing the blame

Under the agreement, neither side admits liability or wrongdoing. It also calls for a close working relationship between the two sides.

Besides the \$35 million in cash and \$60 million in customer support, the settlement also includes a six-year licensing agreement that would allow the state to get free software to upgrade some of its information technology systems.

The expansion of the state's relationship with Oracle represents a major departure from state officials' past representations that the company provided flawed software, did shoddy work and engaged in unethical, even criminal, business practices. In fact, the state's lawsuit had asked a judge to ban Oracle from ever doing business with the state again.

Asked whether the state could entrust its IT systems to Oracle after the Cover Oregon failure, Brown said she was confident in the company's expertise around business enterprise software.

Oregon House Minority Leader Mike McLane, R-Powell Butte, said Thursday that the settlement "marks the end of one of the most embarrassing chapters in Oregon's history."

"While Oracle clearly made mistakes, there is no escaping the fact that the state, too, shares blame for the failure of

Cover Oregon," McLane said. "From the very beginning, the project was mismanaged and wracked by the failures of our bureaucracy."

It appears that Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum and her attorneys had felt the \$6 billion lawsuit was worth much more than Oregon eventually settled for. Contract ledgers show the state has paid more than \$15 million to outside lawyers in connection with the case, which does not include other state costs.

Her side had obtained internal Oracle emails that would not look good in court, or in the national media. One company employee said that the company had been "raping" the state. An expert Oracle troubleshooter said the company's work in Oregon was so poor that the employees responsible should be publicly "flogged."

The state's lawyers in court said they'd obtained other documents showing that Oracle knew its software products could not provide the services it had promised while trying to win the Oregon contract.

David Friedman, a Willamette University College of Law professor who has been sympathetic to Oracle's arguments in the case, said "I really do think this is a win-win. The state is getting a substantial amount of services and value from Oracle ... and Oracle can say 'Hey look, we're not racketeers, we're not fraudsters.'"

Tough talk is normal in a case like this, but, "They're skipping off holding hands now through the wildflowers," he said, "essentially back in business with one another."

Flagpole: Old one was rotten

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operations during the slow winter months. To recoup the cost, the group has launched a public fundraiser on YouCaring.com.

The Northwest Civil War Council, which uses the fort for its annual re-enactment over Labor Day weekend, has already pledged \$1,000 toward the flagpole replacement.

Park ranger John Koch said the old flagpole was rotten and broken when a crew took it down last week. Over the past few years, park rangers would only fly a much smaller flag on the aging pole.

"It was just a matter of time until a stiff breeze would knock it over," Koch said.

Along with being too weak, the old flagpole was built in the late 1990s with guy-wires, commonly used on ship masts to steady the pole. The wires often damaged flags as they flapped in the wind.

The new flagpole, the third to be built at the Civil War-era earthen fort, stands straight up with no wires sticking out on the top.

"We did not go for the mast idea because there is always danger of the flag getting tangled in it," Lindstrom said.

In addition, the park does not plan to fly the Garrison flag in the winter to keep it pristine. The flag, valued at more than \$2,000, was donated years ago.

Park ranger Roger Stone — one of the rangers who raises the flag in the morning, and takes it down in the afternoon — said he has been impressed all week seeing the massive flag up at the fort. He stood in awe when the Stars and Stripes went back up for the first time last week.

"I think you could probably go across the river to Washington, some place along the shore and actually see this thing," Stone said.

School: Building is in tsunami zone

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Coaster Construction general contractor John Nelson quickly walked through the gymnasium on behalf of the city to roughly estimate the cost of making it habitable and up to code. The cost of interior and exterior renovations, including a 25 percent contingency, would be about \$371,000.

"We know very roughly what it would potentially cost," Kucera said. "It's yet another thing for you to consider as we move forward with this."

The \$450,000 cost to

purchase the property, and \$250,000 to demolish the building and restore the lawn, were included as placeholders in the city budget. Instead of demolition, restoring the gymnasium could be an option.

The estimate does not include other costs, such as operating the building, adding restrooms and making aesthetic improvements. Operating costs could be about \$50,000 a year.

"For this project, I would envision probably spending the contingency plus," Public Works Director Dan Grassick said.

Despite costs and the build-

ing's location in the tsunami zone, Kucera said there might be value in investing in the space for the community.

Mayor Sam Steidel said the city could decide what to do with the gymnasium after purchasing the property.

Councilors, who should decide by the end of the year, discussed how the building could become a viable asset for the city and the possibility of residents raising funds for a project.

"Once it becomes occupiable, then you have the potential for fundraising," Steidel said.

Council seat: Candidates recognize lack of housing options is an issue

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Students, he said, need "a place to work and study and have other activities to promote their education."

Jones, who also did not pick sides in the renovation versus rebuild issue, called himself "a big proponent of having a great library."

"If you're an unemployed guy who doesn't have a computer and can't pay his phone bill so he can't use it, and you need help with job hunting, you go to a good library and you can get someone to help you with writing a resume, and you can do online courses, correspondence courses, and you can apply for jobs," he said.

"And if you're a child — of which there are many in this community that live in houses where there are no books and the parents don't read — you can go to the library and develop literacy with people that are volunteers, that read to kids and help them with their reading if they're behind," he continued. "And literacy is an essential element of being prepared to enter the workforce eventually, and you doom people to remain in poverty for generation after generation if they don't have literacy."

Housing

Both candidates recognize that the lack of housing options on the North Coast is a pressing issue without easy fixes.

"I think, at some point, you have to really decide: Is it a significant enough issue that we're willing to go ahead and make some tough choices that will make some people unhappy?" Jones said.

Though Jones said he needs to learn more about the problem, "I kind of feel like there's no solution that's going to put more than a little dent in the housing situation that doesn't

involve adding some high-density housing of some form, whether it's duplexes of triplexes, or whether it's apartment buildings or boarding houses or condos."

He is fully aware, however, that "you can't propose building anything in Astoria bigger than a cottage that doesn't generate some controversy."

Pederson believes councilors must balance the need for "a healthy and growing town" with the need to maintain the charm. He wants the council to consider bringing more non-profits into discussions of the housing crunch.

Earthquake preparedness

On the topic of the Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, Pederson said the issue is "huge" and should be taken seriously. Emergency preparedness, particularly the measures recommended by the state, should be aggressively practiced and promoted, he said.

"This is one area, if it were to get hit, it's going to get hit really bad," he said.

Pederson said cities should be able to provide more opportunities to learn what to do during and after a seismic event.

Jones said local disaster readiness is a responsibility shared among residents, schools, Columbia Memorial Hospital, local government agencies, the police and fire departments, the Coast Guard, major employers and, yes, the City Council.

"What the City Council can do is just ensure all those groups are meeting (on) some sort of periodic basis, and setting some goals and objectives for preparedness," Jones said, adding that "there's no pot of money anywhere to do this."

"I don't think we're pre-

pared now," he said. "And I don't think that's anyone's fault. It's just ... It is what it is. And I think that we need to just keep the awareness level high and encourage people to go out and buy equipment."

Goals and qualifications

Jones said he is not running for City Council because of any particular issue, or because he has an agenda to push.

"I just think that I have qualities that would make me a very effective city councilor," he said. "I'm very interested in the city and the city's future. I'd like to be part of looking at all of these complex issues and fairly assessing them, listening to community input, working with my fellow city councilors and city staff to come up with balanced solutions that'll make improvements and make Astoria a better place to live."

Admitting that he is a bit of a policy wonk, Jones — the former chief of strategic analysis for the Coast Guard in Washington, D.C. — said, "I like looking into the future and developing strategies and trying to take complex pieces that aren't necessarily fitting well together and figure out how we can make something happen productively."

Pederson said his experience in negotiating his union's contracts, and his history of building orchestras on the North Coast from the ground up, will translate well to the City Council.

He wrote in a statement: "The future of the city demands community leadership that is cognizant of the challenges we face, understands the choices that are made which directly affect our assets and opportunities, and of this being done with an ambience of respect and consideration towards a shared goal."

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Schedule of events:

2pm Opening Remarks, City Councilor Zetty Nemlowill

3pm "Making the Most of Your Medical Appointment" by Foot & Ankle Surgeon Dr. Michael Murdock

4pm "Health Coaching: Put your plans into action" by Venus Fromwiller, Health Coach


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