

# SPORTS

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## Late basket topples Loggers

By **GARY HENLEY**  
*The Daily Astorian*

IMBLER — For the second game in a row, the Knappa boys basketball team managed to erase a big halftime deficit ... only to come up short on the final score.

Imbler held a 34-21 halftime lead in the Class 2A first round state playoff Friday, lost their lead in the fourth quarter, but then regained it for an eventual 51-49 win over the Loggers.

A steal and layup by Imbler's Brandon McGilvray with 55 seconds left was the game-winning score for the Panthers, who held on for the two-point victory.

Imbler (18-2 overall) advances to Pendleton for the second year in a row, and will face Santiam in a Thursday quarterfinal.

Knappa's season comes to a close at 18-9 overall, one win shy of a trip to the tournament. The Loggers would have been the fourth team from the Northwest League to secure a spot in Pendleton.

As it is, the NWL will have three teams among the final eight, as Columbia Christian, Life Christian and Vernonia all advanced with victories Friday.

The Loggers led very early in Friday's game, 4-2, and did not lead again until the closing minutes, when a layup by Ethan Rubus gave Knappa a 49-48 lead.

In between, Imbler built leads of 18-9 after one quarter and 34-21 at halftime, highlighted by a 3-pointer from 30 feet at the buzzer by Trayse Riggle to end the first half.

"We shot extremely poor in the first half, especially the first quarter (4-for-15)," said Knappa coach Chris Spencer. "And (the Panthers) were shooting at a tremendous clip. The biggest problem was that we were getting good looks and missing, and they were coming back down and hitting 3-pointers."

Imbler was 6-of-8 from beyond the arc in the first half.

Like they did last week in vs. Columbia Christian in the league tournament, the Loggers rallied, with a 3-pointer from Colton Weirup trimming the lead to 42-38 late in the third period.

Knappa tied the game twice in the fourth quarter before taking the lead on a score by Ethan Rubus with 1:20 left.

The Loggers had possession and the lead with a minute remaining, when McGilvray had a steal near the top of the key, drove the length of the floor, scored and drew the foul for a three-point play.

Knappa had one final shot at a tie, but a tough turnaround jumper by Dale Takalo along the baseline missed.

"We cranked it up in the third quarter, turned them over several times and we were scoring on fast breaks," Spencer said. "The big thing was that Imbler only had one team foul with 1:15 left, so they were able to foul us without putting us on the line. We had a lot of close calls go against us."

"But hats off to Imbler," he said. "I'm proud of our guys for fighting and staying in it. That's a tough environment to play in and we had some adversity with some of the calls. Our kids managed to overcome that and we still had the lead with a minute left."

Timber Engblom led Knappa with 14 points, while McGilvray had 20 for the Panthers.

"We'll lose some seniors and my assistant coach (Jed Mieth), who gave us three outstanding years," Spencer said. "For the guys coming back, we will try to get better and hopefully learn how to win more of these big games."

## Win pushes Ilwaco's Lady Fish to state



Damian Mulnix/For The Daily Astorian  
**Ilwaco's Makenzie Kaech passes out of a defensive double team by Raymond during the fourth quarter of the Lady Fishermen's regional playoff win.**

By **DAMIAN MULNIX**  
*For The Daily Astorian*

CHEHALIS — With less than three minutes left to play in the game and holding a double-digit lead over rival Raymond, Ilwaco's Makenzie Kaech and Madeline Jacobson were on the floor, wrestling for a loose ball. They won the tussle, kicked a pass out to an open Ebby McMullen who drilled a three point shot, essentially sealing the 2B girls regional playoff win Saturday at W.F. West High School in Chehalis, 57-37.

Despite knowing that they would still advance to the state tournament in Spokane later this week regardless of the outcome, the Lady Fishermen came out looking to make a statement after being eliminated the last two years in the regional round. Fac-

ing their Pacific League rivals for the fourth time this season, the Gulls were able to hang around for the first half. But by the midway point of the third quarter the Lady Fishermen took control of the pace of the game with their grind-it-out style of defense. By the fourth quarter, the Gulls seemingly had little left and soon IHS was off to a 20-point win.

Ilwaco — who are seeded fifth in the state tournament — earned a first round bye at state with the win and will play next in the quarterfinals, Thursday at 3:45 p.m., against the winner of a first round game between the #14 seeded Walla Walla Valley and #6 Saint George's.

Kaech led the team with 21 points, followed closely by McMullen with 20. Jacobson and Eliza Bannister added seven points each.



Jeff Ter Har/For The Daily Astorian  
**Seaside's Maddi Utti takes on Junction City's starting five and scores in first-half action Saturday.**

## ON TO SWEET 16 FOR LADY GULLS

*The Daily Astorian*

SEASIDE — The Seaside Lady Gulls pronounced themselves "state tournament-ready" Saturday night, following a decisive 57-33 win over Junction City in a Class 4A girls basketball Regional Play-in game.

Seaside must win one more game to officially qualify for the tournament, but the way the Gulls played Saturday, they're looking far beyond just the final eight.

The Gulls (17-4 overall) earned the No. 9 seed to the Sweet 16, and will play at No. 8 seed Molalla (14-6) March 4. The winner will play either Cascade or Cottage Grove in a state tournament quarterfinal (March 9, 1:30 p.m. at Forest Grove High School).

Seaside coach Mike Hawes called it a "good win. The girls were ready. Ugly fourth quar-



ter, but sometimes that happens. Gonna be a tough one at Molalla."

Tied 7-7 in the opening minutes of Saturday's game, Seaside took off on a 32-0 run for a 39-7 halftime lead, and the Gulls had all the points they would need to win.

Seaside was forcing turnovers at will in the first half (18), while Maddi Utti scored 19 of her game-high 23 over the first two quarters.

Teammate Sydney Villegas finished with 17, as the two seniors combined to outscore the Tigers by themselves.

Villegas sparked the big 32-point run for the Gulls with a jump shot. Utti scored several times off steals and Gretchen Hoekstre scored twice on offensive rebounds. Emy Kiser added a 3-pointer, and Seaside outscored the Tigers 17-0 in the second quarter.

Junction City scored the first basket of the second half, before the Gulls reeled off a 16-5 run for their biggest lead of the night, 55-12.

The Tigers outscored the Seaside reserves 19-2 in the fourth.

In addition to her 23 points, Utti had eight rebounds, six steals and six assists. Villegas had seven rebounds, and the Gulls finished with 19 steals.

## Loss to Taholah eliminates Naselle boys

By **DAMIAN MULNIX**  
*For The Daily Astorian*

TUMWATER — After losing the league and district titles to Taholah over the last few weeks, the last team the Naselle High School boys likely wanted to see in their 1B regional playoff last Saturday were the Chitwins. The Comets kept it close in the first

quarter, but by halftime were down 21 points, as Taholah easily eliminated the Comets from the 1B playoffs, 76-47.

Despite the deficit, and a poke in the eye that had him sidelined for part of the third quarter, Donny Edwards was dynamic at both ends of the court for Naselle, leading the team with 19 points. Antonio Nolan added 10.

With less than five minutes to go

before racking up their fourth straight double digit win over the Comets, the Chitwins showed questionable sportsmanship, with a breakaway dunk attempt (which was missed) and an alley-pop off the backboard (which they also missed).

The Comets finished the season 14-10 and placed second in the league and the district tournament.

## Naselle girls bullied out of the playoffs

By **DAMIAN MULNIX**  
*For The Daily Astorian*

TACOMA, Wash. — Poor shooting and a physical mismatch led to a regional-round exit from the 1B playoffs for the Naselle High School girls basketball team Saturday in Tacoma.

The Comets, who did not convert

a field goal for nearly two quarters, had a hard time matching up against the bigger Neah Bay Lady Red Devils, who had a deep bench and seemed willing to play rough if it meant a trip to state, which they got with a 58-39 win.

The Comets did not score a basket from around the 6-minute mark in the first period until the 3:37 mark in

the third — their 13 points in between came by way of free throws.

Sophomore Taylor Gudmundson led the Comets with 9 points, followed by Ellie Chapman and Lilli Zimmerman with 7 each. The Comets finished the season 16-7, and went 12-0 in Coastal League play, where they were the league champs, and placed second at district.

## Local wrestlers have tough time at state

*The Daily Astorian*

PORTLAND — Clatsop County had just three wrestlers competing in this year's OSAA State Tournament, held Friday and Saturday in Portland.

Team champions included Culver (2A/1A) and Nyssa (3A), while Sweet Home edged Crook County by a half-point to win the team title at the Class 4A level.

Knappa's Andrew Goozee won his quarterfinal match Friday, but then lost two straight matches to wrestlers from Culver in a tough 195-pound (2A/1A) bracket.

Goozee wrestled less than a minute on Day 1, when he pinned Ben Crabill of Myrtle Point in just 44 seconds.

But for the first time all season, Goozee was on the losing side in his first match on Saturday.

No. 2 seed Jaiden Jones of Culver scored a 48-second pin over the No. 3 seed Goozee. Jones lost a 7-3 decision in the championship bout to Cord Flynn of Heppner/Ione.

Bumped into the consolation half of the bracket, Goozee ran into another tough Bulldog from Culver, sophomore Cylus Hoke, who scored a 6-5 decision over Goozee. Hoke eventually finished third.

Wrestling in the 285-pound bracket at the Class 3A level, Warrenton junior Beau Reynolds opened with a loss (49-second pin) to Riverside's Ruben Villa in Round 1, then lost a consolation match by fall (:26) to Keegan Cook of Willamina.

In the Class 4A portion of the meet, Astoria's Kaden Gilbert lost by fall (1:55) to Cole Facchini of Yamhill-Carlton in the first round at 182 pounds.

But Gilbert reversed his fortune with a pin (1:56) over freshman Joseph Carrion of Hidden Valley in consolation and scored a major decision (12-2) over La Grande's Spencer Gerst.

North Marion's Matt Carrillo ended Gilbert's run with a 17-7 major decision over the Astoria sophomore.

## SCOREBOARD

### BOYS BASKETBALL

<b>Imbler 51, Knappa 49</b>
<b>KNA (49):</b> Timber Engblom 14, D. Takalo 11, Weirup 8, J. Miller 6, Rubus 6, E. Takalo 4.
<b>IMB (51):</b> Brandon McGilvray 20, Whitaker 8, VanLeuven 8, Riggle 7, Tritchka 6, McDonald 2.
<b>Knappa 9 12 17 11—49</b>
<b>Imbler 18 16 8 9—51</b>

<b>Taholah 76, Naselle 47</b>
<b>Naselle 10 14 8 15—47</b>
<b>Taholah 20 25 15 16—76</b>

### GIRLS BASKETBALL

<b>Seaside 57, Junction City 33</b>
<b>JC (33):</b> Madison Mehlbrech 13, Bruhn 6, Chappell 5, Ohman 4, Evans 2, Hernandez 2, Fox 1.
<b>SEA (57):</b> Maddi Utti 23, Villegas 17, Hoekstre 5, Ideue 4, Kiser 3, Garhofer 3, Babbitt 2, Smart, Bodner, Falleur.
<b>Junction City 7 0 7 19—33</b>
<b>Seaside 22 17 16 2—57</b>

<b>Ilwaco 57, Raymond 37</b>
<b>Ilwaco 14 15 9 19—57</b>
<b>Raymond 10 14 11 4—37</b>

<b>Neah Bay 58, Naselle 39</b>
<b>Naselle 9 9 4 18—39</b>
<b>Neah Bay 14 16 14 14—58</b>