

SPORTS

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Loggers chop down Oakers, 53-50

Engblom erupts for 29 points in win

By **GARY HENLEY**
The Daily Astorian

The state tournament win that the Knappa Loggers ordered last year finally arrived Thursday afternoon, as they opened the 2A boys' state tournament in Pendleton with a 53-50 quarterfinal victory over Oakland.

Knappa was the No. 3 seed entering last year's tournament, only to suffer a 52-50 upset at the hands of No. 11 seed Vernonia.

In their return to Pendleton, the Loggers (21-8 overall) built a solid third-quarter lead and made just one field goal in the fourth, but still held on for the victory. The Oakers finish with a 25-3 record.

"I'm just really proud of how the kids battled," said Knappa coach Paul Isom. "Beating a team like Oakland with a coach like Jeff Clark is a hell of an accomplishment."

Knappa's Timber Engblom poured in 29 points, and the Loggers cut down the Oakers in another postseason game. Knappa is 4-0 against Oakland in state playoff competition since 2014 (2-0 in football, one win each in baseball and basketball).

Now it's on to the Final Four in basketball, where the Loggers will face a familiar foe, Columbia Christian, for the fourth time this season.

Meanwhile, the Oakers made Knappa work for Thursday's victory.

A dunk by Oakland's Colton Brownson highlighted an 11-6 run to start the game for the Oakers.

The Loggers recovered quickly, however, with baskets from Ty Vanderburg, Kanai Phillip and Eli Takalo, and Engblom's score off a turnover gave Knappa a 14-11 lead.

Another turnover and basket by Engblom made it 16-11, and Engblom's third straight score gave the Loggers an 18-11 lead to complete a 12-0 run to end the first quarter.

In the second period, a flurry of five 3-pointers (two from Knappa, Mason Westerholm and Devin Hoover) and six straight missed free throws by Oakland resulted in a 28-28 halftime tie.

More Oakland turnovers and scores by Engblom gave Knappa a 43-33 advantage late in the third quarter, but Oak-



Knappa junior Eli Takalo goes up and under Oakland's Colton Brownson for a reverse layup.

Photos by Kathy Aney/East Oregonian



Knappa's Joe Ramvick drives to the hoop.



Knappa's Timber Engblom, right, rises above Oakland's Jacob Brooksby for two of his game-high 29 points.

land didn't fold, rallying to within 45-42 midway through the fourth.

The Loggers responded with Engblom scoring following a timeout. Takalo made two

free throws with 2:49 remaining, and Engblom's layup with just under two minutes left made it 51-42.

Still, the Loggers struggled at the free throw line (4-for-10

in the fourth quarter), while a pair of 3-pointers by the Oakers helped Oakland cut the deficit to 53-50 with 27 seconds left.

Oakland missed a 3-point attempt in the final seconds, and Takalo dribbled out the remaining time for the win.

"I knew Oakland wasn't just going to roll over and they didn't," Isom said. "They hit some big shots, but our kids just kept fighting. Timber obviously was awesome. Every time Oakland wanted to make a run Timber made a play."

The Oakers struggled with 19 turnovers and 10 missed free throws (5-for-15).

Engblom also had five steals defensively with seven rebounds, and teammate Joe Ramvick had a team-high eight boards.

Naselle falls to familiar foe at state tourney

Comets have chance to advance to trophy round

By **PATRICK WEBB**
For The Daily Astorian

SPOKANE, Wash. — It was déjà vu for Naselle.

Coming into the WIAA state basketball game against Almirra-Coulee-Hartline, the Comets could be forgiven for remembering the last football season. The Warriors had unceremoniously trounced Naselle 82-28 in the 1B semifinal.

Thursday, without any pads and helmets, the same student athletes from ACH won 54-37 to advance to the basketball semifinals.

The loss doesn't end Naselle's season, however.

Next up is a 2 p.m. game Friday against Oakesdale, with the winner advancing to a consolation final to determine fourth- and sixth-place trophies.

Naselle had reached the second round of this week's tournament with a 54-51 win over Garfield-Palouse, a victory which caused Comet fans to bite their nails through the fourth quarter.

Thursday's matchup started with some promise. ACH defenders began the game crowded around their basket,



Patrick Webb/For The Daily Astorian

Sophomore Colby Glenn dribbles toward his Naselle teammate, junior Corey Gregory.

allowing senior Jacob Eaton, junior Corey Gregory and senior Cole Dorman to sink consecutive 3-pointers.

Each swish was followed by roars from the loyal Naselle cheering section. That joy, and the Comets' small lead, did not last long, however. ACH had clawed back to lead 14-13 as

the quarter ended.

The seventh-ranked Warriors have five players above six feet tall and their physical presence soon kicked in. Last fall's quarterback nemesis, senior Maguire Isaak and freshman Reece Isaak — who is two inches taller than Maguire — were simply commanding.

Crusaders outlast Warrenton in state quarterfinal

The Daily Astorian

A Final Four appearance just wasn't in the cards for the Warrenton Lady Warriors, in their return to the Class 3A girls basketball state tournament.

A little foul trouble for the Warriors, coupled with a long scoring drought that lasted nearly eight minutes, helped No. 2-ranked Salem Academy gradually pull away for a 42-26 win late Thursday night at Marshfield High School.

The Crusaders advance to the semifinals, where they will face Blanchet Catholic Friday night, while the No. 7 seed Warriors drop into consolation and will play Vale in a Friday morning game.

"We came out and executed our game plan really well for three quarters," said Warrenton coach Robert Hoepfl. "Claire Bussert did a great job and led us throughout, Kenzie Ramsey did an incredible job, and Adriana Dejesus held their best player and one of the top guards in the state to five points through three quarters."

Warrenton also held the lead for the majority of the first half in Thursday's game.

Melia Kapua had a 3-pointer to highlight a 9-8 first quarter for the Warriors, and 3-point bombs from Claire Bussert and Kenzie Ramsey had Warrenton in front 16-11 midway through the second.

On the down side, Warrenton post Fernanda Alvarez picked up her third foul early in the second period, and the Warriors were called for their seventh team foul minutes later.

And that kept the Crusaders in the game. With layups by Grace Brown and Kirsten Koehnke, Salem Academy turned a 19-13 deficit in the second quarter into a 28-19 lead midway through the third.

The 15-0 run stunned the Warriors, who still managed to battle their way back into the game, even after being outscored 6-2 in a low-scoring third period.

Bussert closed the third quarter with a jump shot, then opened the scoring in the fourth with a 3-pointer that had Warrenton within 30-24.

But Salem Academy answered with another momentum-building run, this time a 12-2 dash to close the game.

Back-to-back scores by Koehnke upped the Crusader lead to 36-24 with 3:15 remaining, before Alvarez scored Warrenton's last hoop at the 3:06 mark, as the Warriors were held to just seven points in the second half.

Bussert scored 16 of Warrenton's 26 points, while Brown had a monster game for the Crusaders, scoring 18 points with 20 rebounds and four assists. Koehnke added nine points and nine boards.

"Obviously the foul trouble hurt us, and then they made that run right before half to take the lead," Hoepfl said. "They're obviously a great basketball team and deserved to be (in the Final Four). They might be the best team in it, and I wouldn't be surprised to see them win it."

He added, "we'll try to bounce back against Vale (today). They gave Blanchet Catholic a great game, so they're a very good team. I'm proud of our team — it's bittersweet, because we wanted to win a state championship, but it's March and we're still playing, so here we go. Hopefully we can finish strong."

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE TODAY

Boys basketball — 2A state tournament: Knappa vs. Columbia Christian, 1:30 p.m.
Girls basketball — 3A state tournament: Vale vs. Warrenton, 10:45 a.m.

SATURDAY

Girls basketball — 4A state playoffs: Seaside at Baker, 4 p.m.; Marist at Astoria, 7 p.m.
Boys basketball — 4A state playoff: Sisters at Seaside, 7 p.m.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Knappa 53, Oakland 50
 Knappa (53): Timber Engblom 29, Eli Takalo 9, Ty Vanderburg 4, Devin Hoover 3, Kanai Phillip 3, Mason Westerholm 3, Joe Ramvick 2, Tristin Wallace.

Oakland (50): Colton Brownson 12, Austin Madden 8, Triston Mask 8, Noah Strempel 8, Jacob Brooksby 6, Hunter Reynolds 6, Zach Cummings 2, Chandler Miller, Ethan Roberson.
 Knappa 18 10 17 8—53
 Oakland 11 17 8 14—50

Field goals: Knappa 22-54, Oakland 18-48. 3-point FG: Knappa 2-11 (Hoover, Westerholm), Oakland 9-23 (Brownson 2, Strempel 2, Mask 2, Reynolds 2, Brooksby). Free throws: Knappa 7-15, Oakland 5-15. Fouls: Knappa 15, Oakland 15. Fouled out: None. Assists: Knappa 6 (Phillip 3), Oakland 8 (Strempel 3). Rebounds: Knappa 36 (Ramvick 8), Oakland 34 (Brooksby 8). Steals: Knappa 11 (Engblom 5), Oakland 9. Turnovers: Knappa 16, Oakland 19.

Moda Players of the Game: Timber Engblom (Knappa), Colton Brownson (Oakland).

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Salem Academy 42, Warrenton 26
 Warrenton (26): Claire Bussert 16, Fernanda Alvarez 4, Kenzie Ramsey 3, Melia Kapua 3, Maria Heyen, Adriana Dejesus, Aylee Miehle, Sagi Diego.
 Salem Academy (42): Grace Brown 18, Kirsten Koehnke 9, Chloe Campbell 5, Chloe Baker 4, Jamie VanderStoel 4, Kayla Bauldree 2, Annabelle Brawley, Tristin Brabson.
 Warrenton 9 10 25—26
 Salem Academy 8 14 6 14—42

Field goals: Warrenton 11-41, Salem Academy 17-50. 3-point FG: Warrenton 4-19 (Bussert 2, Ramsey, Kapua), Salem Academy 1-6 (Campbell). Free throws: Warrenton 0-4, Salem Academy 7-14. Fouls: Warrenton 15, Salem Academy 7. Fouled out: Warrenton, Diego. Assists: Warrenton 3, Salem Academy 9 (Brown 4). Rebounds: Warrenton 25 (Alvarez 7), Salem Academy 43 (Brown 20). Steals: Warrenton 9 (Bussert 3), Salem Academy 7 (Brabson 2). Turnovers: Warrenton 14, Salem Academy 12.

Moda Players of the Game: Claire Bussert (Warrenton), Grace Brown (Salem Academy).