

SPORTS

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'TOUGH, TOUGH YOUNG WOMAN'



MADDI UTTI

Was recently named to the all-Mountain West women's basketball team. She was on the conference's all-freshman team last season.

Fresno State University

No sophomore jinx season for Seaside's Maddi Utti

By NEIL BRANSON
 For The Daily Astorian

LAS VEGAS — After watching five Pac-12 women's tournament basketball games over three days, I took in the Fresno State vs. University of Nevada-Las Vegas quarterfinal in the Mountain West Conference tournament.

Best game ever.

And I say that as — after the Fresno State game — I caught the Gonzaga Bulldogs, the then-No. 1 men's team in the national, play Pepperdine.

Maddi Utti, a four-year stalwart for the Seaside girls basketball team, is in her sophomore season for the Bulldogs of Fresno State.

When I caught my first glimpse of Utti during the team warmups, I thought "Maddi has spent some time in the weight room."

My judgments connected to the question I posed to Marci Utti, Maddi's mother, when I asked what her thoughts were on her daughter's time and success at Fresno.

Marci's first response was a non-verbal expression of pride in Maddi. I could see it in her eyes and a pause to catch her breath and gather her thoughts.

"Maddi has worked really hard," she said. "Being a college student-athlete is very demanding and she has stepped up in every facet of her studies and basketball."

Mom is very thankful that her daughter is in a program with excellent coaching that is demanding and caring.

"Maddi has grown in so many ways beyond basketball, as the team is required to engage in community service, participate in kid's camps and meet with team boosters," she said.

Prior to making the trip to watch Maddi, I contacted her two high school coaches, Wally Hamer and Mike Hawes.

They both had words of praise for her relentless work ethic, natural abilities and team focus.

Said Hamer, "Maddi, since she was little, had the ability to make everyone around her better. She has always been a great competitor and passed that on to her teammates."

Women's basketball is a tough

See Utti, Page A7

Astoria falls to Clatskanie in opener

The Daily Astorian

Clatskanie's two-run second inning was the difference Thursday, as the Tigers posted a 2-1 win over Astoria in a nonleague softball game at Clatskanie.

It was the season opener for the Lady Fishermen, who scored their lone run on a two-out rally in the top of the fourth.

Sophomore Emma Biederman had a two-out triple, then scored on a base hit by freshman Tenley Matteucci.

Clatskanie pitcher Shelby Blodgett allowed six hits, with 11 strikeouts and three walks. Astoria stranded eight baserunners.

Julia Norris went the distance in the circle for Astoria, giving up four hits with four strikeouts.

Alexis Smith had a double and Olivia Sprague had a triple for Clatskanie.

The Fishermen have home games Tuesday and Wednesday against Yamhill-Carlton and North Marion, respectively.



Vicki O'Brien

Astoria pitcher Julia Norris allowed four hits in a Thursday loss at Clatskanie.

Knappa walks over Naselle, 10-0

The Daily Astorian

Knappa scored three runs in the bottom of the first, then erupted for seven in the bottom of the fifth for a 10-0 win over Naselle, in a cross-river baseball battle Thursday afternoon.

With 40 straight wins going back to the 2017 season, the Loggers are now tied with Argyle High School of Argyle, Texas, for the nation's longest high school baseball win streak.

Argyle's win streak recently ended at 40, so Knappa can take over the country's longest win streak with a victory Monday at Clatskanie.

"We're just 2-0 this year," said Knappa coach Jeff Miller. "We know we're probably going

to get drilled when we go to Arizona (March 25-26, when the Loggers are scheduled to play teams from California and Colorado, against schools with over 2,000 enrollment). But you have to play the good teams to get better."

Knappa took advantage of 13 walks in Thursday's win, including five in the first inning. The Loggers had six hits off multiple Naselle pitchers.

Tristin Wallace pitched all five innings for Knappa, allowing two hits and a walk with nine strikeouts.

Wallace and Eli Takalo each scored two runs, while Wallace reached base four times, after reaching five times the day before in a win at Warrenton.

Gladstone edges Astoria with late rally

The Daily Astorian

Tied 5-5 going into the sixth inning, Gladstone scored three runs in the bottom of the sixth on its way to an 8-6 win over Astoria in a nonleague baseball game Thursday at Gladstone.

Astoria's Burke Matthews had a double in the top of the seventh

for a run, but the Gladiators were able to record the final out with two Fishermen on base.

Will Reed started and pitched a solid four-and-a-third innings for Astoria.

The Fishermen return to action Friday at home (5 p.m., Tapiola Park) against North Marion.

SCOREBOARD

PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE TODAY

Baseball — North Marion at Astoria, 5 p.m.; Nestucca at Warrenton, 4 p.m.

Softball — Seaside at Gladstone, 5 p.m.; Nestucca at Warrenton, 4 p.m.

Track — Astoria at Cotton Invitational, 4:30 p.m.; Seaside at Grant, 4:30 p.m.

Seaside baseball tournament

Friday-Sunday
 (at Broadway Field)
 Friday's schedule

11:15 a.m.: Tillamook vs. Hockinson

1:30: La Center vs. Ft. Vancouver

3:45: Seaside vs. Corbett

6:00: Hoquiam vs. Centralia