

# GOLDEN EAGLES: Free throws help establish lead in second quarter

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With the Nixyaawii-heavy crowd giving them a standing ovation, the realization that they were about to be state champions finally sank in.

"It was cool, it was different," said Stewart of the feeling. "Like at districts it was way different. It was a bigger crowd (at state) and a lot of people came and supported us from different areas. It was cool."

"It was a crazy feeling because we finally knew that we did it," said senior Stacy Fitzpatrick, who finished with eight rebounds to go with four points. "We accomplished something that we've been trying to get to all year, and to know we actually got it is crazy."

Fitzpatrick said the undefeated season was never a goal, and junior Kaitlynn Melton said she needed to be reminded that the team had also pulled off the incredibly difficult task of winning all 27 games it played this season.

"That wasn't even a thought until after the game," said Melton, who finished with 10 points and eight rebounds. "Somebody came up to me and said, 'Undefeated.' And it's like, 'Oh yeah we are!' We don't think about it. We just go and do our thing."

Going into the state bracket, the list of potentially derailments for the Golden Eagles was extremely short. One thing that had to be added after some late season struggles at the line, though, was free throw shooting.

But the Golden Eagles were solid at the line all week, and came into the game shooting 17-of-27 at Baker High School. And on Saturday it was the Golden Eagles' free throw shooting that established their lead and kicked off a 26-9 second quarter that sucked all of the drama out of the second half.

Country Christian (22-8) was handing with Nixyaawii through a first quarter that had six lead changes, but when the Cougars opened the second quarter shooting 1-for-7 from the field the Golden Eagles made their move.

Despite seeing their own shooters hit a cold spot as well, the Golden Eagles were able to get to the line and double the lead over the first three minutes. Milan Schimmel (14 points, 7 rebounds, 3 steals, 2 assists), Melton and Stewart combined to go 6-of-8



**MAIN PHOTO:** Ernia Butler (30), of Nixyaawii, launches a shot over County Christian's Mollie Lewandowski (4) during Saturday's 1A OSAA championship game in Baker City. **TOP RIGHT:** Nixyaawii head coach Jeremy Maddern takes his turn cutting down the net after his team beat the Cougars. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Nixyaawii's Milan Schimmel smiles for a selfie with her sister Shoni Schimmel and the 1A Championship trophy.

on free throws during the stretch, and Stewart added a three-pointer as the lead grew to 25-12 with 5:08 left in the first half.

"We've had games where we haven't shot well at the free throw line, but we had some ice in our veins tonight," said Maddern, who also coached the team to its other state title in 2011. "It was just a great effort by all the girls."

Country Christian finally started to hit some shots, but by then the Golden Eagles had fully worked through their pre-game jitters and shot 6-for-8 from the field in the final three minutes to take a 42-19 lead at halftime.

"It's a big thing, we couldn't let our community down, basically," Melton said of the pressure coming into the game. "We were nervous. ... But that also pushed us to do better."

Nixyaawii shot 15-for-32 (46.9 percent) in the first half, including 3-for-6 from three-point range, and was 9-of-11 at the line.

"That first half is probably the best ball I've seen in 20 years," Maddern said. "We executed everything perfectly with our game plan. The girls shot the ball well, I'm just proud of this group of kids. We worked hard, we rotated some younger kids in this game for the height and they played out of their minds as well. We did some meditation before the game, and I'll probably do that every game after the way we played tonight."

The Golden Eagles didn't let up after halftime.

"We went out there and the score was zero-zero," said Melton. "That's what we go out every game, so we were treating this game like

any other game."

Country Christian saw its shooting percentage drop after halftime and finished 16-for-67 (23.9 percent) from the field. The closest the Cougars came in the second half was when Mollie Lewandowski scored a putback with 2:12 left in the third quarter to make it 52-30. Trisatlynn Melton answered with a bank-shot at the other end, Schimmel came up with a steal and fast break, and then Stewart found Fitzpatrick for a layup to close out the frame with a 58-30 lead.

Nixyaawii finished the game shooting 27-for-67 (40.3 percent) and was 11-for-13 at the line.

The Golden Eagles also kept the Cougars from gaining an advantage on the glass and were out-rebounded just 49-45.

"We executed, and we defended them the way we should have," Stewart said. "(Maddern) had a plan and we stuck to it. ... For this game we needed to rebound, and that's what we did."

Country Christian had its final lead of the game on a Lewandowski putback that made it 10-9 with 3:15 left in the first quarter. That lasted about 30 seconds until Schimmel hit a pair of free throws to put Nixyaawii back on top, and then stole the ball and passed to Stewart to finish the fast break. Stewart hit a three-pointer with 1:51 left to make it 16-10 and close the first-quarter scoring.

Debby Grandle led the Cougars with nine points and Lewandowski finished with seven points and 13 rebounds. Sarah Phillips added seven points and 10 rebounds.

The Golden Eagles graduate just two players from their title run — Fitzpatrick and starting center Sunshine Fuentes, who wasn't credited with a block in the score sheet but made a habit of altering shots against the Cougars.

"Mary (Stewart) told me before the season started that she was going to get the rings for me, make sure I got it for my senior year," Fuentes said. "It was kind of sad for a little bit, knowing I won't be able to play for this community again, but it was a good feeling knowing that we won."

CC	10	9	11	9	39
NCS	16	26	16	10	68

COUNTRY CHRISTIAN — D. Grandle 9, M. Lewandowski 7, S. Phillips 7, J. Griffith 5, A. Farner 4, K. Halverson 2, J. Warrington 2, K. Sandberg 2, S. Ross 1, H. Fincher, E. Casterline.  
NIXYAAWII — M. Stewart 34, K. Melton 14, S. Fuentes 10, S. Fitzpatrick 4, T. Melton 4, E. Butler 2, S. Fuentes, A. Tonasket, S. Patrick, T. Broncheau, E. Looney, K. Mountainchief.  
3-pointers — CC 2; NCS 3. Free throws — CC 5-14; NCS 11-13. Fouls — CC 13; NCS 13.

## HONKERS:

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No. 12 Arlington (22-8) finished in fifth place after making its first final bracket since 1987.

Hauner, a second-team all tournament selection, scored a game-high 16 points for the Honkers, but after she connected from deep off a pass from Joely Patnode to make it 34-28 with 7:24 play the Honkers were 0-for-6 from the field with a pair of missed free throws and four turnovers before Hauner was able to stop their dry spell with a jumper with 2:29 left.

Carlee Morton had seven of her 10 points during the critical stretch, and Anna Hutchings and Vollarreal each scored 12 to lead Adrian (25-4). Villarreal added four steals as the Antelopes pressured the Honkers into 23 turnovers.

Hauner finished with a double-double and added 10 rebounds, two blocks and two steals to her state line. Hannah Davidson and Sara Grady came off the bench to chip in a combined 11 points, but Arlington shot just 11-for-40 (27.5 percent) from the field in the game and was 13-of-26 at the free throw line.

Adrian didn't shoot the lights out in the field or at the line, but was able to sink five three-pointers and finished just better than the Honkers at 16-of-47 (34 percent) shooting and made 13 of 33 freebies.

The game was tied just once at 2-2 after Shelby Collins connected from close range for the Honkers, but Arlington never let Adrian get comfortable

with its lead during the first three quarters.

A jump shot by Davidson pulled Arlington within four at the end of the first, and when Adrian extended the lead into double digits in the second quarter it was Emily Kirby and Hauner with buckets to bring the lead to nine going into halftime.

The closest Arlington came in the second half was when Collins hit the front end of a pair of free throws to make it 25-20 with 5:01 left in the third.

Adrian went on a 9-2 run capped by a three-pointer by Villarreal to give the game its largest lead to that point at 34-22 with 1:23 left in the third.

Hauner scored the next six points spanning the quarters to bring Arlington within 34-28, and that was as close as they got.

Morton answered with a jump shot right away, then Lauren Barraza added a free throw and Shyanne Allaire connected in the paint to make it 39-28 with 6:12 to go. The lead never dropped back below double digits.

Arlington will lose six seniors to graduation including Hauner, Collins, Patnode, Raleigh McClure, and Andrea Galvin.

ARL	8	8	9	11	36
ADR	12	13	9	16	50

ARLINGTON — M. Hauner 16, H. Davidson 6, S. Grady 5, S. Collins 4, E. Kirby 3, J. Patnode 2, R. McClure, K. McClure, E. Erskine, A. Galvin.  
ADRIAN — A. Hutchings 12, S. Villarreal 12, C. Morton 10, S. Allaire 8, L. Barraza 2, M. McLay 2, Su. Speelmon 2, G. Nichols 1, M. Bayes 1, E. Nielson, G. Morton, Sa. Speelmon, R. Young.  
3-pointers — ARL 1; ADR 5. Free throws — ARL 13-26; ADR 13-33. Fouls — ARL 25; ADR 23. Fouled out — S. Collins, R. McClure, E. Kirby (ARL), A. Hutchings

## TIGERS:

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put Santiam on top 53-50 with 2:21 left and keep them on top for good.

Downey finished with 15 of his game-high 33 points in the fourth quarter on 4-6 shooting and 4-5 at the free throw line.

For Stanfield, the Tigers offense simply fell flat in the fourth. The team made just 4 of 13 shots in the quarter and couldn't get any bounces to fall their way.

"I think we were a little stagnant," Sperr said of his team. "We just didn't quite get ball movement and movement in general like we typically do. I don't know exactly, we probably should have had them more prepared."

Stanfield had a chance to tie at the game at the end, however Ryan Bailey's off-balance 3-pointer clanked off the rim as the buzzer sounded, sending the Wolverines and their fans into pandemonium.

Grogan was Stanfield's leading scorer with 16 points to go with eight rebounds, but the rims were not being kind to the 6-4 senior as he made just 4 of 17 shot attempts, many of which bounced in and out. Behind Grogan, Monkus had 10 points and a pair of banked-in 3-pointers, which helped earn him one of the two Player of the Game honors.

While Sperr admitted afterwards that it may take a while for the team to accept being runner-up, he knows the season that the Tigers put together and finishing second out of 42 schools in Class 2A is a tremendous accomplishment.

"It was an incredible season and these guys worked their tail ends off to get here," Sperr said. "They deserved the opportunity and then took it and gave it all they had and just came up a tiny bit short. I couldn't have asked for a better group of guys and they'll go a long ways in life and I'm excited to watch that."

### ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

**First Team**  
Simeon Hess, Western Mennonite; Jonah Downey, Santiam; Julian Downey, Santiam; Zeke Quinlan, Life Christian (unanimous); Dylan Grogan, Stanfield (unanimous).

**Second Team**  
Joel Snyder, Oakridge; Ryan Bailey, Stanfield; Clay Sullivan, Vernonia; Brett Elliott, Vernonia; L. Dalzell, Columbia Christian.

SANT	14	12	11	20	57
STAN	17	13	14	10	54

SANTIAM — Ju. Downey 33, Jo. Downey 21, A. Fawcett 2, N. Butler 1, J. Fawcett, R. Nicot.  
STANFIELD — D. Grogan 16, T. Monkus 10, J. Garcia 9, B. Woods 6, T. Flores 6, R. Bailey 4, E. Angel 3, J. Galarza.  
3-pointers — SANT 5, STAN 4. Free throws — SANT 14-19, STAN 12-16. Fouls — SANT 16, STAN 20. Fouled out — T. Monkus (STAN).

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**TOP:** Stanfield's Dylan Grogan shoots the ball in the Tigers' 57-54 loss to Santiam in the class 2A basketball state championship game Saturday in Pendleton. **BOTTOM:** Stanfield's Jose Garcia shoots the ball guarded by Santiam's Austin Fawcett on Saturday in Pendleton.



Staff photos by E.J. Harris