

# EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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## YVC looks to rebuild with help from Echo's McCarty

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East Oregonian

**E**CHO — You'll have to forgive Yakima Valley College women's basketball coach Robin Andrea if he gets a little excited when he talks about Faith McCarty.

The Echo High School sharp shooter and all-round talent will be a key player as the Yaks look to rebuild their program.

"The thing that really jumped off to me about Faith is her toughness," Andrea said. "It jumps off the court. It's more than the contact that she takes or delivers, it's her physical strength and toughness and resiliency when things don't go your way. That toughness really rings true. I couldn't get her on the phone fast enough."

McCarty was drawn to Yakima Valley because Andrea is starting from the ground up.

"They are building a whole new program, instead of me going into a program," she said. "When I talked to him, he was determined to get me there. His offense is a ball-screen offense, which is something I really like."

McCarty, who plans on majoring in business management and agriculture business, also is looking forward to a fast-paced game at the college level. In Oregon, there is no shot clock in high school, which tends to slow down the game.

"Oregon needs a shot clock," McCarty said. "The game goes so much faster and is so much more intense. When I watch my cousins Katelyn and Ellie (Heideman) play at Hermiston, it's so much faster."

YVC plays in the Northwest Athletic Conference East with local schools Blue Mountain Community College, Columbia Basin College and Walla Walla Community College.



EO Media Group, File

**Faith McCarty of Echo pushes her way in during the Oregon School Activities Association 1A State Championship quarterfinals at Baker High School on March 3, 2022. McCarty is heading to Yakima Valley College in the fall to continue her education and play basketball.**

Andrea took over the Yakima Valley women's program coming out of the pandemic. He inherited a team of players, many who have moved on. He retained a couple of players off the team, but is bringing in a whole new squad.

"We are not leaving any stone unturned," Andrea said. "We have a 6-1 international post player from France coming in. She played a year at a junior college in Texas. We also have players coming from Florida and Arizona. We are bringing in top people."

McCarty is looking forward to being part of the foundation of YVC's program.

"I think it is going to be so much fun," she said. "We are all going

to be a team of freshmen except for a couple of girls. I'm excited. I think there will be a lot of positives coming out of the program. We are starting fresh."

In her senior season at Echo, the 5-6 McCarty averaged 17.5 points a game, along with seven assists and five steals, and was named to the Big Sky League first team.

At the 1A state tournament, McCarty averaged 15.7 points, 2.7 assists and 2.3 steals a game, and was named to the all-tournament second team.

Echo (19-6) won the district title and finished sixth at state, winning its first state trophy since placing second in 1995.

"She will be a 2 in our system,

and a secondary ball handler," Andrea said. "There are aspects of her game she will have to work at."

Having to play every position on the floor is not one of them.

"She is so tough, mentally and physically, and she is willing to work hard to get better," Andrea said. "We can put her in a position to do what she can do while we work on other things. If she has to play inside, I have done a poor job of recruiting."

McCarty also talked with Umpqua Valley Community College near Roseburg, and Walla Walla Community College.

"I really liked the style of play at Umpqua Valley, but it was a little too far," McCarty said. "I

was considering Walla Walla for a long time. When I went there for a workout, my shot was off and nothing was going right. I had some good conversations with (coach) Bobbi (Hazeltine). I didn't know if I would fit in. They have a very strong program and you have to be disciplined. After my workout at Walla Walla, it opened my eyes. It was a lot different than high school."

### A solid foundation

McCarty has been playing basketball since the second grade. She played Amateur Athletic Union ball with her cousin Katelyn Heideman until the eighth grade, with her uncle Aaron Heideman coaching their teams.

"He taught me literally everything I know," McCarty said of her uncle. "I played middle school and AAU basketball. The coaches appreciate you coming into high school knowing your fundamentals."

Andrea likes that McCarty's game is solid.

"That's why her toughness popped out at me," he said. "She can step up and take the open shot. The other side is when you get to know her. There is a strength of character. She is confident and mature. There is a different kind of person who holds herself accountable, and is able to get that respect from her teammates."

McCarty is one player who is not afraid of hard work. She works on the family farm, and helps her grandpa.

"I work for my dad cutting hay, wheat and different grasses," she said. "We are pretty busy. I have been doing this since I was like 13. With extra rain we've had, you have to rake the grass two or three times before you bale. That's where my work ethic comes from, being raised on a farm."



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