

# Basketball, college and a strong spirit:

## Equipped with these, a tribal member's son is poised for success

By Oscar Johnson, Staff Reporter

**D**allas Husak has got the ball in his court and is running with it. Son of Grand Ronde tribal member Kenneth Husak, his 36 inch vertical jump, 14 point game average and tenacious love for basketball won him top team honors at Milwaukee High School and first team Three Rivers League honors last season.

After recovering from a knee injury two years ago that left some wondering if he would ever play again, Dallas Husak made a stellar comeback allowing him to pick from nearly a dozen college scholarship offers and sign with Lane Community College in Eugene.

"Everybody starts off at a similar point," says the hoopster, recalling that when he took up basketball in fifth grade he was far from impressive. "But I kept sticking with it and now it's paying my tuition for college."

At 6-foot-6, the 18-year-old highpoint/wing forward for the LCC Titans says he averages 10 rebounds per game in addition to scoring record that seems to be getting better and better.

A strong player with a proven knack for scoring three-pointers from outside who is also not afraid to muscle inside for a slam-dunk, Dallas Husak says his strength is that he is a "well rounded player."

"A lot of people can either play outside or inside," he says. "But I can play both."

He chose Lane Community College because he liked the team's coach, Jim Boutin, who he says also seemed to be well connected to the world of college basketball. Although for the time being his career plans are a toss up between marine biology or a physicians assistant, Dallas Husak admits "it would be nice to play pro ball."

But for now the young rookie has a lot of work ahead of him according to Boutin.

He says Dallas Husak "will play some this year" but he is more enthusiastic about what the up and coming rookie's game will look in a year or two, after he has spent his first college season building up strength.

Boutin says in his 31 years of coaching he has developed an eye for spotting a good ball player and he thinks young Husak has the right stuff but warns that what seemed strong in high school may not be strong enough in college without a lot of hard work.

"There's a huge comparison between high school and college," Boutin says. "The guys in college are much more physical, stronger and bigger. Dallas has to make up some ground."

But this is not the first time in the up and coming ball player's career that he will have to meet a tough challenge.

He showed dazzling perseverance after tearing a knee ligament while playing for the Milwaukee Mustangs during his high school sophomore year.

The injury required intensive surgery that included removing and grafting a tendon; inserting

metal screws to hold the joint in place; and five months of painful physical therapy.

But by the starting season of his junior year — months before his doctor thought he would be ready to play again — Dallas Husak was showing up for practice and showing signs of speedy recovery and an amazing comeback.

He ended the year with an average score of 5.6 points per game but by the following year his average jumped to 13 and now, nearly two years later, an injury that would still worry most is the furthest thing from his mind.

"The knee is doing great. It hasn't given me any problems — to me it's just another knee," he insists.

What inspires this hoop-shooting star?

"My dad used to play basketball," Husak says.

He also says the support he gets from his

parents and grandparents have helped a lot. However, passing on the inspiration to other youths also seems to motivate the young star the most.

"I guess I'm kind of a positive role model. After a good game kids come up to me and say 'good job,'" he says. "When I was a little kid I used to remember every dunk and how it was done. Now a lot of little kids come up to me after the game and I'm sure they will remember too."

As Dallas Husak gears up for the Nov. 27 pre-season Southwest Tip Off Tourney in Roseburg, there seems to be no stopping him now. And proud fan and father, Kenneth Husak, hopes more members will get a chance to see his son in action.

"I'd like to express encouragement for all young Native American students that are involved in sports programs," says Kenneth Husak, who encourages fellow members "to turn out and support others who are making a difference."

And if you do get a chance to see the promising rookie and find yourself asking 'how does he do that,' the answer is easy.

"Stick with your goals, don't give up and keep trying," says Dallas Husak. "Because some day it will pay off."



Photos courtesy of the Clackamas Review



Dallas Husak during one of his many games for Milwaukee High School.