

Lady Bulldogs Streak Cut Short

■ The Willamina Girls' basketball team finished seventh in the state this year. They were co-champs of the West Valley League, but in the end, they lost a close one to the defending and eventual state champs.

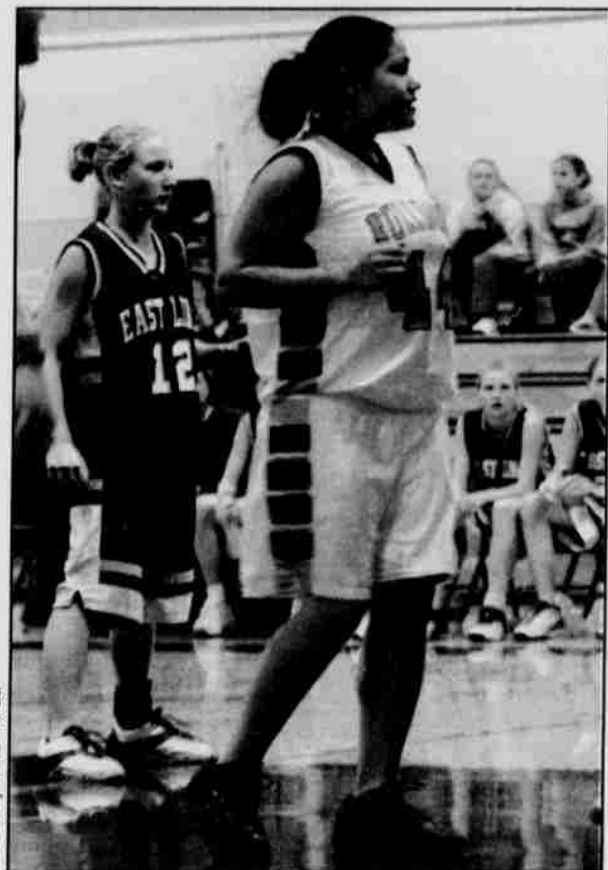


Photo by Peta Tinda

Tribal Member Janel Lara

By Ron Karten

"It was such a huge team effort," said Jerry Grant, Coach of the girls' basketball team at Willamina High School this year. "We went 25-4. We were co-champions of the West Valley League. We finished seventh in the state in the last 2-A Coaches poll. It was a great season. It really was."

The Lady Dawgs competed through the second round of the state playoffs, hitting a brick wall in the name of the Myrtle Point Bobcats, last year's defending champs and this year's winners.

And even at that, the Dawgs "played them tough," said Grant. "With a minute and a half left, they were up by four. We had to foul and they made their free throws."

"They're big. They play tough defense. They have a good outside game and a good inside game. You can't concentrate on any one thing. We concentrated on their outside game and they went inside. We concentrated on their inside game and they went outside," said Grant.

Tribal member and post Caitlin Zimbrick, a

senior this year, was named to the First Team All West Valley League and the *Statesman Journal's* All-Region Girls Basketball Team.

"It was such a huge team effort," said Grant. "The nice thing about our team, we had 10 players who could play. Ten kids contributed to our success. We brought up a freshman (Brandi Shell) at the end of the season, and she did some great things for us, too."

The team will see seven players return next season. "Looking at what other teams are bringing back," said Grant, "the chances of us repeating as league champs is pretty good. We can set our sites higher to get to Pendleton next year. I have a chance to work with them over the summer. Two years working with them instead of just one year will make a big difference."

"For me to come in my first year and have the kind of kids we had was really a dream come true," he said. ■



For One Tribal Member, A Great Way To End Her High School Career

By Ron Karten

"It was like our first time going to state," said Caitlin Zimbrick. "Last year, we were one game away. We played Dayton. They beat us. This year, the game determining whether we go to state was Dayton again, and we beat them. That was kind of cool."

Zimbrick was a leader for the team all year, according to her coach, Jerry Grant. "It's hard to single anyone out," he said, "but she just did a great job."

"I think everyone did really well," said Zimbrick. "We knew last year we'd return with the same players. (We didn't have any seniors last year.) Everyone really just stepped it up this year."

"I was pretty excited because I was a senior and we ended up going to state."

Zimbrick is weighing her options for college next year, but doubts she'll play basketball. "Maybe volleyball. Maybe track, too. Right now, I'm leaning toward Chemeketa (Community College) to play volleyball, or maybe Linfield (College).



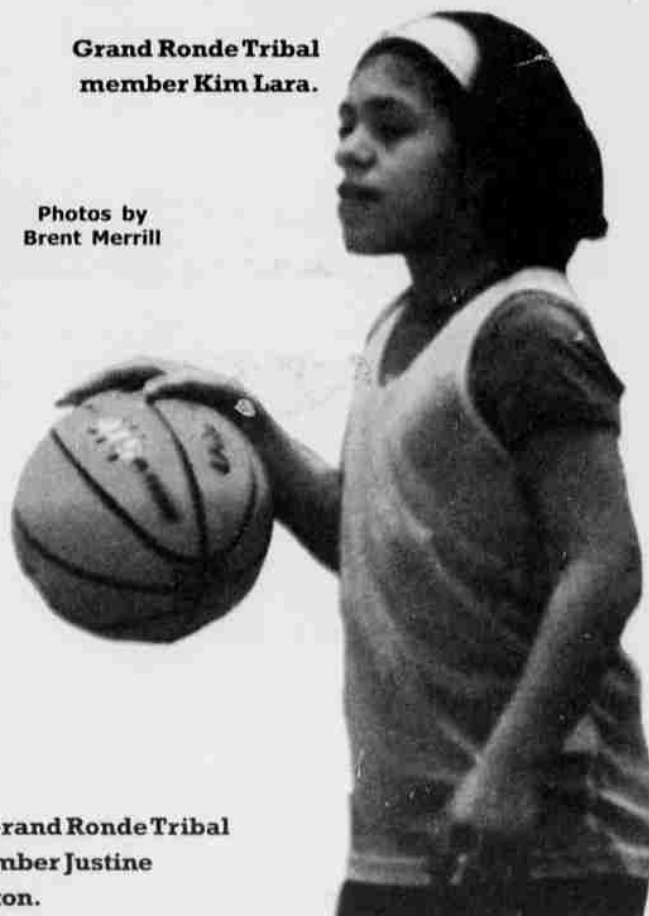
Photo by Peta Tinda

Tribal member Caitlin Zimbrick (14)



Grand Ronde Tribal member Kim Lara.

Photos by Brent Merrill



◀ Grand Ronde Tribal member Justine Colton.