

**Playoffs** from 1B

the end, it was a hell of an effort and I'm proud of the

boys." JJ Neece had a monster game, leading with 21 points, followed closely by Nate Neece's 20-point per-

formance. Justyce Wierichs also had an impressive 17 points against the Warriors. "And freshmen Kody Wierichs had two big threes," Wolgamott added. "I tell him, you have to take that shot if you're open. Even if you miss it, at least you look like a threat. And he was a threat tonight. I was proud of him." Wolgamott gave special praise for Justyce and Neece, both seniors playing their last home game before playoffs. "I'm happy for them finishing out that way," he said. "Nate played his best game of the year with Justyce on attack mode, they played smart. I'm really proud of them for keeping their composure. That's a big thing we've been working on." They were particularly smart when it came to fouls, with both seniors playing with three each at half time — then four the rest of the game. "They survived it, but it

did take away from them being aggressive at times," Wolgamott said. "I saw them give up a layup or two there. I told them if it's between you getting your fifth foul or them getting a layup, let them get the lay up until crunch time. We have to have you for the game, and they were able to do that." As for the few things the team had to work on, there were lapses defensively. "[Siletz'] 3-pointers really hurt us tonight," Wolgamott said. "You take a few of those away, and we win. That's a lapse on our coverage. You have to recognize the shooters and not let them have open threes." With that said, the Sailors were still playing their best basketball of the season. "Talking, communicating, looking with your head up, being willing to make that extra pass," Wolgamott said. "It's not about scoring now, it's about finding that person and taking pride in rebounds and assists. That's

what you want for a team, to be peaking at the end of this year. It's not going to be easy, but I'm confident in our ability, especially watching what we did tonight." Last week, Wolgamott was expecting to end up in third place, playing No. 3 to go to the championship game. "But now Siletz and Mowhawk are tied for first," he said. "That bypasses everything and they just meet in the championship game now." Which also means that the playoff game Feb. 22 will be do-or-die situation for the Sailors. "It's win and you're at state, basically," Wolgamott said. "If we play the way we played tonight, I think we have a great shot. But we just have to keep the same intensity." The opponents will be either McKenzie, Eddyville Charter or Crow. "I think combined, we're 5-1 against those teams. But

they're going to be in that game for a reason and we have to take them seriously. I'll be thinking about this one all weekend, but that's what a coach does." Between the boys playing at peak performance on Thursday, along with the girls winning an historic quadruple overtime game, Wolgamott said he was proud to be a part of Mapleton basketball. "I don't remember the last time Mapleton had an evening of basketball like this. It was something special," he said. "But overall, the big winner tonight was the school and the community." As for Mapleton's chances next Saturday, Wolgamott stuck to mantra: One game at a time. "If we play the way we played tonight, I think we have a great shot," he said. The playoff game will be at Harrisburg High School on Saturday, Feb. 22, beginning at 12:30 p.m.

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the field four times in the first half alone. His amazing recovery was duplicated by teammates a total of seven times in the first half — all by defensive players. Vontaze would only go down one time in the second half of that game. He would only miss one play before returning to the field. All told, the ASU players would have twelve injury delays while Oregon had just one. Did ASU players cheat? Were the ASU coaches involved with this delay tactic? This injury delay, whether a legitimate injury or faked, has exploded as more and more offenses are now no huddle speed games. It is understandable for 300-lb. defensive linemen to get tired chasing the passers, so substitutes are rushed onto the field as quickly as possible. In the NFL Aaron Rogers of The Green Bay Packers

and Tom Brady of The New England Patriots are masters of the quick snap. Once they see the substitutes enter, they immediately hike the ball for a free play or free 5 yards. Football is not the only sport where players fake injuries to have an advantage or to try and get an opponent called for a foul. Soccer and basketball are two sports where flopping has become an art form. As you watch the initial foul it might look as if the fouled player has been legitimately fouled. Replays show some of these players may not have been contacted nearly as hard as the resulting fall indicates. I even watched a video where soccer players were being instructed how to fall convincingly. The NBA now calls an unsportsmanlike foul for actions the officials deems a flop has occurred. There are rules for when

the clock can be stopped fairly. Calling a time out is the clear way for a coach to use. The sheer numbers of commercial TV time outs are used strategically by coaches. When the ball goes out of bounds the clock stops. Some sports are trying to shorten the length of the game. The PGA and MLB are both considering a faster paced game. Golfers may be penalized a stroke for excessive delay on striking their ball; pitchers may be penalized by a ball called on the batter if the pitcher takes too long on the mound. In tennis, the number of sets players play has been reduced at many tournaments to speed up the matches. What can be done to players, in football, who are escorted off the field by the trainers only to reappear all too soon? When I coached football, I told my players if I had to go out on the field to check on their injury

they would be done for that game. I know some injuries are sincere, but if a player has a convenient injury perhaps there could be a rule to exclude them for a designated time. Our society is moving at a much faster pace than ever. People want to be entertained for a limited amount of time. The (not-so-instant) instant replay has slowed down the game enough to push fans away. Getting it right used to be in the hands of the officials; their judgments ruled the game. The game moved along to the finish in a timely manner. The next time you watch a sporting event live or on TV, ask yourself who benefits from the clock stopping? Was the stoppage a ploy to disrupt their opponent? Did the offending team just cheat? As an athlete, I often said to myself, "We did not lose, we just ran out of time or innings!"

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