

Elks earn another win

By Zach Silva
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After a minute of play the Elkton girls basketball team had scored seven points; their opponents from Mohawk scored their seventh point late in the third quarter.

It was another big win for the Elks (4-1) as they won 55-26. It was their fourth win in which the margin of victory was over 25 points.

"I don't know if it would be a big win, just a win. We did play well, though," said Elkton head coach Rob Parker. "We got the fast break going early and that's always nice. I like the fact that we were seeing open players and we were looking down the court. But you know, it's hard to judge games like that with how you're really doing. They get to be too easy."

Their success from the start was predicated on their full-court pressure. The Elks were relentless in their attack. Each steal turned into open layups. And when the layups were missed, the Elks were still there each time to get the board. Elkton had 19 steals on the game and outrebounded the Mustangs 52-26. Hannah Maxwell led the team with 18 points, 12 rebounds and six steals. Kierny Carnes added 12 points and Alexis Halstead had 11.

"We missed too many [layups]. A lot of that is we're looking to sophomores and they're missing a lot of those shots. They're still sophomores. They're not used to getting that ball inside and going up and someone is hitting them or bumping them," said Parker.

"It's totally different. They come out and they go, 'Well I got fouled, that's why I missed it,' and I go, 'Well, you didn't get fouled, you got bumped.'"

Elkton's biggest lead of the game was when they were up 41 points late in the third quarter. With a lead, the Elks got to play around with different lineups throughout the game.

"We had a lot of players that maybe wouldn't have normally got a lot of playing time, get a lot of playing time. And we're mixing, we're mixing different players and I actually have players playing other positions than they normally would play," said Parker.

On Friday night, the Elks defeated Triangle Lake 54-20. Maxwell led the team with 17 points.

Warriors can't stop Wynn, lose

By Zach Silva
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The North Douglas boys' basketball team had a front row view of the Parker Wynn show last Saturday.

Wynn, who dominated the game for Triangle Lake from the start, finished with 29 points and led the Lakers to a 56-47 victory over North Douglas at the Elkton Tip-Off Classic. It was North Douglas' first loss of the season.

"We were playing good D on [Wynn] and he was just shooting over us," said North Douglas head coach Tyler Vancil.

"We tried. We said, hey, don't give him any space, told the other guys to help out and I mean, like I said we were playing up, our guys were doing a great job playing in his face and he just pulled up over them. And the basket was huge for him and he just wasn't missing. I don't know what else you can do, he was hitting everything tonight."

Down five late in the first quarter, it was the Warriors' Caleb Parks who changed the momentum for North Douglas.

NORTH DOUGLAS cont. B

Lions outmatched by top-tier talent



Cottage Grove's Tara Child starts the fast break for the Lions last Friday at Cascade High School.

PHOTO BY CG SENTINEL/ZACH SILVA

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For the second time in a week, it was one bad stretch of play against a good team that took the Cottage Grove girls basketball out of the game.

After falling in their opener to Marshfield, who finished the regular season ranked third last year, the Lions lost to Cascade, who finished the regular season ranked first a season ago.

"Well, we started off with probably two top five teams in state at least," said head coach Kevin Yoss.

"I'm encouraged. I think that we saw two good teams that we want to try to emulate and as soon as we can do that I think we'll be successful."

Against the Pirates on the road last Tuesday, it was an imposing 10-0 run in the second quarter and in the fourth quarter that put Marshfield in control of the game and win 46-29. Matty Ladd led Cottage Grove with 12 points.

On Friday night at Cascade, an uninspiring first quarter of play saw the Cougars with a 5-4 lead over Cottage Grove. As the game gained offensive flow, the back and forth game saw the Cougars with 19-17 lead at the half. It was in the third quarter that the Cougars put the game out of reach with a 9-2 run that the Lions were unable to battle back from.

"We still turned the ball over way too much. That's,

I think, our Achilles heel. That's been our top goal our last two games to take care of the ball. When we do that, we have stretches when we do that and we're very successful and we can beat them but when we don't, you get that 10-0 run that you're talking about and that's the difference," said Yoss.

Down nine in the early moments of the fourth quarter, it was a coach's nightmare when a missed Cascade shot rimmed out, hit the ground and the Lions were unable to get the board that promptly turned into a Cougar made-three pointer.

"Everybody's watching, waiting for somebody else to do it and we need to have more players take the initiative to do it themselves," said Yoss.

As the game, like many Cottage Grove possessions, slipped out of reach, the Lions began hoisting up three pointers that were going in. The Lions shot five-of-eleven for three on the game. Samantha May and Madison Bethke each had two threes for Cottage Grove. Miakela Blomquist led the team with 10 points and Ladd had seven.

When asked if the team was hesitant to shoot, Yoss noted that it is a work in progress.

"I think part of that's accurate. Part of it's that they played us in a little bit of a different defense at the end, they were sitting in a zone but we aren't aggressive enough and I told the girls that we have to be aggressive especially when they are pressuring us to get to



PHOTO BY CG SENTINEL/ZACH SILVA

As teammate Reilly Kelty is double-teamed, a wide-open Madison Bethke jumps in the air and calls for the ball on Friday night.

the rim. But we do, we look to pass before we look to shoot and so, that's something else we need to fix," he said.

Lions fall in first games

By Zach Silva
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The Cottage Grove boys began their season last weekend with a pair of losses on the road.

Under the tutelage of first year head coach Nick Finley, the Lions opened their season at Cascade on Friday night with a 58-53 loss.

From the first moments of the game it was clear that the Lions are a team that is going to work to fast break teams, get loose balls and shoot threes. The Lions were in a six-point hole early but willed themselves back through Juice Clafin getting back on defense to force Cougar misses, a Jesse Ellingsworth recording a block and Erick Giffen taking charges on back-to-back possessions. A late surge in the second quarter game the Cougars a 31-23 halftime advantage.

"Effort was there. Totally. The effort on the loose balls, I don't know how many 50-50 balls we ended up with but most of them. I know at halftime we accounted for pretty much all of the 50-50 balls. And even in the second half, they were just scrappy. So the effort was there. I think the nerves got us early on," said Finley.

As the Lions turned the ball over and were called for sloppy fouls, the Cougars continued to build their lead.

"The officiating was fine but we have to adjust to the officiating and we didn't. We continued to foul and



Cottage Grove's Markus Julien squares up on defense against Cascade on Friday night.

PHOTO BY CG SENTINEL/ZACH SILVA

we never adjusted," said Finley with a diplomatic response.

Throughout the game, there were calls that gave pause to the Lions' faithful. One in particular that was when a Cascade player passed an alley-oop to a team mate and was fouled on the pass but was awarded free throws for being in the act of shooting. The player snickered as he walked to the line.

"There was that one and then there was one, what did he say, the other coach made the call. Yeah well, can I have a call? Can I have a couple calls? Let me make some," said Finley.

Doing what they do best, hustling, the Lions were able to claw their way back in. A DeJean Alonzo diving save set up a Trenton Grover three, one of his five on the night. And what had been an eight point lead was down to three heading into the fourth quarter. The

Cougars made an early run and got back to a nine-point lead and it was too much for the Lions.

"We just haven't had time to do the little things," said Finley who has put in new defensive and offensive schemes in the nine practices that the group has been together. "You know, rotation on defense. How we're going to handle on-ball screens, what are we going to do coming off on-ball screens, the little things that we can correct, we're going to correct. And we're going to be just fine."

"It was the first game of the year and we want to make sure we're playing our best basketball in March not December."

On Saturday, the team travelled to Marshfield where they lost 64-48. The Lions were outrebounded 44-32 and had 19 turnovers. Ellingsworth led the team with 12 points.

Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week was Elkton's Hannah Maxwell. On Friday she led her team with 17 points and on Saturday added 18 points, 12 rebounds and six steals for the Elks.

