

Yoncalla holds on for win over North Douglas

Late Eagles run proves to be too much

By Zach Silva
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In a fight between two teams in the middle of the league standings, it was the Yoncalla boys coming away with a 61-51 home victory on Friday night against North Douglas.

As the Eagles led by as many as nine points in the first half, the Warriors were always clawing their way back as they cut the lead to six by halftime. The lead got as close as two points in the third quarter before Yoncalla put together an 18-6 run that doomed the road team.

"We came in with a game plan, we were ready and we capitalized on it. Now we're super excited," said Yoncalla head coach Jarred Eakin.

"In previous games whenever a small run would happen to us and it would end up becoming a large run... The difference was just maturity."

The other difference was also the play of Yoncalla's Ted Wickman. The Warriors felt Wickman's presence all game as he finished 20 points, nine rebounds and five assists.

"We were playing for each other tonight. We passed the ball a lot more, guys are the floor and we're picking them up. It was just a lot of fun tonight," said Wickman.

Corbin Eichman added 12 points for the Eagles.

"We just got to play better, I don't know what else to say. We've got to play better," said North Douglas head coach Tyler Vancil.

"Every time we would try to take a good look at a shot it fell like it would go halfway in the basket and then come out."

Warriors down Eagles

Yoncalla stays positive after loss to North Douglas

By Zach Silva
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After a 27-point loss at home to North Douglas, the Yoncalla girls' basketball team felt like champions.

"We feel like we just won the Super Bowl, to be honest with you," said Yoncalla head coach Nick Edera. "Girls are really excited about what happened. We show signs of being a really good team and stuff like that. We're still at six people and the depth, we get a little tired but I was just, it was awesome how great they did in the second half there."

In the first meeting between the teams, the Warriors beat the Eagles by 52.

On Friday night, it looked as if North Douglas was going to win by a similar amount when their defensive pressure overwhelmed the Eagles in the first quarter as they went up 17-0. The second quarter saw a slow pace and just eight total points (North Douglas five, Yoncalla three).

After back-to-back losses to the top teams in the league last week, the Warriors came

WARRIORS continued on B3

Sophomores setup Elks for success



Elkton's sophomores (from left: Alexis Halstead, Kiernyn Carnes, Samantha McCall, Aspyn Luzier and Sadie Olson) have had a meaningful impact on their season.

PHOTOS BY BECY GERRARD AND ZACH SILVA

The Elkton sophomores are an essential part of the the team's success this season

By Zach Silva
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Entering the basketball season, there was a general unknown about the Elkton girls' basketball team.

After being one round away from the quarterfinals – and a coveted trip to Baker City – a season ago, the Elks graduated their two senior guards and suddenly had holes in their roster. This is the very nature of high school athletics. With just two senior starters, no juniors and a group of untested sophomores on this year's team, there was anything but a guarantee that this team would be able to win right away.

"I don't know, I don't know what to think of what's going to happen this year at all," said senior Allison Swearingen on November 15, two weeks before the season 2017-18 tipoff.

"It's honestly, it's 100 percent a surprise," added senior Hannah Maxwell.

But that was then, before the season began. Before the Elks, as of this writing, have gone 17-3 (losing to the number three team in 2A and two top seven 1A teams) including a rare victory against rival North Douglas. Before the sophomores of Elkton became the key ingredient to the team's success on the season.

"Must be something in the water. I don't know, it just works so well this year," said sophomore starter Kiernyn Carnes.

Everything the Elks do first begins with Maxwell. She leads the team in points and rebounds this season and is the engine that makes the team go. On any given night, she can go for 20 points and 20 rebounds with ease. The leader of the team, she instructs teammates on the court and – if she happens to come out of the game – from the bench.

When sophomore Alexis Halstead was trying to describe what Maxwell brings to the team words failed her as she settled on encompassing the entirety of the senior's importance and value into all that she does by saying "she's Hannah Maxwell."

She's Hannah Maxwell. After Maxwell, there is fellow senior Swearingen. Swearingen, a starter that hits threes and plays through the pain of her strained ACL, is the only other senior that gets regular minutes. Maise Cox is the third and final senior on the roster. Cox also plays JV and generally gets into varsity games when the Elks are blowing teams out which this season has happened more often than not.

That's it for the Elkton upperclassmen. The rest of the team is carried by a wave of sophomores.

"The first day of practice [head coach Rob] Parker told them that you're sophomores but you're going to have to start playing like you're a senior because that's what we need from them," said Maxwell.

This group that surrounds Maxwell has risen to the occasion, positioned the Elks at the top of the league and are prepared to make a postseason run.

"They've completely exceeded my expectations. Because I've been a sophomore, I've been there. I started on varsity my sophomore year, too, and it was hectic. I was nervous all the time and stuff and it honestly probably showed in my play," said Maxwell.

"Watching them play they don't ever seem nervous. It doesn't ever get to them. I don't think they ever think 'Wow, I'm a sophomore playing for varsity this is crazy.'"

The six sophomores – Carnes, Samantha McCall, Alexis Halstead, Aspyn Luzier, Sadie Olson and Holly Garza – have varying roles on the team.

"Alexis is a fantastic rebounder and Aspyn can obviously shoot threes amazingly and Kiernyn is really good all-around and Samantha has these moments where she just kind of does a bunch of really cool stuff and I think we're all getting better at really fast pace," said Olson.

For Carnes, this is her second year starting on varsity. Midway through last

season after a teammate got sick, Carnes filled in and has been starting ever since. She has gone from being "the freshman in the mix of all the older kids" to becoming an oxymoron as she takes the role of a veteran sophomore.

"It's really cool to see everyone like step up, like fill their roles, and definitely like getting their own characteristic out on the court. It's fun to see everyone adapt and find their role, their specific doing on the court. It's really cool," she said.

This season, McCall, Halstead and Luzier – until she fractured a growth plate in her leg – have all rotated through the starting lineup. Joining them in the lineup is then Olson who is first off the bench for the Elks.

While Carnes has consistent experience at the varsity level, this next tier of players have been adapting to playing meaningful minutes in a varsity game compared to playing JV last season.

"JV you're in there, you're going through it step-by-step slowly, it seems like, but when you get on varsity it steps up a whole new level," said Halstead.

The next level also includes a more physical game.

"It's a lot more aggressive. A lot more people can like push you around so I have to be more aggressive around people which I've always struggled with. So I've been working on it really hard," said McCall.

ELKS continued on B3

Lions host wrestling tournament



Cottage Grove wrestlers wrestle at the Cottage Grove Invitational on Friday and Saturday. The Lions took ninth of the eleven teams that competed. For more high school sports updates, turn to B3.

PHOTOS BY CGHS PHOTOGRAPHERS

Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week is Cottage Grove's Reilly Kelty. Last Tuesday against Sweet Home Kelty finished with 13 points and six blocks in the Lions 69-28 victory. Pick up next week's paper to read more on Kelty and how Cottage Grove has utilized its height this season.



Kelty gets a lay-up to go earlier this season at home.

BLACK
YELLOW
MAGENTA
CYAN