

THURSDAY | JUNE 24, 2021

Lions upset Viks away on Senior Night

BY ZEAHNA YOUNG/FOR THE SENTINEL

Last week, the Lions played their final basketball game of the season away at Siuslaw High School, where they took on the Vikings for a rematch, defeating them in a major upset, 73-66.

The boys had a different mindset coming into the game this time around.

Said Coach Jared Hutchins, "When we played them the first time, we came out and had a good first half and had a 10-point lead or so, and then we let it get away from us in the second half.

"Our mindset coming into this game was to attack from the very first and not let off. Siuslaw is a very good shooting team, and we knew we were going to have to hit some shots, so we just talked about being in the rhythm of our offense and having confidence when we shoot."

Indeed, the Lions came out the gates with full heat, scoring an amazing 29 points in the first quarter alone and slam dunking on the Viks three different times — two for Brennen Murphy and one for Ty Kishen.

They held the Vikings at 6 points, finishing the quarter up 29-6.

In the second quarter, the Lions did not relent, and although the Vikings picked up their game considerably at that point, Cottage Grove still had 18 points in the quarter to Siuslaw's 13, and went into halftime ahead 47-29.

In the third quarter, the Lions slowed a bit on the score board, picking up 12 points to the Vikings' 23, but they still led by the end of the quarter 59-52.

Although the Viks had picked up a great deal of momentum in the third quarter, it was still



ZEAHNA YOUNG/FOR THE SENTINEL

see **LIONS** on B2 Brennen Murphy tears around the defense and cuts to the hoop.

Girls take Sky-Em title with clutch wins

BY JERRY THOMPSON FOR THE SENTINEL

Last week the Cottage Grove girls played four games in five days with the Sky-Em championship on the line. The Lions faced 5-2 Marist, 4-4 Marshfield, and 5-2 Junction City, and were challenged in all three of those games.

The Lady Lions ran through the gauntlet and came away with an 11-0 record, the only blemish a forfeit against Marshfield because of virus policies.

In the Marist game it was two seniors who helped the Lions prevent the Spartans from upsetting the Grovers on their home court.

Marist led by as many as five points in the third quarter, and it wasn't until midway in the fourth that the tide changed for the Lions.

On senior night, senior Matty Ladd led the scoring with 18 points, but it was senior Alexia Riggs' three-point dagger with the Lions clinging to a four-point lead that sealed the 42-32 win.

"Lex is one of those kids who has come up clutch ever since I have been coaching her for the last three years," said head coach Erin Roysse. "We've had many situations where Lex has hit a three like that. I remember a killer one at Junction City last year...just

see **SKY-EM** on B3

Lady Lions beat Viks to remain undefeated

BY ZEAHNA YOUNG/FOR THE SENTINEL

Last Thursday, June 17, the Lady Lions played their final away game of the season against Siuslaw, where they defeated the Lady Viks soundly 46-16. Coach Erin Roysse's team, who is currently undefeated in their league, finished first in the Sky Em 4A-4 conference this year.

"Initially, the girls have kind of had these goals that they're checking off along the way," said Roysse.

While the team has had a great deal of success this season, they almost had to stop mid-way because of a COVID-19 scare.

"It was almost taken away because of the COVID scare we had two weeks ago," said Roysse.

"Those three days were super long. We just thought, our season's gone. And then through the investigation, they let us practice in two different gyms and we were okay.

"So, we get to come back and play," she continued. "And having that almost taken away again was a good reality check. Their focus is there, and it's awesome just to be a part of it."

The girls were playing as such on Thursday, and while both teams took time to really get things moving on the score board, they held Siuslaw at 4 points in the first quarter and scored 7 on their end, forcing many turnovers for their opponent and keeping de-

fense tight.

Cottage Grove picked up the pace in the second quarter, with point guard Mikaela Blomquist running the show and Matty Ladd and Gracie Arnold picking up rebounds and points down low.

"We do have Matty and we do have Gracie," said Roysse, "and we're led by Mik. She tunes up the bus, and then she just turns it on and gets everybody rolling.

"So, without her it's a different game," she said. "Her presence as a senior gives us a lot; she's a pretty amazing kid.

"She never really played the point guard until we had our point guard get injured a couple of years ago, and she stepped in. Or, was kind of thrown in, to the wolves," said the coach. "It's a hard position because you have to be a leader. And she definitely leads.

"There's no player that goes harder in practice than her, if you ask any of the players, she's the one who sets the tone every single day," said Roysse.

The Lady Lions only allowed Siuslaw 1 point in the second quarter while picking up 7 more of their own, finishing the half ahead 14-5. Leading on the score board that quarter with 4 points was Kourtney Owens.

"If you're comparing height, she's way under size, but she has a heart that's just huge," said Roysse. "And

see **LADY** on B2



ZEAHNA YOUNG/FOR THE SENTINEL

Gracie Arnold, in the zone, takes a heavily contested jump shot.



ZEAHNA YOUNG/FOR THE SENTINEL

Matty Ladd takes the court with Gracie Arnold, Alexia Riggs and Kennedy Sturman-Royse.

Tim Alberding reigns supreme in WSS weekend action

Rea, A. Bloom, And Bryant also visit Victory Lane

BY STEPHANIE DEATHERAGE

The second and final night of the Father's Day Weekend doubleheader at Cottage Grove Speedway was on Saturday, June 19.

The evening featured four classes, including three a part of the Speedway Motors IMCA Weekly Racing program. They included the Wingless Sprint Series, IMCA Modifieds, Royalty Core IMCA Northern Sport Mods, and IMCA Sport Compacts.

Tim Alberding, from Stayton, was the early race leader during the main event. Three total stoppages were to be witnesses in the main event, but Alberding stayed in front of the main pack despite the yellow flag incidents.

Tim experienced some hefty lapped traffic at times but wasted no time navigating through the tail end of the field. However, in the waning laps he did feel some pressure from a hard-charging Kinzer Cox. Albert held off Cottage Grove's Cox to win his second Wingless Sprint Series victory at CGS.

Kinzer Cox was second, with Wilsonville youngster Chad Lindsey placing third. The rest of the top five were Lance Hallmark, from McMinnville, and Tacoma, Washington traveler Jonathan Jorgenson getting fourth and fifth.

The IMCA Modifieds had five cautions during their feature. Paul Culp of Creswell took charge of the top place position on the opening start. Unfortunately, Culp would spin on lap seven, handing first place to Paul Rea.

Rea, from Eugene, had to deal with several restarts from some fast drivers nipping at his heels.

Despite all the advances and the potential moves to overtake him, Paul Rea held his composure to win his first race of the season. He joins the victor's list in Cottage Grove Speedway, KMJ Performance Oregon State, and Shaw Race Cars Western Region competition.

Paul is the seventh different driver in ten IMCA Modified races to take a trip

see **WSS** on B3

Athlete of the Week



This week's athlete of the week is sophomore Brennen Murphy, who scored 26 points in Cottage Grove's 73-66 victory over Siuslaw last Thursday, the last game of the season for the Lions.



Brennen Murphy drives through Marist's defenses in their June 15 game.

PHOTO BY JERRY THOMPSON/FOR CG SENTINEL