

Sports

BAKER GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYS HOST TO MAC-HI IN GREATER OREGON LEAGUE CONTEST

Bulldogs' pressure overwhelms Pioneers

■ Baker forces a dozen turnovers in the first quarter and rolls to a 66-28 win

By Jayson Jacoby
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Baker had twice as many steals in the first quarter as Mac-Hi had points. Other statistical comparisons illustrate the Bulldogs' dominance over the Pioneers Monday in a Greater Oregon League game in the Baker gym. The final score is an obvious one — 66-28. But those steals, and forced turnovers overall, best represent how closely Baker followed coach Mat Sand's strategy for success.

"We want to start out with a spurt because that helps jumpstart you, especially when it comes to defense," Sand said.

He emphasizes defense because forcing turnovers can lead to breakaway layins and other easy baskets.

That certainly was the case Monday as the Bulldogs, who improved to 2-0 in the GOL, raced to a 21-4 lead after the first quarter.

Baker, ranked second in Class 4A, had eight steals,

GOL Girls Basketball

BAKER	2-0
MAC-HI	1-1
LA GRANDE	1-1
ONTARIO	0-2

MONDAY'S GAME

Baker 66, Mac-Hi 28

FRIDAY'S GAMES

Baker at Ontario
La Grande at Mac-Hi

several as a result of its full-court press, and the Bulldogs' aggressive defense also led to three traveling calls and one five-second call against the Pioneers in the opening period. Baker's senior point guard Sydney Younger converted three of those steals into layups as she scored 9 of her game-high 16 points in the first quarter. Younger said the Bulldogs played with intensity from the opening tip — another goal



Kathy Orr/Baker City Herald

Anna Carter shoots against Mac-Hi on Monday.

Sand preaches, but one Baker hasn't always accomplished recently.

In its previous game Jan. 16, Baker led Weiser just 8-5 after the first quarter before rolling to a 57-29 win.

And the Bulldogs were tied 8-8 with La Grande after one quarter in their GOL opener on Jan. 10.

Younger said Baker's early dominance Monday against Mac-Hi was satisfying.

"That intensity from the start sets us up for the game," she said. "If we start strong we play strong the whole game."

Baker didn't let Mac-Hi muster anything resembling a comeback Monday.

The Pioneers never scored two straight baskets.

Baker, meanwhile, scored 17 consecutive points, a span bridging the first and second quarters, to take a 25-4 lead.

The Bulldogs later scored 6 straight points — on baskets by freshman Jozie Ramos, senior Anna Carter and junior Jocelynn Hellberg — to push its lead to 35-8 just before halftime.

Baker opened the second half much as it did the first, scoring the first 10 points — four each by Younger and Ramos — to push the lead to 45-10.

Mac-Hi briefly escaped its offensive doldrums later in the third quarter, scoring as many points in the period — 10 — as the Pioneers did in the first half.

But Baker's Isabella Nemec nearly matched Mac-Hi basket for basket. The senior scored Baker's last 8 points of the third quarter.

In the fourth period Sand

continued his effort to get valuable experience for freshmen on the roster, and Rylee Elms — Baker's second-tallest player at 5-foot-11 — took advantage with six points.

Elms showed her versatility, scoring on a layin, an 8-footer and a jumper from just inside the three-point line.

Her fellow freshman, Makenzie Flanagan, scored 4 points in the second quarter.

Ten Bulldogs scored at least 2 points.

Sand said that although Mac-Hi isn't the toughest team Baker has played, and is more vulnerable than some opponents to the Bulldogs' defensive pressure, he was gratified to see that his players were executing the system they're practiced. They were in the positions they will need to be in against more skilled teams that won't turn the ball over as often, Sand said.

"They understand their assignments and they executed them," he said. "As a coach I'm very pleased with where we're at."

Sand said he was also happy with Baker's half-court offense.

"We saw the open person, and our pick and rolls were really good," he said.

Younger, who was a key cog on the Bulldogs' 2019 state championship team, said she sees similarities between the two squads.

But Younger said she's also confident that Baker will continue to improve. Sand has said several times that his goal is for the Bulldogs to play

Baker donates to Joseph after fire damages gym

Baker raised about \$1,400 during Monday's games to donate to Joseph Charter School, where a Thursday fire severely damaged the gymnasium.

Baker donated ticket receipts, which totaled about \$1,000, said Buell Gonzales Jr., athletic director.

At halftime of both the girls and boys games, Gonzales auctioned a Baker Bulldog shirt and sweatshirt. The four items brought in \$410.

their best basketball in late February and March, coinciding with the playoffs and, ideally, a return to the state tournament to defend their state title.

"Obviously we haven't peaked yet," Younger said. "But we're hitting shots that we need to hit. We're maturing as we go."

Baker won the JV game, 60-24.

MAC-HI (28)
Rendken 0 0 0 0, Brown 0 0 0 0, Angel 1 1 2 3, Lober 3 1 2 7, Reichert 1 0 0 3, Rhoads 4 1 2 9, Garcia 2 0 2 4, Uribe-Garcia 1 0 0 2. Totals 12 3 8 28.

BAKER (66)
Elms 3 0 0 6, Hellberg 2 0 0 4, Flanagan 2 0 0 4, Keller 2 1 2 5, Younger 7 1 2 16, Zikmund 1 2 2 4, Carter 1 2 4 2, Mackenzie 1 0 0 2, Nemec 4 0 2 8, Ramos 6 1 4 13, Benson 0 0 0 0, Moore 0 0 0 0. Totals 29 7 16 66.

Mac-Hi 4 6 10 8 — 28
Baker 21 14 16 15 — 66
Three-point baskets — Reichert, Younger. **Total fouls** — Mac-Hi 14, Baker 16.

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Lillard scores record 61 in win

By Anne M. Peterson
AP Sports Writer

PORTLAND — After setting a Portland record with 61 points, Damian Lillard knew exactly who held the old mark.

He did.

Lillard topped his own franchise scoring high Monday night in the Trail Blazers' 129-124 overtime victory against the Golden State Warriors. He also established a team best with 11 3-pointers.

"I guess if somebody's going to beat my

record, it's good to be me," Lillard said.

The star guard's previous career high was 60 points earlier this season against Brooklyn, which broke the club record at the time. His 61 points Monday were the most in the NBA this season.

Lillard became the first player in NBA history with 60-plus points and 10-plus 3-pointers in a game, and just the sixth player with multiple 60-point games.

He also had 10 rebounds for his 10th double-double of the season.