

# Sports

CLASS 4A STATE BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

## Baker's rally falls short in season-ending loss to Henley

By Jayson Jacoby  
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The Baker boys basketball team, facing a daunting deficit starting the fourth period, could have played the final eight minutes of its season with a certain apathy.

But coach Jebron Jones expected more from his players.

And they delivered. Not a win, but respect.

Trailing Henley 52-30 in a Class 4A playoff game Saturday afternoon at Klamath Falls, the Bulldogs refused to concede what the scoreboard suggested was inevitable.

Baker went on a 17-3 run to close within 57-47 on senior Caden Long's two free throws with 2 minutes left.

But the Bulldogs could get no closer and they fell 64-52 to the Hornets, who advanced to the Class 4A state tournament this week at Forest Grove.

"We just challenged the kids to finish the game strong," Jones said of his conversation with the Bulldogs between the third and fourth periods. "I was proud of them. They didn't quit. They didn't fold or blame each other. They finished the game the right way."

Long wasn't around for the final minute — he fouled out — but he made the most of his minutes.

Long scored a game-high 25 points, including five straight points that cut the Hornets' lead to 57-47. That was the closest the Bulldogs had been since late in the second quarter.

"He did a great job," Jones said of Long. "Everybody who was on the court did a great job finishing strong."

Jones said he was disappointed that Long and his five fellow seniors ended up one win short of qualifying for Baker's first trip to the state tournament since 2007, when the Bulldogs won the state title.

The five other Bulldogs playing in their final game are Riley Flanagan, Brylan Robb, Jamisun Rigueiro, Spencer Smith and Spencer Shirtcliff.

"For the six seniors I wish they had a better ending," Jones said.

Although Henley scored the first six points of the game and never trailed, Baker (15-11 for the season) stayed within a reasonable range during the first half.

The Hornets extended their 14-9 first-quarter lead to 18-9 early in the second, but Baker scored consecutive baskets, on Mason Van Arsdall's rebound of his own miss and Rigueiro's inside hoop, to get Baker within 18-13.

Henley responded with a 10-0 run, during which four Hornets scored, to lead 28-13.

But Long then scored six straight points to narrow the lead to 28-19.

Henley led 32-19 at halftime, but Jones said he was still confident.

"I told the boys this game is definitely not over with," he said. "They out-scored us by 13 in the first half and I told them I have complete confidence that we can win the second half by 13 points. We just came up short."

Jones credited Henley with taking advantage of Baker's defensive communication lapses.

"It led to them getting open looks, and easy layups, which are daggers," he said.

Gabe Gambleton was the only Bulldog besides Long in double figures, with 10 points.

Rigueiro added 7 points



Sierra Webster/Klamath Falls Herald & News

**Baker's Caden Long looks for room to drive against the defense of Henley's Matthew Neubert during a playoff game Saturday. Henley defeated Baker, 64-52. Long had a game-high 25 points in his final game as a Bulldog.**

and Mason Van Arsdall had 5.

Jones said he will remember the dedication this year's team showed, always arriving on time for early morning practices.

"That takes a strong work ethic," Jones said.

But regardless of what the players achieved in uniform, Jones said he's more impressed by their performance in the classroom.

"They're all great students," he said. "I'm more

proud of that than anything they could accomplish on the basketball court. I was glad to be a part of their lives."

Jones said he also tried to use Saturday's playoff game, and his players' refusal to concede victory, as motivation for the rest of their lives.

"It's a testament to how they hopefully will react when things don't go their way as adults," he said. "That's why I like basketball — it teaches you life lessons."

### BAKER (52)

Younger 0 0-0 0, Gambleton 5 0-0 10, Flanagan 1 0-1 2, Robb 0 0-0 0, Rigueiro 2 2-2 7, Wright 1 1-2 3, Shirtcliff 0 0-0 0, Long 7 9-10 25, Van Arsdall 2 1-2 5, Smith 0 0-0 0. Totals 18 13-17 52.

### HENLEY (64)

Lawrie 7 2-2 16, Hayes 0 0-0 0, Hall 2

0-2 5, Taylor 0 0-0 0, O'Connor 1 3-4 5, Newsom 0 2-2 2, Cheyne 0 1-2 1, Neubert 5 6-7 18, Frank 0 2-2 2, Howe 2 2-3 6, Northcutt 4 1-2 9. Totals 23 19-26 64.  
Baker 9 10 11 22 — 52  
Henley 14 18 20 12 — 64  
Three-point baskets — Rigueiro, Long 2, Hall, Neubert 2. Total fouls — Baker 21, Henley 17.-

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