

Sports

BAKER GIRLS BASKETBALL

Baker dominates Ontario, 54-15

By **Corey Kirk**
ckirk@bakercityherald.com

Fresh from two days of rest after a hectic week, the Baker girls basketball team overwhelmed Ontario 54-15 on Tuesday, June 15 in the Baker gym.

The Bulldogs had played five games in six days from June 7-12, going 3-2 in that span.

Baker coach Mat Sand was excited to see his team return with a lot of energy after losing 39-30 to Burns on June 12.

"We came out with some rest (and) the girls are really starting to understand that their energy is what makes this game fun to watch," Sand said.

The Bulldogs (7-3) controlled the tempo from the opening jump ball. Baker was dominant on both sides of the court in the first quarter, racing to a 21-2 lead as sophomore Macey Moore had six of her eight points.

Sydney Keller, Baker's lone senior, said taking control from the start is pivotal.

"We need to play at our level of game," said Keller, who had eight points. "When you play a team, regardless of how good or bad they are, you want to stay at your level, and play your game."

Ontario (0-11 on the season) found a bit of offensive rhythm in the second quarter, with nine points, but Baker still extended its lead, to 31-11 at halftime.

Keller said Sand exhorted the Bulldogs to continue their inspired play in the second half despite the big lead.

Baker responded, outscoring Ontario 20-2 in the third



Corey Kirk/Baker City Herald

Baker's lone senior, Sydney Keller, had eight points in her final game in the BHS gym on Tuesday, June 15.

quarter, a near repeat of the first quarter.

"Everyone needs to be aware and have the energy to be on the floor, because the little mistakes can cost," Keller said.

Baker never let up defensively, holding Ontario to just two points in the fourth quarter as well.

Sophomore Jozie Ramos led Baker with 16 points. A trio of fellow sophomores also had strong games, with Makenzie Flanagan scoring 10 points, while Sydnee Pierce added five and Brooklyn Jaca four.

Although Keller said her final season has gone by quickly, she said she's enjoyed watching her younger teammates become more confident.

"It's super exciting, it's kind of why I stuck around to help them out," Keller said. "Being such a young team there was no one really to lead them, and help Mat teach them what they should be doing, to give back to the program and help them grow."

Sand said Baker's defensive dominance is a sign that his young team — the roster includes 10 sophomores and two freshmen — is beginning to blossom.

"I'm the type of coach that everything starts with defense, if your offense is struggling, you can make it up on the defensive side of the ball," Sand said. "I just loved how we played defense up front."

As has been the case during

this condensed season — 12 games in three weeks — Baker has little time to revel in its latest win.

Baker travels to Vale today and then to La Grande on Friday, June 18, with a chance to avenge a 51-32 loss to the rival Tigers on June 8.

"I think we can compete against La Grande but we got to play a mistake-free game," Sand said.

Keller, who played her final game in the BHS gym Tuesday, is also excited about one last chance to beat La Grande, which is 9-0 this season.

Prior to the June 8 loss, Baker had beaten La Grande 13 straight times, and Keller was a part of more than half of those wins.

"I'm super psyched, I have been really looking forward to it ever since they were here in our house," Keller said.

Sand said Tuesday's win over Ontario was bittersweet, as he watched Keller, a three-year starter, in her final game before a home crowd.

"I just want to send her off well, and I want to thank her for helping me mature this team, because it's not just me," Sand said. "I just want to say thank you to her."

Keller said she's grateful to the Baker community for its support, and for the memories she has made on the hardwood.

"Just to leave it all out here and wear my last white jersey as a Bulldog, now we will see where it goes, and come at Vale, come at La Grande. I am just super grateful for everyone at Baker and all the support," Keller said.

BAKER BOYS BASKETBALL

Bulldogs roll past Ontario

By **Corey Kirk**
ckirk@bakercityherald.com

Baker boys basketball coach Jebron Jones wanted to make sure winless Ontario didn't take advantage of the emotion of senior night and start fast on its home court Tuesday, June 15.

Jones needn't have worried.

Baker bolted to a 29-12 lead after the first quarter and breezed to an 85-52 win, improving to 7-3 on the season.

"It was Ontario's senior night, so I made it a point of emphasis to the guys to not let them have any hope early on, and I think we accomplished that," Jones said.

Freshmen Hudson Spike scored 12 of his 18 points in the first period as Baker took control from the start.

With post Jake Wright heading to Corvallis, where he will play football at Oregon State, Baker's front line was missing a key cog against Ontario.

Jones had to rely more on another senior, Mason Van Arsdall, and junior Nick Mitchell.

Van Arsdall responded with 17 points, while Mitchell added six.

"With Jake going down, Nick Mitchell had to step up, and he did," Jones said. "Mason played more minutes than usual and he hit his first two career three-pointers tonight, so he was feeling good about himself."

Baker didn't let up after its scorching first quarter, something Jones attributes to Baker hitting its stride with conditioning.

"We are in better shape now than where we were three weeks ago," Jones said. "I wish I had more time with them."

Senior Gabe Gambleton led all scorers with 21 points. Freshman Paul Hobson added 11.

Jones was proud of the team's collective effort. "Everyone shared the rock, we got easy shots, everyone was laughing, smiling and giggling," Jones said. "So, it was a good way to go out."

Baker wraps up its season today by playing host to Vale (5-2) at 5:30 p.m.

Jones hopes the team, including seniors Gambleton and Van Arsdall playing their final game at BHS, enjoys the opportunity.

"That they had fun, they worked hard and they made good memories," Jones said.

SWITCH & GET
SAMSUNG GALAXY S21 5G
FREE

NO HIDDEN
REQUIREMENTS



SAMSUNG
Galaxy S21 5G

uscellular

Navigate Wireless

1084 Campbell St., Baker City, 541-523-3334

Requires Smartphone and postpaid service plan purchase, new line, port-in, credit approval. Paid via monthly bill credit on a 30-mo. RIC. Taxes, fees, and additional restrictions apply. 5G capable device required to experience 5G. 5G coverage not available in all areas. See uscellular.com/coverage-map for details.

Things we want you to know: Purchase a Samsung GS21, GS21 Plus or GS21 Ultra via RIC and receive a \$799.80 bill credit divided into 30 monthly credits. Free offer applies to base model and memory. Additional terms apply. See uscellular.com/terms for details including obligations to serve Kansas customers. ©2021 UScellular



**Time
has
come...**

**hit the trail
with a set
of the best!**

Tires **LES SCHWAB**

**We've got what
you want!**

**Come see our
full line of
ATV/UTV
tires and wheels**

Lew Brothers Tire Service

541-523-3679

210 Bridge St. Baker City, OR