

Frustrated Cardinals take fifth in 1A basketball tournament

By Anne Morter

The Ione Cardinals were frustrated in their attempt for state tournament hardware as they finished fifth in last week's 1A tournament in Baker City.

The Cards opened with a convincing 80-49 win over St. Paul before losing to Cove 88-86 in the semifinals and finally, falling to Dufur 96-81 in the game for third place. Illness struck the team during the week with the worst of it being felt on Saturday, when starters Aaron and Deacon Heideman were too ill to suit down and several other players played sick.

The Cardinals left a mark on the record books of Baker however. David Wagenblast made eight three-point shots in the Cove game to break the old single game record of seven. Jim Logan made five of six three-point attempts in the Dufur game to set a new high percentage record of .833. The team set a single game record with 12 treys against Cove plus they set a new tournament record of 28 three pointers. Finally, the team made 247 points over three games to break the old record of 242.

David Wagenblast was named to the first team of the All-Star team and Jim Logan was named to the second.



David Wagenblast (22) tries for shot against St. Paul

Ione 80 St Paul 49

The Cards had 12 points on the board before the Buckaroos managed their first score Thursday, March 4, during the opening round game. The Cardinals used their size advantage to dominate the inside game and run away with the win.

At the end of one quarter, the Cards were up 19-9. By halftime, they held a commanding 40-25 advantage. Ione went on to outscore their opponents 40-22 in the second half.

Justin Miller came off the bench to hit three three-pointers and lead the Cardinal scorers with 14 points. Tony Bjerke, another key reserve, scored 12. Jim Logan also hit three three-pointers and scored 11 points in the game.

The Cardinals' size advantage showed in the rebounding statistics where they dominated the boards, 57-33. Deacon Heideman grabbed 12 boards and cousin Aaron had 10. Wagenblast chalked up 12 assists and four steals for the Cards.

Ione shot 38 percent from the floor, making 28 of 73. At the line, they connected on 18 of 27 for 67 percent. The Buckaroos had shooting troubles, connecting on just 18 of 64 from the floor for 28 percent and 12 of 24 for 50 percent from the line.

"It was a good game for us," said coach Del LaRue, noting that everyone played and all but one player scored. "We were trying to keep the kids fresh for a three-day tournament," he added.

Cove 88 Ione 86

The Cove Leopards were a quick and physical team and the Ione Cards struggled with their inside game losing to the Leopards 88-86 on Friday, March 5. The teams played even through the first half, with the Cards leading by two at the end of the first quarter and Cove tying it up at the half, 46-46. The third quarter proved to be the Cards' downfall, as the Leopards outscored them 21-15.

David Wagenblast tried to singlehandedly make up for the lack of an inside game by canning a tournament record of eight three-pointers in the game. The Cards were down by 15 with just over two minutes to go and were still behind by 13 with a minute left before Wagenblast pulled them to within two. Despite Wagenblast's offensive fireworks show, the Cards still came up two points short and Cove advanced to the finals.

Wagenblast set a personal scoring record with 39 points. Jared Ashbeck was the only other Cardinal in double figures with 15. Jim Logan hit three treys and finished the game with nine points.

The stats books said that Ione held a 42-39 rebounding edge, a statistic that coach Del LaRue says is misleading. "They had 21

offensive rebounds. That really killed us," he said, noting that many of the offensive boards came after one successful free throw and turned into a three point play. Aaron Heideman led Ione in the rebounding effort with 12, followed by Deacon Heideman with seven.

The Cards actually made nine more field goals than Cove but the Leopards made 25 points at the free throw line, compared to the Cardinals six. From the field, the Cards shot 38 of 69 for 53 percent and at the line, they hit six of 10 for 60 percent. Cove shot 29 of 66 for 44 percent from the field and 25 of 39 for 64 percent from the line.

"Our biggest problem was that we didn't block them out on the boards," said coach LaRue. "We just didn't produce inside," he added.

Dufur 96 Ione 81

The Cards put their flu-ravaged squad on the floor in the State 1A tournament consolation game against Dufur at Baker City on Saturday, March 6, with six able bodies and several more in various stages of illness.

Starters Aaron and Deacon Heideman were unable to dress down for the game. Even so, the Cards made a gallant attempt and led 45-39 at halftime. In the third quarter, things started to unravel as the Cards began to feel a little tournament weary.

Dufur's 6'5" center went on a scoring rampage, making 12 points in the third quarter and eight in the fourth for 20 critical second half points. The Cards also began to have some foul trouble. "We put people on the (free throw) line way too many times, but we were a step slow," said coach LaRue.

David Wagenblast hit three more treys on his way to team scoring honors with 29. Jim Logan hit five of six three point attempts and scored 19 points in the game. Jared Ashbeck, a sick player who was questionable right until game time scored 11.

Dufur hammered the Cardinals on the boards, 46-31. The Cardinals were led by Ashbeck with seven, Jason Halvorsen with six and Wagenblast with five. Wagenblast had six assists and two steals and Logan chipped in three assists and two steals.

Both teams shot fairly well. Ione hit 30 of 66 for 45 percent from the floor and 15 of 21 for 71 percent from the line. Dufur connected on 38 of 75 for 51 percent from the field and 18 of 30 for 60 percent from the line.

"I was really proud of the kids. We went into the game with six able bodies. They performed really well and worked hard. We got everything out of those kids that they had left. It was a real gutsy performance," stated coach Del LaRue.

"It was a tough way to end the season," said LaRue, referring to the ill-timed flu bug. "It was just one of those things that happens. I have no regrets at all. The kids could have got sick at district and never got there (to state)," he added.

"It's been a good season and they've been a great group to work with. I guess there's nothing wrong with finishing 17-7," said LaRue.

By Anne Morter

The Ione lady Cardinals won one game and lost two on their way to a fifth place finish at last week's State 1A basketball tournament in Baker City. After an opening round win over Alsea 60-40, the lady Cards fell victim to illness and jitters losing to Elkton 60-44 in the semifinals and to Pine Eagle 55-33 in the game for third place.

Ione 60 Alsea 40

After a two week layoff, the lady Cards took a quarter to get rolling in their opening round game of the State 1A basketball tournament, but before it was over, all but three Ione players had scored on their way to a 60-40 victory over Alsea.

The Wolverines led 11-9 at the end of one but the Cards had swung things their way by halftime, 24-17. "In the second half, we played a lot better on offense and pretty much tore them up," said coach Dana Heideman. The Cards outscored Alsea 36-23 in the second half. Heideman noted that the team played some good half court defense and managed to keep the ball away from Alsea's big girl. "Melissa (McElligott) did a good job keeping the ball away from her," he said. He also noticed that the Wolverines were a rough-playing team and there were many fouls in the game.

Crystal Minster led three lady Cards into double figures with 13 points. Jamie Lovett had 12 and Melissa McElligott added 10. McElligott led the rebounding effort with 10 boards, but Alsea had the team rebounding advantage 28-24. McElligott also paced the Cards in assists with three.

Ione shot 38 percent from the floor, making 21 of 56. At the line, they connected on 18 of 30 for 60 percent. Alsea shot 14 of 55 for 25 percent from the field and 12 of 21 for 57 percent from the line.

"It was a good opening round game. We started off slow and then dominated. We did a good job on defense. That's how we won it," said coach Heideman.

Elkton 60 Ione 44

Too many turnovers and a lack of defensive intensity did the lady Cards in during their semifinal matchup with Elkton on Friday,

March 5. The Cards led 18-16 in the first quarter and it looked like they were set to run off with the

game. But 0-14 shooting in the second quarter put them in the hole 21-30 by halftime and it proved to be a hole that the lady Cardinals were not able to dig out of that day.

"By the second half, we were done," said coach Dana Heideman. "It wasn't the same team that had played the night before," he added. He also said that the Cardinals sent the Elks to the free throw line too many times. Elkton shot 20 of 35 from the line while Ione connected on just seven of their 19 attempts.

"We had five more fouls than they did (24-19) but theirs were all shooting fouls," he said.

Melissa McElligott led the Cardinal scorers with 13 points. April Taylor had two three point shots and Crystal Minster had one. No other stats were available.

Pine Eagle 55 Ione 33

The flu kept point guard April Taylor in bed and coach Dana Heideman was also too sick to attend the game against Pine Eagle for the third place trophy at the State 1A basketball tournament in Baker City Saturday, March 6. Without Taylor at the helm, the lady Cards' offense stuttered and they lost 55-33.

Pine Eagle, with three seniors who would be named to the All-Star team later that evening, used a press and their experience to force the Cards into 32 turnovers.

Ione tried to press but "they ran right by us," said coach Dana Heideman. After watching the tape, Heideman noted that the lady Cards essentially "handed off" to them on the press and they were able to capitalize with lay-ins. The Spartans ran to a 22-12 first quarter lead and a 31-19 halftime advantage.

The lady Cardinals pulled to within seven in the third quarter before Pine Eagle cranked up their scoring machine again. The Cards were scoreless in the fourth quarter until Lynde Minster hit a three pointer with a minute and a half to go.

Jamie Lovett was Ione's high scorer with 13 points. Crystal Minster added nine. The Cards held the rebounding edge, 28-23, led by Lovett with seven and

Minster and Melissa McElligott with five each. Minster and Lovett each had two steals in the game.

The lady Cards struggled with their shooting, making just 11 of 45 for 24 percent from the floor. At the line, they hit 10 of 15 for 67 percent. Pine Eagle shot 23 of 64 for 36 percent from the field and nine of 15 for 60 percent from the line.

"They shot better and we had twice as many turnovers," commented coach Heideman.

Summing up the tournament and the year, Heideman said "It was a real good experience. We'll be back (to state) for another three or four years, and this year will pay big dividends in the next few years." With eight freshmen on the roster this season, he has reason to look forward to next year. "We had a great season. We had the opportunity to do better (at the state tourney) but that's the way it turned out, and fifth in state isn't too bad."

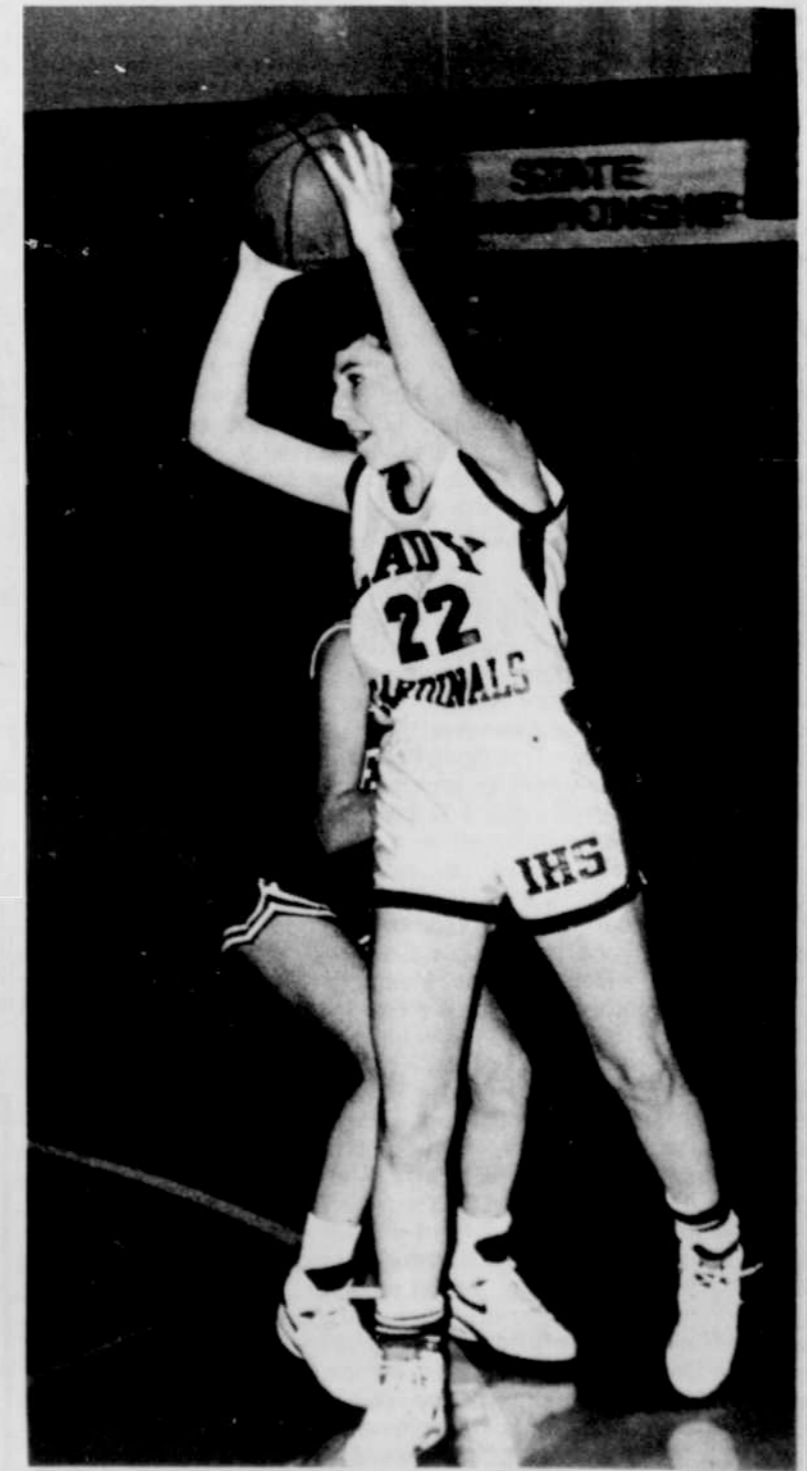
Heideman will graduate just one senior, Crystal Minster, the only player remaining from the 1990 state championship team. Besides playing at the state tournament twice, she was also part of two district championship teams and two third place (at district) teams during her high school career.



Jake Bacon (24) tries to get by Cove defender



Melissa McElligott drives on Spartans



Becky Wagenblast



Crystal Minster

Photos by Wayne Hams