

Signal Sports

Season comes to end for Lady Gulls

By Gary Henley
EO Media Group

The Seaside Lady Gulls had to be feeling pretty good midway through the first half of the March 13 consolation semifinal game vs. Banks, in the Class 4A state girls basketball tournament.

Not only had the Gulls beaten the Braves four times in four games over the last two years (including a 29-point thumping just over a month ago), Seaside held a 17-6 lead early in the second quarter of the state playoff.

But somewhere in the dimly lit gymnasium at Century High School, the Gulls lost their shooting touch, the lead, and ultimately the game, as their season came to a premature end.

A 10-0 run by Banks late in the first half put the Braves within striking distance at halftime, and they completed their comeback in the second half for a 44-37 win over the Gulls.

"Four times in a row that they got us, so we knew it was going to be tough," said Banks coach Brandon Bagley. "The last time we played they beat us by 29 at their place. But we saw some things that we could be successful with, and we felt like the way we've been playing lately, anything was possible."

And "anything" came true, as the Braves were finally able to beat Seaside. Their luck ran out, however, in Saturday's consolation final, in which Gladstone beat Banks, 54-31.

Sutherlin — riding a 55-game win streak — won the 4A state championship for the second year in a row, with a 51-46 win over Henley March 14.

Seaside's season ends at 20-7 overall, which included losses to both Henley and Sutherlin.



ALEX PAJUNAS PHOTO

The Banks Braves put the clamps on Seaside's Maddi Utti and the Seagulls to overcome a first-half deficit and take control of the game in the second.



ALEX PAJUNAS PHOTO

From left, Seaside's Jetta Ideue, Alie Zagata, Paige Ideue, Jesse Trott, and Allison Bussert carry their warm-ups and water bottles off the court following a 44-37 season-ending loss to the Banks Braves during consolation play in the state tournament March 13 at Century High School.

After winning the Cowapa League title and racking up a combined 3-1 record against Valley Catholic and Banks in the regular season, the Gulls were 0-2 against the same two teams in the state tournament, losing to the Valiants in a March 12 quarterfinal and to the Braves the following day.

Banks was coming off a record-setting loss to Henley in the quarterfinals, where the Hornets beat the Braves 39-

18 (the 18 points set a new 4A tournament record for fewest points in a game).

The Gulls did not fare much better in the quarterfinals, losing to Valley Catholic 61-30.

"Unfortunately, we had our two worst games of the season, back-to-back," said Seaside coach Wally Hamer, whose team had not scored under 40 points in a game since Jan. 6, then were held to

30 and 37 points, respectively, in the state tournament.

"It's no excuse. We just didn't play as well as we would have liked. That was disappointing," he said, adding, "we're really proud of the kids for the season. They did a good job."

And the Gulls appeared to be well on their way to their 21st win of the year, as Whitney Westerholm, Haylee Dundas and Sydney Villegas all knocked down jump shots, with Maddi Utti and Dundas both hitting 3-pointers in the closing minute of the first quarter for a 13-4 lead.

Utti scored twice on breakaways following turnovers for the 17-6 advantage. From there, Banks outscored Seaside 38-20 the remainder of the game.

Banks senior Madison Soper hit back-to-back 3-pointers off the bench late in the second quarter, capping a 10-0 run.

The Braves rode the momentum wave into the third period, where junior Megan Bunn made four straight free throws to start the quarter, Cassie Streblov and Jojo Wren both hit jump shots, and

Soper scored on an offensive rebound and a minute later made her third 3-point to give Banks a 29-26 lead.

Anna Klein scored on a layup with 1:02 left in the third, which sparked a 7-0 run for the Braves.

Seaside rallied midway through the final period, as Utti made four straight free throws and Paige Ideue hit a 3-pointer that had the Gulls within 38-36 with three minutes left.

But Banks would close by making 6-of-10 free throws in the final 2:13 to seal the win, while Seaside managed just one point in the final 2:30.

Bunn made just one field goal, but was 8-for-8 from the free throw line and pulled down nine rebounds for the Braves, while Soper finished with a team-high 11 points.

Utti poured in a game-high 15 points with five steals and four assists, but the Gulls struggled from the field for the second straight day.

After shooting 26 percent (12-of-46) against Valley Catholic, the Gulls finished 12-for-41 (29 percent) in the March 13 loss.

Seaside was a combined 6-for-34 from the 3-point line in the two games.

Both coaches agreed that the turning point came with the 10-0 run by the Braves in the second quarter.

"It seemed like the end of the second quarter, the last three or four minutes," Hamer said. "(Soper) kept them in the game. And then we got stagnant on offense and just didn't score."

Bagley said, "Madison Soper's two 3-pointers were huge for us. It got our momentum going. We've been struggling to score lately, so getting those two 3-pointers was huge."

"It's the biggest win we've had in a while," he said. "Megan Bunn played on the last team that made it to the final site, but other than that, this is the biggest game that these girls have been in."

"Megan hurt her ankle on Tuesday and Anna Klein hurt her shoulder (Thursday), and they both came out and battled," Bagley said. "It just shows the heart that these girls have."

Seaside loses just three seniors, Allison Bussert, Dundas and Shelby Miller.

"We appreciate them so much, because they worked really, really hard," Hamer said.

Cowapa League honors students

The Cowapa League honored the following Seaside High School students following league play in basketball:

Boys

Most valuable player of the year: Jackson Januik

First Team: Jaxson Smith

Honorable Mention: Hunter Thompson, Austin Eagon

Girls

Most Valuable Player of the Year: Maddi Utti

First Team: Haylee Dundas, Whitney Westerholm, Sydney Villegas

Honorable Mention: Allison Bussert

Get over it. Get screened.

A colonoscopy can save your life.

We know. It's not a test you're looking forward to. But because colon cancer has no early warning signs and can be deadly if it progresses, screening is essential. Colorectal cancer is highly preventable. If caught early, it's highly curable. If you are age 50 or older, or at higher risk, ask your doctor about colon cancer screening.

March is National Colon Cancer Awareness Month.

To learn more or to find a local physician who performs colonoscopies, please call 503-717-7000, or visit www.providence.org/coloncancer.

At Providence, it's not just health care, it's how we care.™

