

Seaside falls in thriller

'There was some craziness in that one'

By Gary Henley
EO Media Group

The Astoria boys basketball team took the less scenic route to get there, but once they reached their final destination Friday night, Jan. 29, at the Brick House, the view was pretty nice for the Fishermen. It was, simply, one for the books.

"We didn't play perfect in any way, shape or form, but we're starting to learn how to win," said Astoria boys coach Kevin Goin, following his team's 63-57 double overtime victory over Seaside.

The Fishermen hit a pair of clutch 3-pointers to end both the fourth quarter and the first overtime, and beat the Gulls in the first of two regular season meetings.

Yes, the Brick House was packed and a-rockin' Friday night. And rightly so.

There's nothing like a Clatsop Clash doubleheader, with all four teams playing highly competitive basketball.

At stake on the boys' side — bragging rights, first place in the league standings — and possibly the inside track to a league title.

Astoria had to overcome a few rough spots to defeat the Gulls in double overtime, while Seaside won an equally important girls' game, 45-32.

"It was a barn-burner," Goin said of the opener. "There was some craziness in that one."

Both teams had major meltdowns at the free throw line late in the boys' game — Astoria was 1-for-7 in the fourth quarter and first overtime, while the Gulls missed seven straight free throws in the first OT session.

One made free throw by either team would have ended it. So could any one of the several close range shots the Fishermen took late in the game, but missed.

"We had so many opportunities that one time down the floor," Goin said. "They just didn't go in, and that's part of basketball. Shots



JEFF TER HAR PHOTO/FOR SEASIDE SIGNAL

Jackson Janik drives to the basket against Astoria.

go in, shots don't go in ... you just have to play through it and see what you can get."

And since the free throws and freebies weren't going in, the Fishermen had to rely on two 3-pointers in the final 30 seconds of the fourth period, in which they trailed 45-41 with 40 seconds left.

Derek Jarrett hit the first with 30 seconds remaining to bring Astoria to within 45-44.

Following a layup by Seaside's Jaxson Smith that gave the Gulls a 47-44 lead, Astoria's Fridtjof Fremstad drained a 3-pointer to tie it with seven seconds on the clock, sending the game to overtime.

In the final 1:05 of the first OT, the Gulls missed seven of eight free throws, but still led 52-49.

With 12 seconds left and no time outs available, Fishermen junior Ole Englund connected on Astoria's second miracle shot, a 3-pointer from 25 feet that tied the game with nine seconds left.

The Gulls were unable to answer, and the Clatsop Clash headed to a second overtime.

Jarrett and Ryan Palek scored back-to-back hoops for a quick 56-52 lead, before Seaside's Jackson Januik made his fourth 3-pointer of the game, cutting Astoria's lead to 58-57 with just under two minutes left.

Ironically, the Fishermen clinched at the free throw line, with Justin Fruiht making four straight in the final 51 seconds.

"I keep telling kids to fight through stuff and play through it ... I'm just glad our kids finally got through all that," Goin said. "We've hung our heads at times and struggled to deal with things. But I was real happy with the way they fought back."

And "for a group that doesn't shoot threes very well at all, we hit some big ones," he said.

Fruiht led Astoria with 16 points — none in the fourth quarter, but six in overtime.

"He's starting to heal up (from a knee injury suffered in the Dulcich Tournament)," Goin said. "He's kind of struggled and his mobility is limited, but he stepped up in the second half, rebounding. Palek helped out on the boards, Derek (Jarrett) did a much better job the second half, and Ole got some huge rebounds for a kid who's not very big and strapping."

Englund had 14 points and Jarrett had 13, while Januik scored 18 for Seaside. He had three 3-pointers in the first quarter, but only four points the remainder of regulation.

Austin Eagon and Smith had 11 points apiece for the Gulls, who

made six 3-pointers, but missed on 16 other attempts.

"We played really well defensively in the second half," Goin said. "We didn't score much in the third quarter, but I kept looking up, and they weren't scoring either."

In fact, the Gulls had just six made field goals in the second half of regulation.

"We didn't take the opportunities that were given us," Seaside coach Bill Westerholm said. "I think we were 1-for-10 (on free throws) down the stretch, and all we have to do is hit one of those to close it out."

"We had a couple defensive breakdowns when they hit their threes," he added. "They didn't have any time outs at the end of the first overtime, and all we had to do was guard the perimeter, but didn't."

Still, he said, "you have to give credit to Astoria. They stepped up and made those shots when they needed them."

"We'll bounce back," he said. "Our kids know what they need to do, and we'll be back and playing."

The strength of the Cowapa League is certainly showing in the state rankings.

Seaside is tied for third in the Cowapa, but the Gulls are also ranked No. 3 in the latest state rankings, and "by far the best team I've seen in our state, game in and game out," Goin said. "You can always lose in basketball, and if you can beat that team, you can beat anybody or play with anybody."

"It's a huge thing for us. Our kids are starting to get some confidence and starting to learn how to do some things."

The win puts eighth-ranked Astoria (3-1 in league) in a tie for first in the Cowapa with No. 7 Scappoose, while Banks upset 10th-ranked Valley Catholic, now 2-2 in league along with the Gulls.

"It's going to be one of those leagues," Goin said. "It's going to get interesting. We knew our league was going to have four really tough teams, and even Banks and Tillamook are very good."

"You have to show up every night, and you can't have off nights."

Lady Gulls win Clash, snap skid

EO Media Group

For the first time since the 2009-10 season, the Astoria girls came into a Clatsop Clash with a better league record (2-1) than the Gulls (1-2). But — for the eighth straight meeting between the two rivals — the Gulls came out with more points, as Seaside broke a 20-20 halftime tie (and a two-game losing streak) by outscoring the Lady Fishermen 16-3 in the third quarter, on its way to a 45-32 victory on Astoria's home floor.

Maddi Utti was back in the lineup for the Gulls, as she recovers from an ankle sprain. She finished with 11 points and seven rebounds, and her return to the floor had the Gulls playing with more confidence. Seaside had just 10 turnovers for the game, Sydney Villegas scored 13 points with eight rebounds, and Paige Ideue had eight points. Whitney Westerholm dished out seven assists. Part of Seaside's game plan was to take as many 3-pointers as possible — which they did, launching 25 shots from behind the arc, making seven.

Meanwhile, Astoria's game plan was sidetracked by turnovers — 28 of them, 17 in the first half. Other than that, the Fishermen played well, rallying from an early 8-0 deficit to tie the game at halftime on a Chloe Hunt 3-pointer, 20-20. But it was the opening minutes of the third quarter that made the difference. Utti and Westerholm knocked down back-to-back 3-point shots, Utti scored on an offensive rebound, Ideue scored off a turnover, and Westerholm's second trey gave the Gulls a 33-20 lead.

Astoria was just 2-of-11 from the field in the second half, 9-of-24 for the game. The Gulls took more than twice as many shots and finished 15-for-52. "The difference in the game was the third quarter," Seaside coach Wally Hamer said. "We made some shots and got some stops, I thought Astoria did a good job defensively, and of course Chloe Hunt played very well. We just need to keep moving forward and everyone on the team play tough."



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