

BOYS BASKETBALL

GULLS READY FOR THE SWEET 16

By Gary Henley
Seaside Signal

The 66-55 victory over Banks Feb. 15 was the very definition of a “Statement Win” for the Seaside Gulls.

The Braves can be right proud of their league championship. They were the best of the regular season. But the “defending state champions” label still resides in Seaside.

And that was Seaside’s statement Thursday at the Gulls’ Nest: Seaside is still the team to beat in 4A boys basketball.

The Gulls certainly left no doubt about it. Trailing 9-1 just minutes into the game, out-sized at almost every position ... Seaside found the heart, the drive and the defensive tenacity to run circles around the bigger Braves.

A 5-point play for the Gulls with 4:02 left in the game didn’t hurt.

Behind 50-45 nearing the midway point of the fourth quarter, Seaside’s Chase Januik made two free throws to make it 50-47.

The Gulls made a defensive stop at the other end, and seconds later, Brayden Johnson made the Shot of the Night for Seaside.

His 3-pointer at the 4:02 mark went in, and the Gulls simultaneously drew a foul underneath the boards. Ryan Hague sank both free throws, and Seaside never trailed again.

In less than a minute, the Braves’ 50-45 lead turned into a 56-50 advantage for the Gulls.

Game over.
“We haven’t had that many kids engaged in our defensive scheme in a game this year,” said Seaside coach Bill Westerholm, who picked up career win No. 256. “When everybody is on the same page, and everybody is engaged in the scheme and flying around and playing with a lot of heart ... we can get a lot done. These kids tonight were all flying around.”

Which is exactly what you want from a bunch of Seagulls.

Seaside spent much of the night trying to deal with Banks’ senior Dalton Renne, who finished with a game-high 26 points, 17 in the second half.

The Gulls trailed 24-20 midway through the second quarter, when Beau Johnson hit a 3-pointer and Brayden Johnson followed with another trey for a 25-24 lead. Hague



JEFF TER HAR/FOR SEASIDE SIGNAL

Fans cheer the Gulls on during the team’s win against Banks.

scored on a layup and Brayden Johnson drained another 3-pointer, helping Seaside post a 30-26 lead at the half.

“We did a better job in the second quarter and second half of attacking and kicking the ball out, and taking the open looks,” Westerholm said. “And it’s tough to shoot those shots against those long arms.”

Defensively, “we were trying to create opportunities to trap, get the ball out of Renne’s hands and force other kids to beat us,” he said. “Renne still had 26, but they were a hard 26. He had to make some difficult shots.”

It was Brayden Johnson’s 3-pointer at the 4:02 mark that completely turned everything in Seaside’s favor. The Braves lost their composure, and the Seaside crowd took over.

“Home court is pretty big in our league,” said Westerholm, whose team lost three games on the road in league this season. “Banks has a good crowd, we’ve got a good crowd, Tillamook’s got a good crowd ... we’ve got a young group, and sometimes playing on the road is hard.

“But we didn’t have all of our kids the last time (in a 60-33 loss at Banks Jan.

30),” he said. “We had a lot of young kids up there. We had more of our seasoned kids tonight.”

Most of whom are sophomores and juniors. That list includes Brayden Johnson, the sophomore who finished with a team-high 18 points off the bench. Januik, Hague and Payton Westerholm all scored 13 points apiece.

“Brayden Johnson was completely frantic in the last game,” coach Westerholm said. “He calmed down and hit some big shots for us.”

Seaside also made 20-of-31 free throws (13-of-20 in the fourth quarter alone), to the Braves 7-for-10.

Another spark for the Gulls was the fear of losing.

“We knew the scenarios of what was going to happen if we lost,” Westerholm said. “We might have had to travel for a Play-in game, and I told them we’d be practicing (today) and Monday. That might have lit a fire under ‘em.”

The Braves “tried to be physical with us, and it bothered us at times,” he said. “But we kept battling, and things started going our way.”



COLIN MURPHY/EO MEDIA GROUP

Brooklynn Hankwitz rebounds the ball for Astoria during the Clatsop Clash.

Lady Gulls defeated by Astoria in finale

By Gary Henley
Seaside Signal

There wasn’t too much at stake for the Astoria girls basketball team Feb. 21 at the Brick House.

Win or lose, the Lady Fishermen were moving on to the regional play-in round, and win or lose, their ranking wasn’t going to change. Much.

But when it’s a Clatsop Clash, there’s the “personal pride” thing. And that was enough to get Astoria fired up for the Cowapa League playoff with Seaside.

Brooklynn Hankwitz scored 16 points, and the Lady Fishermen topped the Gulls for the third time this season, 46-36.

The season came to an end for the Gulls, 8-17 overall.

Astoria managed to overcome the dreaded “third meeting” jinx in Wednesday’s game. Even though Seaside lost both regular season meetings, the advantage usually belongs to the losing team the third time around.

“I hate playing the same team three times in a season,” said Astoria coach Mike Jacobson. “It doesn’t matter who it is or how you’ve played against them, it’s tough to beat a team three times.

“And Seaside played well tonight,” he said. “I watched them the other night against Scappoose, and they played well. They wanted to win.”

At the same time, it’s tough to beat coach Jacobson in Clatsop Clash league playoff games.

In three post-season meetings between Astoria and Seaside since 2006, Jacobson is a combined 3-0 as coach (2-0 as Seaside’s coach, now 1-0 with Astoria).

Wednesday’s final score might have favored Seaside, if the Gulls had not missed 16 free throws and 32 shots from the field. Seaside also had 25 turnovers.

As it was, neither team was shy about shooting the ball, as the Gulls and Fishermen combined to take 104 shots from the field, missing 78.

And with a combined 26 fouls in the second half, it was tough for either team to get into a rhythm. Astoria would threaten to pull away several times, and Seaside would respond with a run of its own. The Gulls simply ran out of time.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Home loss ends Jewell season

Seaside Signal

JEWELL — Of the eight first round state playoff games in the Class 1A girls basketball bracket, the home team won six.

The Jewell Lady Jays were one of the unlucky home teams that came up short.

Southwest Christian paid a visit to the Jays’ gym Feb. 21, and left with a 34-29 win.

The loss ends an otherwise successful year for Jewell, 14-9 overall. Southwest Christian (18-8) advances to play at Powder Valley in the Sweet 16.

“It was a close game — we just made a couple mistakes at a couple key times,” said Jewell

coach Mark Fick. “And they took advantage. We played ‘em tough, they were just a little taller and made more shots.”

“The girls had a great season,” Fick said of his team. “It was a fun group to work with, probably because they over-achieved so much.”

Jewell led 9-4 after one quarter, before the Wildcats went on a 19-10 run in the second period.

Haley Norman led Jewell with 10 points and seven rebounds, followed by Gabi Morales (nine points, nine boards) and Emma Guillen (six points, five rebounds, five steals). Freshman Kayla Morgan scored 15 for the Wildcats.

Seaside’s Shipley scores at state swim meet

Seaside Signal

GRESHAM — Seaside’s Josh Shipley entered the state swim meet Feb. 16 as the fourth-fastest swimmer in the boys’ 50-yard freestyle event, with a time of 22.77 seconds.

In Friday’s preliminary heat, Shipley swam a 22.55, the third-best qualifying time.

And in Saturday’s final, Shipley improved his time and place yet again, finishing the 50 freestyle in 22.10 seconds for a second-place medal.

Shipley was the only North Coast athlete to score points in the OSAA state meet, held Feb. 16-17 at Mt. Hood Community College in

Gresham.

His second-place finish behind Henley senior T.J. Morgan (22.10) earned Seaside five points in the final team standings. Newport won the boys’ team title with 74 points, well ahead of second-place North Bend (48).

North Bend won the girls’ team championship with 66 points, edging Sweet Home (57). Tillamook was fifth and Newport seventh.

Ironically, Shipley was unable to qualify for the finals in his top event, the 100-yard breaststroke, in which he was the second-seeded swimmer entering the meet. His time of 1:03.69 placed him seventh in the preliminaries (the top six advance to finals).

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