

THE EUREKA REPORTER



Jackie Christensen/The Eureka Reporter

The varsity Lady Panthers are all smiles on the bench Wednesday night as they cruised past Eureka in Big 5 action 50-28.

Panthers closing in

by Jackie Christensen, 2/9/2006

The McKinleyville Lady Panthers put on a defensive clinic Wednesday night en route to a 50-28 victory over Eureka at McKinleyville High School in prep basketball.

With the win the Panthers remain unbeaten in Big 5 play at 5-0, while the Loggers (3-3) dropped into third place after Arcata (4-2) beat Del Norte.

McKinleyville hit the ground running in the game as it quickly put up a 20-3 lead in the first quarter.

The Loggers (11-9) had no offensive response for the mixed zone and man-to-man defense of the Panthers (16-6) as Eureka not only struggled to score, but just to get the ball anywhere near the basket.

Panther senior and UC Davis-bound Ashley Curry racked up enough defensive stats for an entire team and Eureka trailed 35-9 at halftime.

“When the ball isn’t falling there’s not much you can do,” said Panthers head coach Brad Warze about Eureka’s offense. “But when you have Curry standing in the paint with double-digit blocks, it helps.”

Eureka didn’t break double digit scoring in the game until there were two minutes remaining in the third quarter.

“Our main goal was to come out hard right from the beginning,” Curry said. “We play defense as a team and the way we talk and move allows to know where other players on the court are without having to see them.”

Eureka trailed the entire game but even when the game was far out of reach, the team never gave up and the Loggers outscored McKinleyville in the second half 18-15.

Freshman Kelly Kime scored all 13 of her points in the fourth quarter.

“Defensively I thought we played well tonight and I was proud of the team for not folding in the second half,” said Loggers head coach Kristie Christiansen. “We just couldn’t put the ball in the basket.”

Panther senior Courtney Cuffee scored a game-high 17 points while Curry added 10 points.

Both teams’ next games are scheduled for Friday with the Loggers hosting South Fork at College of the Redwoods, while the Panthers host Del Norte.