

Island Sports

Jamestown girls anchor Skippers freshman team

By Adrienne Downing

Every sports team has their rival, the team their practices are focused around and they get fired up to play, and the North Kingstown High School freshman girls' basketball team is no exception. The girls finished the season with a 12-2 record, 7-1 in Western Division play, including 30-point victories over Barrington, Tiverton and Cumberland. Given the chance, the only part of the season they wish they could play over again is the second half of the state tournament game against division rival, Westerly.

The Bulldogs handed the Skippers their only regular season defeat, a 50-46 overtime loss at North Kingstown, but they still felt good about their chances going into the final game against their nemesis.

The tournament started with North easily defeating Tiverton 59-28 at home, followed by a 38-28 win over Portsmouth on the road.



Eloise Heath, #13, Allison Smith, #34, Hannah Farrelly, #4 and Kelly Scully, #32 position themselves for a rebound during a game at Portsmouth High School.

Photo by Liz Perez

"The first game against Westerly was so close we knew we had a chance to beat them in the finals," islander Eloise Heath said. "We had improved a lot since we had played them, but I don't think we were prepared for the fact they had improved a lot, too."

It was a tight first half in the fi-

nal game against the Bulldogs, but the Skippers took an 18-14 lead into the locker room at halftime.

"In the second half they outscored us, they forced us to turn the ball over quite a bit and out rebounded us," coach Lynn Downey said. "They were very aggressive the second half, beating us to the ball on rebounds and they played tremendous defense."

Downey said the one thing her team needed to strengthen this year was being more aggressive when rebounding. Despite that weakness, she was pleased with her team's effort. "It was a good game and my team played hard the entire game," she said.

One advantage the team had going into the season was that over half of the team had played together on the Lawn Avenue School team.

Heath, along with Allison Smith, Sarah Crowell, Hannah

Farrelly, Danielle Perez, Katie Bednarczyk and Kelly Scully left a big hole on Dave Pritchard's Warrior team when they all graduated together, but the girls found that knowing each other and their playing styles was a definite strength of the NK team.

"I am glad they had an all freshman team. It really helped us to transition into North Kingstown basketball and prepare us to play at the next level," Perez said. She pointed out how Downey's coaching helped the seven girls assimilate with the other six players they did not know as well.

"Coach Downey made practices fun. She would play games with us that helped us know the new players we had not played with before," she said.

It would have been easy for the island girls to remain a closed group, but Downey praised them for their ability to blend in with the

team and make the season a successful one.

"It was nice that this group came as friends into the season. It made it a little easier for me as a coach to help to build a total team atmosphere. They knew each other's strengths on the court because of similar basketball experiences they have had together, so that was an asset to our season," the coach said. "The Jamestown group is a wonderful group of kids, as was my whole team. During our season, they worked hard, wanted to learn and improve and were very supportive of their teammates. They were a pleasure to have as part of my team."

Unlike some coaches, Downey only has her players for one season before they move on to the junior varsity or varsity level. As she reflects back on the strong season, she hopes the girls will take away the lessons they learned this year and continue building their game.

"My entire team this season was a very cohesive group, they would come to practice and work hard each day and were very helpful to each other to continue to learn the game and improve their skills both individually and as a team. They pushed each other to always give their best," Downey concluded. "They had fun all the time. While we were working hard each day, we also had a lot of fun this season while we were working to reach our team goals."

JYC Spring racing results

Race number 2 of the Jamestown Yacht Club Spring Series was held on May 15. The following are the results for the race:

A Class: 1. Downhill Express, Swan 42, T. and C. Hirsch; 2. Slipstream, Beneteau 36.7, J. Collins; 3. Floating Point, Frers 40, P. Clayton.

B Class: 1. Fast Lane, J/24, A. and H. Lane; 2. Blues Eracer, J/22, L. Mariorenzi; 3. Aurora, Tartan 41, A. Kallfelz; 4. Time Bandit, MM 30, R. Fadden; 5. All In, J/24, P. Schmidle; 6. Ghost, Express 27, M. DeAngeli; 7. Rhapsody, J.30, B. Kneller.

C Class: 1. Madrigal, J/130, W. Kimball; 2. Hydra, Cal 33, J. Riedel; 3. Second Wind, Seid 30T, S. Parfit; 4. Chairman A, Pearson EL, R. Bestoso.

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