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Another strong finish for Yosemite's AAU girls travel basketball team

Submitted



Yosemite's Liza Schlosser, No. 20, scores two points with this running lay-up, trailed by the Yosemite center, Emily Richie, No. 21.

SACRAMENTO — The Yosemite Badgers eighth-grade girls travel basketball team competed in Sacramento this past weekend in a two-day tournament that was hosted by Sacramento Area Sports and the Amateur Athletic Union.

The Badgers competed against some of the very best travel teams from northern California and Nevada and soundly defeated last year's "Shoot the Rock" champions, in the Badgers' final game on Sunday against the Tracy Lightning. The win clinched a third-place finish.

Yosemite guards, Katie Menton, Ashley Nichols and Crystal Lachawicz took turns at the point position and helped orchestrate the Badgers' offense with Kristin Slayton, Michelle Lalev and Lisa Schlosser at the forward positions. In addition, the Badger centers Patricia O'Neill and Emily Richie teamed up with new teammate, Ellie Berg, to secure a 41-31 Badger victory over the Nor Cal Sparx.

The game was played at Silverado Middle School in Roseville on Saturday morning. The Nor Cal team made a run late in the third quarter to tie the game, but the Badgers never gave up and eventually recaptured the lead.

After the game, head coach, Jeff Nichols, praised the Badgers for their efforts and said, "I am very happy with our overall performance and victory, but I am even happier with our sportsmanship. We kept our composure and battled back for a well deserved victory."

Narrow loss, game 2

The Badgers played their second game of the day against the "Jam-on-it" team from Reno at Olympus Middle School in Rocklin.

Although the Badgers matched up well defensively, Badger forward Kristin Slayton and center Patricia O'Neill got into early foul

trouble with four fouls each by the half.

The Nevada team used this to their advantage and outscored the Badgers in the second half to beat Yosemite with a score of 31-55.

After the loss, Badger's assistant coach Otto Schlosser said, "We played a great game, but have to give the Nevada team a lot of credit. They took advantage of our early foul trouble and made the best of it. We may have learned more from this loss than we did from our earlier win."

The Badgers rebounded in game three and completely dominated the Tracy Lightning from start to finish. With super defense, Yosemite shut out the Lightning in the first quarter of play and took a 14-0 lead.

The Badgers continued their stellar performance and allowed only four points by the Tracy Lightning during the first half while racking up 17 points of their own. The Badgers never looked back during the second half and finished the game with a 37-21 victory. Club president, Rick Slayton said, "I have never been more proud of our girls.

Without exception, every single one of our players gave an MVP performance and contributed to our 'team' victory. I was simply amazed to see how much our girls have improved and to see how well they can now play together as a team. It's games and performances like this that make [the time and effort] all worthwhile."

Praise for Badger coaching

Slayton also praised the Badgers' coaching staff and said, "Head coach Jeff Nichols and assistant coach Otto Schlosser have spent countless hours in team practices and pre-game preparations.

Their dedication and support is not only appreciated by our players and parents, but by all of our mountain

communities. Not only have they helped to promote youth basketball, they have instilled pride in our young Yosemite Badgers by helping them to become the best they can be so that they can compete with the best and win.”

The Badgers eighth-grade girls travel basketball team has a busy schedule during the coming months with plans to attend several more tournaments in Sacramento and Santa Maria. During November, the Badgers will be holding additional tryouts for positions on their 10-and-under, 13-and-under and 15-and-under girls travel teams.

Anyone interested may contact Yosemite Youth Basketball Association's head coach Jeff Nichols at 641-6811.

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