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Win for the ages: Bellevue boys rally

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by [Nathan Fenno](#)
Journal Reporter

BELLEVUE-- Bob McDonald walked out of Bellevue Community College's gymnasium feeling a few years older Tuesday night.

Somehow his Bellevue boys basketball team had survived to play another day. Behind an astonishing fourth- quarter rally, the Wolverines defeated Sammamish 76-70 in the first round of the 3A Kingco Conference tournament to escape a loser-out contest.

"My hair is a lot grayer," McDonald said. "We played 24 minutes of horrible basketball and eight minutes of great basketball."

Bellevue plays Newport on Thursday at BCC in a winner-to-district game.

With five minutes left in regulation Tuesday night, Bellevue trailed by 16 points. By the time the overtime period ended, the Wolverines (12-8) were celebrating one of their biggest wins of the season. After the game, McDonald quipped that he drew it up like this.

You can't make up this stuff.

When Matt Coombs hit a long 3-pointer to cut the Sammamish (5-15) lead to 51-41 with 4:29 left, Bellevue was jolted back to life. Robert Vasen followed with a long jumper and Eliot Green hit a 3-pointer. Bellevue couldn't miss.

"He hasn't been able to hit a shot in a month," McDonald said of Coombs, "and then he hits that one."

Tommy Tomsic, who had three key steals in the final two and a half minutes, and the rest of the Wolverines swarmed the Totems on defense. Coombs put his team ahead with a 1-handed layup with 1 minute left. Coombs and Tomsic combined for 17 of the Wolverines' 28 points in the quarter.

At halftime, McDonald talked to his team about pride. He had tried different lineups and timeouts and substitutions. Nothing seemed to work until Coombs' 3-pointer sailed through.

"That was crazy," Coombs said. "We needed something to pick us up."

Sammamish's Peter Stevens sent the game to overtime with a 3-pointer from the left side as the horn sounded. Stevens, who scored 21 points, raised his arms in the air as teammates mobbed him.

Buoyed by five straight points from Green, Bellevue outscored the Totems 14-8 in the extra period. Tomsic finally put the game away with a 3-pointer with 39 seconds left.

"We hadn't played too well until the last part of the game," Coombs said. "Hopefully we can carry this over into our next game."

The loss overshadowed an impressive effort from the young Totems, playing under first-year head coach Chris O'Connor. Earlier this season, Bellevue beat them 65-46. Sammamish looked like a different team Tuesday night, taking a 8-0 first quarter lead and playing like veterans, even though Stevens was the only senior on the roster Tuesday night.

Freshman Thomas Bright had 16 points for Sammamish and junior Colby Wick





added 13.

Tomsic finished with 18 points for Bellevue, Green had 16 and Coombs added 11.

* Skyline 54, Liberty 38: An unlikely shot helped pull the Spartans (11-7) out of a slow start and top the Patriots (4-17).

Ian Tushar hit a halfcourt heave as time expired in the first quarter to continue his legacy of long shots. Skyline trailed 15-14 after the first, but went on a 12-4 run in the second to take control of the game. Last year, Tushar hit a 70-foot game-winner against Mount Si.

"It's always good to hit at the last second," Skyline's Matt Nelson said. "That helped. There's always a little boost."

Skyline plays Mount Si Thursday at BCC.

"They had us out of our rhythm," Nelson said. "We had to play through it. It's always good when you can fight through like that."

Nelson scored 19 points and Tushar had 13.

Girls

* Skyline 60, Sammamish 27: The Spartans (11-10) rallied behind their absent head coach to easily beat the Totems (3-18).

Jodi Sackville, Skyline's first-year head coach, missed the game after passing out during practice Saturday after battling the flu all week. Doug Sackville, her father one of her assistant coaches, took over the head coaching duties for his daughter. She watched the first half of the game from the bleachers before leaving.

"She's part of the team," said Skyline's Laura Payne, who scored a game-high 20 points. "We've been going with such momentum now. That helped inspire us the ."

By halftime, the Spartans led 37-10 and all 12 players on their bench had played. Payne had eight points in the second quarter and Danica Dougherty scored seven of her nine points in the first.

Jodi Sackville said she wasn't sure when she would return to the sidelines.

Jessica Myers had 10 points for Sammamish.

Skyline plays Mount Si Thursday at BCC.

* Liberty 48, Mercer Island 47: Behind a 9-0 run in the fourth quarter, the Patriots (11-10) held on to top the Islanders (9-12). Hilary Tanneberg's putback of a miss by Katie Connors with 1:54 left gave Liberty the lead for good.

Beth Richards' steal and layup brought Mercer Island within one and the Islanders got the ball back with 2.9 seconds left, but Richards' 3-pointer bounced off.

Last year, the Islanders that ended the Patriots' season with a 64-62 overtime win in the Sea-King district tournament. Earlier this season, Mercer Island needed two overtimes to beat Liberty, 67-63.

Rebekah Bartholomew led the Patriots with 18 points and Tanneberg had 12.

Tiffany Lee hit three 3-pointers and scored 13 points for the Islanders. Richards, the league's leading scorer, was held to a season-low seven points. She had 35 points in the double-overtime win against Liberty, but couldn't find her shot Tuesday night, missing her first eight and finishing 3-for-19 from the floor.

The Patriots play Newport Thursday at BCC.

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