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Harmony duo reach 1,000-point mark together

Wednesday, December 31, 2008

By Josh Mlot *Sports Writer*

PATTON - Milestones are named as such because they are benchmarks - accomplishments that only an elite few reach. In basketball - at least in the amateur ranks, and especially at the high school level - one of the major scoring milestones is the 1,000 career point plateau.

In the history of Harmony girls basketball, only two players have surpassed the mark. That is, until now.

In just a single season that number has doubled, as junior Alyson Leyo scored point No. 1,000 Tuesday night against Northern Cambria and senior teammate Megan Brink reached the goal earlier this winter against Brockway.

So how do two girls on one team reach the rarified air of the 1,000-point club at nearly the same time? Both players chalk it up to their teammates, coaches and the people around them.

"I've had all the help from my teammates," Leyo said.

"I couldn't do it myself."

"(Our coaches) make us go hard, and I definitely think that's a part of it. They push us every day."

Not only would they be unable to get to this point in their careers without help from others, they wouldn't want it any other way.

"Ever since we ever got to varsity we've talked about getting our 1,000 points together and scoring high together," Leyo said, "so it was awesome for us to be able to do that."

"She's like family," Brink added. "We're together at school, we're together all the time. Our whole team is like family and I was really excited for her."

Brink was the first to get there, scoring 18 points in a 63-46 home victory over Brockway on Dec. 17.

"It was really exciting," Brink said. "I wanted to reach it, but I was all for teamwork, too. It wasn't all about me getting my 1,000th point."

Unselfish even at perhaps the greatest individual moment in her career, Brink was able to get pleasure out of seeing her teammate hit the mark with a lot of time left in her high school career.



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"I was really happy for her," Brink said. "For her to reach it as a junior is a big accomplishment. It was nice to have two in one year like that."

With a season and a half to go before she graduates, Leyo not only joined Brink and former Lady Owls Amanda Dospoy and Misti McKeen as 1,000-point scorers, but she is also on pace to smash Dospoy's Harmony all-time scoring mark of 1,229, set in 1998.

"It's amazing to me," Leyo said. "I never thought I'd be able to (reach 1,000) my junior year."

And while Alyson may find it hard to believe how far she's come, she's not the only one who has to pinch themselves every once in a while. Head coach and father Joe Leyo has been along for the ride the whole time.

"It's tremendous," he said. "I can't believe it's true."

With individual achievements out of the way for the time being, both Brink and Leyo are keeping their eyes on what matters most to them - playoff success for the Lady Owls. After losing to Conemaugh Valley in the first round last year, the two sweet-shooting forwards want to make sure that doesn't happen again.

"As a team we don't want to lose any more games this season and go farther than one game in the playoffs," Leyo said before reiterating what is most important. "We want to go farther."

Brink didn't need any prodding to announce what sort of legacy she wants to leave behind at Harmony, either.

"Just to make it further than last year."



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