Inexperience doesn't stop Bingham sophs

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

The Bingham girls sophomore basketball team started the 2010-11 season with a lot of questions.

A lot of the school's younger players had been moved up to the varsity, leaving coaches Jenny Cluff and Jessica Wilcock with a team filled with a lot of freshmen. That made them one year younger than most of their opponents.

To compound the situation, on the afternoon of their first game, coach Cluff had a baby. That left Wilcock, a 2007 Bingham graduate, in charge, if only for that short time.

"We were really nervous … and anxious to see how we would do," Wilcock said. "But we were shocked at how well the team played together. They had the best chemistry I had ever seen."

Bingham won its first game – at home against Jordan – by 42 points. The Miners went on to post an impressive 19-1 record. Wilcock said the highlight of the season was winning at Riverton.

"That means we had the best record of any of our three teams," Wilcock said. "The girls were pretty proud of that."

Of the team's 13 players, 10 were freshmen. The Miners were led by Emily Anderson, Haley Tebbs, Berlin Gago, Ana Lokotui, Tara Fennell, Carynn Duke, Viola Langi and others.

"The freshmen really mixed in well in practice, and that just made us better," Wilcock said. "Every game, we learned new things and overcame challenges."

The team's only lowlight really was a 46-19 loss to Syracuse. That was a challenge the Miners turned into a positive.

"It was a rude awakening," Wilcock said. "They pressed us and we didn't do well. After that, we really worked on it and didn't struggle against the press the rest of the season."

All of Bingham's players earned time on the court. Many of the Miners' victories were blowout wins, so the coaches were able to substitute freely.

Ana Lokotui looks to establish position against her defender during a late-season home game.

Wilcock said Viola Langi and Holly Sorensen improved the most during the season. Langi became good at pushing the ball and getting the tempo going, and Fenell "stepped up her game and was one of the people who carried us late in the season."

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2010-11 roster

No.	Name	Year
10	Emily Anderson	Soph.
12	Makenzi Schiess	Soph.
14	Brandi Yazzie	Fr.
21	Haley Tebbs	Fr.
22	Berlin Gago	Fr.
23	Carynn Duke	Fr.
24	Jaiden Achermann	Fr.
30	Tara Fennell	Soph.
31	Emma Casaril	Fr.
32	Ana Lokotui	Fr.
33	Courtney Roberts	Fr.
34	Holly Sorensen	Fr.
35	Viola Langi	Fr.

Coaches: Jenni Clough, Jessica Wilcock

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The team suffered only a few injuries. Lokotui got pneumonia and missed a week during the season, and Tebbs broke her nose twice. Fennell injuried her shoulder, but was back within a couple of days.

Wilcock expects this group of players to eventually become a big part of the varsity. However, with the varsity losing just four seniors from this year's squad, finding a place for them might be difficult.

But there's no denying the group's talent. The 19-1 overall record, and unbeaten Region 3 mark, should make for a bright future for Bingham basketball.

2010-11 results (19-1)

Date	Opponent	W/L	Score
Nov. 30	JORDAN	W	56-17
	Berlin Gago scores 10 as Bingham gets a hot start.		
Dec. 2	at Brighton	W	62-14
	Emily Anderson and Ana Lokotui had 10 points each.		
Dec. 4	WEBER	W	41-34
	Anderson has 11 as Miners hold on at the end.		
Dec. 7	CYPRUS	W	74-23
	Gago (13) and Anderson (12) form 1-2 scoring punch.		
Dec. 14	at Alta	W	50-19
	Anderson has season-high 18 in easy win.		
Dec. 16	SYRACUSE	L	19-46
	No offense as Bingham gets rolled.		
Dec. 22	at Davis	W	35-30
	Gago and Courtney Roberts top scorers in close game.		
Dec. 31	LAYTON	W	37-35
	Lokotui and Viola Langi key close victory.		
Jan. 4	COPPER HILLS*	W	44-31
	Brandi Yazzie nailed three treys in region win.		
Jan. 6	KEARNS*	W	33-24
	Lokotui had 11 as Bingham pulls away at the end.		
Jan. 11	TAYLORSVILLE*	W	57-26
	Holly Sorenson helps build big lead in easy win.		
Jan. 13	at Riverton*	W	53-45
	Anderson (17 pts.) has big game in important matchup.		
Jan. 18	HERRIMAN*	W	51-32
	Bingham rolls early. Lokotui leads with 10 points		
Jan. 20	at West Jordan*	W	43-19
	Miners shut out Jags in first quarter.		
Jan. 25	at Copper Hills*	W	36-28
	Gago scores eight, but Miners' defense is the key.		
Feb. 1	at Kearns*	W	41-25
	Langi, Carynn Duke and Yazzie lead on offense.		
Feb. 3	at Taylorsville*	W	44-15
	Lokotui had eight, but Bingham's defense is the tops.		
Feb. 8	RIVERTON*	W	44-34
	Big second quarter keys second win over rival.		
Feb. 10	at Herriman*	W	39-9
	Team effort and great defense key another victory.		
Feb. 15	WEST JORDAN*	W	53-20
	Langi, Gago top scorers as Bingham ends with smile.		

* - Region 3 games. Home games in CAPS