



Riverton's players and staff show their focus during the National Anthem prior to the start of their first 5A state tourney game.

# Riverton ekes out first-round win

Silverwolves survive tough Brighton team and advance in tourney

By Amy Donaldson  
Deseret News

The Brighton Bengals and Riverton Silverwolves celebrated President's Day by working as hard as they could to hang onto their playoff dreams.

"That was a great way to start the tournament," said Riverton coach Ron Ence after the second-ranked Silverwolves won an early morning thriller 54-50 against co-Region 2 champion Brighton. "This was not coach (Jim) Gresh's first rodeo. He did a great job of getting the balls to their scorers, and we could not stop them."

The game was back and forth the first half, but the Bengals came out and junior Maddy Chin scored 14 of her game-high 18 points.



LEFT: Whitney Saunders attempts a free throw.

RIGHT: Jamie Smith searches for a teammate.

The Bengals did a decent job of keeping Riverton from running on them.

"We played hard," Gresh said. "We just tried to stop their fast break. They're a really good team. I was going to play zone, but then we came out and I saw man-to-man was working better."

Senior forward Whitney Saunders said she and her

teammates looked up at the scoreboard as the game clock was counting down the final minutes of the game, and felt an urgency that she hadn't felt earlier in the first game of the 5A state tournament played Monday at Salt Lake Community College.

"We weren't pushing

*Continued on next page*

# RIVERTON BASKETBALL: Silverwolves 54, Brighton 50



**TOP LEFT:** Assistant coach **Jodi Lee** has a discussion with **Shelby Richards** before the game.



**TOP RIGHT:** **Pume Currie** breaks loose for a layup.



**MIDDLE RIGHT:** Richards eyes the basket and gets ready to score.



**LOWER RIGHT:** **Tiena Afu** drives to score.

*Continued from previous page*

ourselves enough," Saunders said. "Then it was like, 'Oh, we could lose this.'"

Saunders said they were prepared for a tough battle, but for some reason, they struggled against the pressure the Bengals applied.

"We knew it wasn't going to be an easy game," she said. "We knew we would have to gut it out. We needed to want it more."

Saunders helped the Silverwolves edge the Bengals by shooting near-perfect free-throw shooting when it mattered most. She was 6-of-7 and finished with a team-high 14 points.

"I just saw the opportunity more," she said of doing more to create her own shots in the fourth quarter.

The Silverwolves also got important contributions from Tiena Afu, who finished with 10 points and Jamie Smith, who scored seven points, but hit two big three-point shots that helped swing momentum in favor of her squad.

Even though Brighton ends the season with a loss in the first round, Gresh said he's a happy coach.

"We did some good things this season," he said. "I'm proud of their effort tonight. We fought Riverton all the way to the end."

GAME SUMMARY				
Brighton	12	7	17	14 - 50
Riverton	10	12	12	20 - 54
<b>BRIGHTON (50)</b> – Sammie Smith 0 0-0 0, Alyssa Hirschi 4 1-2 9, McCall Christensen 5 3-4 13, Lindsey Johnson 3 1-5 7, Maddie Chin 8 2-2 18, Amy Johnston 1 0-0 2, Sierra Engle 0 1-2 1, Marissa Mansell 0 0-0 0. Totals 21 8-15 50.				
<b>RIVERTON (54)</b> – Mallory Bostic 2 1-2 5, Jamie Smith 2 1-3 7, Gerika Ballard 2 1-2 5, Shelby Richards 1 0-0 2, Whitney Saunders 4 6-8 14, Pume Currie 3 3-4 9, Tiena Afu 5 0-0 10, Elyssa Marchant 1 0-0 2. Totals 20 12-19 54.				
<b>Total fouls:</b> Brighton 17, Riverton 17. <b>Fouled out:</b> Hirschi, Christensen.				
<b>Three-point goals:</b> Riverton 2 (Smith 2).				