

**GIRLS**

Continued from page 4

She finished her career with 1,456 points, 1,616 rebounds, 167 assists, 216 steals and 260 blocks.

“We’re very thankful she and the other Orient-Macksburg girls were able to play with us this year,” Eisbach said. “It not only made us more competitive, but it made for a better locker room. The word the kids use today is aura. If there was a game we needed Emma inside, she was inside, and if there was a game where she could come out and help us on the perimeter, she did. “Emma was definitely a great addition to the team. She made our jobs as coaches so much easier.”

Other first-team selections were unanimous picks Hailey Randall of Southwest Valley and Izzy Gilbertson of Mount Ayr, along with Rylie Fugate of Martensdale-St. Marys and Dannie Stewart of Mount Ayr.

Second-team honorees were Ada Lund and Mackenzie Fast of Southwest Valley, Brystal Peck of Wayne, Breegan Lindsey of Central Decatur, Jessica Lillig of Southeast Warren and Jaylee Shaffer of Mount Ayr.

**Nelson earns honorable mention**

Nelson drew attention in her first season of high school basketball. She ranked third on the team in scoring; second in rebounds and steals; third in blocks, field goals made and field goals attempted; second in field-goal percentage; second in free throws made and attempted; and second in offensive and defensive rebounds.

“Abby’s energy is contagious. She’s just a competitor, a great kid, extremely athletic and she’s got a super bright future ahead of her,” Eisbach said. “It was really good to kind of see her come into her own. The first couple of games you could see she was maybe nervous or a little hesitant. Then to see her kind of flourish, using her athleticism to cause havoc in our full-court pressure — and she was an animal on the boards offensively and defensively — that was a huge upside to her growth throughout the season.”

Other honorable mentions were Lydia Forsythe of Southwest Valley, Soiyer Smith of Central Decatur, Gwen Nixon of East Union, Reese Reed of Lenox, Carley Franey of Martensdale-St. Marys, Emma Reynolds of Mount Ayr, Madison Olsasky of Southeast Warren and Ella Whitney of Wayne.

**Pushing through adversity**



FOB photo by CALEB NELSON

Nodaway Valley freshman Abby Nelson runs the offense, looking for an open pass or shot, during the first home game of the season against Mount Ayr.

Eisbach said one of the things he was most proud of was how his team battled through adversity down the stretch. The Wolverines dealt with injuries and illness over the final seven or eight games but continued to compete.

“Emma and Izzy both had their fair share of injuries, and that’s something not everybody takes into account when you lose a game in Earlham,” he said. “But they kept fighting. To watch the growth and confidence from the first game when we lose to Mount Ayr to going down

to their place and having a good-sized lead — then it dwindled — but they didn’t cower. They kept fighting and found a way.

“As an adult working with kids, the winning is a phenomenal feeling, but how all these kids got out of their comfort zone this year, whether they know it or not, [is impressive].”

Eisbach said this senior class was special.

Kynnady Van Eaton and Caroline Britten each overcame at least one “catastrophic” knee injury and still finished their careers, willing to play key junior varsity minutes for the betterment of the team. Lea Stonebraker and Kacie Ford brought a willingness to be physical — Eisbach called Stonebraker the “charge magnet.”

“Every one of those kids did what we needed them to do. They all did their job. They did it to the best of their abilities,” Eisbach said. “As a coach, that’s all you can ask for.”

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 Monte Standley  
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 Greenfield, Iowa 50849  
 Patti Wieronski  
 605 Edgewood Drive  
 Choctaw, Oklahoma 73020  
 Matthew Bollman,  
 ICIS PIN#: AT0010669,  
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