

Otters' offense erupts vs. MR

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NORTH CLARENDON — The 'O' in Otter Valley was screaming OFFENSE in Friday night's 70-33 victory over Mill River in girls basketball action at Dean W. Houghton Memorial Gymnasium.

Scoring 25 points in a quarter is a rarity in girls high school basketball but the Otters nearly did it twice. They blitzed the Minutemen with 25 points in the opening quarter and then scored 23 more in the second stanza.

"That is what we try to come out and do every game," said Otter Valley's Mallory Lufkin who scored 12 points. "Our intensity was up today."

It was an incredible display of offensive balance with 11 different Otters scoring led by Alice Keith with 13 points. Lufkin and Anna Lee added 12 apiece, Ryleigh LaPorte had nine and Marissa Connors seven.

"Give credit to Otter Valley. They shot the lights out," Mill River coach Ryan Csizmesia said.

Csizmesia has some pieces to work with for the future and some good size that will be returning. His freshman Lauryn Charron led the team on this night with nine points. Aisy Kelley and Malori Carlson contributed seven points each.

"Lauryn has really improved a lot," Csizmesia said.

Keith had all 13 of her points during that torrid 48-point half. She was injured late in the half and did not return.

Lufkin had nine points in the first half on three 3-point field goals.

The win halted a three-game losing streak for the Otters and they improve their record to 2-5. The Minutemen fall to 1-4.

Lufkin said the Otters played with a great deal of confidence and that by scoring so prolifically, it also fed their confidence on defense.

"We know that we are small and that we have to utilize our speed," OV coach Kelly Trayah said. "I thought we did that tonight."

He also delighted in the fact that 11 different Otters wound up in the scoring column.

"I have a rule that if you are open, shoot the ball," Trayah said.

"This is a big confidence help for us."

It has taken the inexperienced Otters time to grow up and Trayah is hoping that this win is a sign of their maturation.

"We don't have a lot of depth in varsity experience. Other than Mallory and Alice, nobody had played a lot of varsity minutes before this year."

But inexperienced players can shed that tag even in a short season and Lufkin believe she and her teammates now have some confidence that they can take into the tournament.

"I think this is going to give us momentum for the playoffs and, hopefully, for a deep run in the playoffs," Lufkin said.