**Seahawks shorthanded**

With only 7 players remaining on the roster, Cabrillo does its best to stay positive.

**By ANDREW MATHESON**

APTOS — Already lacking in height, the Cabrillo College women's basketball team knew coming into league play it would measure up short against much of the opposition in the Coast Conference South.

It didn't realize it would also be short on players, however.

The Seahawks (2-10), who will begin conference play Wednesday against host San Jose City College, will look to rally around each other for the remaining 12-game slate after losing two players in the past month, bringing the total roster number to seven.

It's the second straight season Cabrillo has entered conference play with just seven players.

"Why is that always the number?" Seahawks coach Kristy Netto asked Tuesday while preparing for SJCC.

Last year, injuries mostly brought the Seahawks' roster from 11 to seven and likely hurt their season after starting 7-5.

This season, beginning with a roster of 10 that includes redshirt freshman Vanessa Wright, Netto had one player quit early in the season. Another player, Debbie Gonzalez, who graduated from CSU Monterey Bay but still maintained athletic eligibility, recently received a job offer inupcourt during a recent game.

**CABRILLO**

Continued from D1

her degree field and left the team.

"She felt horrible leaving us, and we'll miss her," Netto said. "But you can't turn down a job in your career."

Still, with just two substitutes on the bench, the lack of players limits Cabrillo with what it can do. But, much like last season, the players remain positive and have banded together in an effort to limit their shortcomings.

"Other teams might be bigger than us but, in the end, we're working hard," said sophomore guard Nancy Fernandez, who was the lone returning from last year's team that finished 9-16 overall. "We're not giving up. We're gonna keep going."

The Seahawks have received a bit of outside help, too.

Netto said former players Cristina Locatelli and Annabelle Balcazar, who together coach the junior varsity girls at Aptos High, have returned to the Cabrillo gymnasium to help in practice by making up the two-player shortage necessary for 5-on-5 drills.

The two 2012 graduates played through adversity. Players experienced a range of emotions after learning they lost the services of two of their teammates, Netto said, but the shared experience only made the team more tightly knit.

Netto said she's seen the team develop in the short weeks since the roster was reduced to seven players.

It was on display last week when the Seahawks staved off Gavilan en route to a 55-51 victory — the team's second overall win and its first as a seven-player unit. McQuillan scored 26 points while Fernandez made three 3-pointers and finished with 13 points.

"That Gavilan game was huge. It lifted us big time and gave us a little bit of light," Netto said.

It instilled confidence as well. Cabrillo will no doubt have its hands full against conference foes De Anza, Mission, Monterey Peninsula College and defending champion Ohlone, but the team can use what it accomplished against Gavilan as a positive focal point.

"I've got seven, eight phenomenal girls who understand. They lean on each other; they support each other," Netto said. "We've got to keep moving forward and see what we can get out of this season. It's not wins, it's stability, friendships, learning. If we give into the negative, we're done."