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Snow Canyon girls hoops team gives back on day off

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With the schedule allowing teams at the 4A girls state basketball playoffs an off day, it gave Snow Canyon, which traveled a long distance, a choice.

Rather than be inactive, the Warriors turned proactive with the help of assistant coach Jack Rolfe and stepped outside of themselves and give service.

The team spent the off day on Thursday working with a Salt Lake City-based organization called P.J.'s Forgotten Children, which works with mentally ill kids and their families to give help and hope in a variety of ways.

Some of the services the Warriors gave included stuffing backpacks with school items and tying quilts. Rolfe and his wife, Lexi, also donated books through his School of Life foundation.

TAKING THE AIR OUT: As the Wasatch Wasps were desperately trying to hold on to their lead over Canyon View in the fourth quarter of Thursday's 3A girls quarterfinal playoff game at the E Center in West Valley City, they decided to spread the floor - with five minutes remaining and the Falcons on the charge from a 13-point third-quarter deficit.

While it may have been a head-scratcher for some, there was a method to the madness for Wasatch coach Roger Pyper.

"We wanted them to overextend their defense and stop them from clogging up the middle," Pyper said of Canyon View's look.

The Wasps held the ball for more than a minute at one fourth-quarter stretch, but the offensive plan temporarily backfired when a layup was missed and Canyon View's Tori McGrath hit a 3-pointer that tied the game at 42-42 with 3:53 left. Cassidy Holmes scored inside on the Falcons' next possession to give them the lead for the first time, but a see-saw battle down the stretch ended up in a 52-46 Wasps victory.

"When they started the stall, I knew there was plenty of time for us to come back," said Canyon View junior Danielle Wynn. "There was no panic the whole game."

SETTING THE TONE: The Hurricane boys' season came to a disappointing end with a loss to Juan Diego, relegating the Tigers to the consolation bracket. Hurricane defeated Emery in the first contest, before falling to Judge in the fifth-place game 48-33.

"Judge jumped out on us before we had a chance to warm up," Hurricane coach Gordon Dotson said. "It was an amazing year. I'm not sure if Hurricane has had a 20-win season."

Dotson said his team might have felt the first-time jitters, because Hurricane had not been to a state tournament for more than 10 years.

The team will see a group of seniors who have bred a winning tradition at Hurricane, after getting to the state title game in football and making it to the state quarterfinals in the basketball season.

"They're really competitive. They're the ones who brought a winning tradition that the juniors and sophomores on down can live up to," Dotson said. "They spent a lot of time working in the off-season. They enjoyed the success this year because of that. The sheer competitiveness was unequalled in my many years of coaching."

A FAMILIAR FACE: Rowland Hall coach Shawn Macqueen returned to Cedar City for the 2A state tournament.

Macqueen was a former coach at Cedar High School, before moving up north to coach the Winged Lions.

He said he had fun seeing old friends, but the focus was on his team and the kids having the best experience they could have.

Macqueen didn't leave Cedar without something to cheer about: his team finished third in the 2A state tournament - a huge improvement considering Rowland Hall's absence from the state tournament prior to 2008.