

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Crean Lutheran girls make giant strides

By [TIM BURT](#)

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Crean Lutheran's girls basketball season finally came to an end in the semifinals of the Southern California Division V playoffs Tuesday night.

The Saints lost to Bellarmine Jefferson of Burbank, 50-35, But Coach Kelsi Walker remained proud of her team.

Crean Lutheran wound up with 21 wins this year after winning just four last year and Walker said the future is bright.

"I'm excited for next year," she said after Tuesday's loss. "We got a lot of development to do. We're young, so I'm excited to see what next year holds."

Tough finish for UCI basketball

UCI's men's basketball players played their hearts out in Saturday's Big West Conference championship game before losing 50-47, to UC Davis. UCI, which had been an excellent shooting team, hit just 38 percent and also turned the ball over 20 times. It was certainly not typical of the way the Anteaters had played most of the season.

UCI coach Russell Turner was trying to get his team prepared for Wednesday's NIT Tournament opener on the road against Illinois State, although the NCAA tournament was the team's goal.

"It's hard to feel as excited as maybe one should about the opportunity we have to play in the NIT," Turner said after Saturday's game at Honda Center. "I know that's a great tournament. What I hope is that our guys will appreciate the opportunity to play together again and we will get over this disappointment. That's what you have to do when you risk everything and come up short. You have to be men and gather yourselves, and get ready to go again and that's what we're going to do and we will play a spirited game in the NIT."

Beckman baseball on a roll

Everything is going Beckman's way so far this year. The Patriots are off to a 6-1 start. Last week, they defeated Mater Dei and Mission Viejo on their way to winning the Newport Elks Tournament. Beckman is ranked No. 1 in Division 2 and No. 3 in this week's Orange County Top 10.

Beckman is the clear-cut favorite to capture the PCL baseball title. Friday, the Patriots host Northwood in the league opener at Beckman at 3:30 p.m.

Beckman Coach Kevin Lavalley was encouraged by last week's results heading into the Newport Elks Tourney title.

"Winning the Elks Tournament would be a great accomplishment, but I think I speak for every coach in the county when I say that I just want to play well and compete," he said. "I don't think we will be ordering any T-shirts if we win on Friday, but I will be proud of my guys and happy that we'll be setting a high standard for 2017."

Two more teams added to Crean tournament

Crean Lutheran coaches Josh Beaty and assistant Josh Zumkehr are excited about next year's field for the Crean Lutheran Chick-Fil-A boys basketball tournament, which will also include Beckman, Woodbridge and Saddleback Valley Christian.

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