

Butler Eagle

BC3 ladies seek that winning feeling

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BUTLER TWP — Casey Fleegeer and Emily Wise are unaccustomed to losing.

The Butler High graduates and sophomores on the Butler County Community College women's basketball team aren't comfortable looking up at the scoreboard and seeing their team trailing by a large margin.

"I would say it's pretty hard," said Fleegeer, the Pioneers' point guard. "It's hard to lose. Once we play more as a team, as a unit, I think we'll be much better."

It's not that BC3 has been awful this season, but the Pioneers are coming off a trip to the National Junior College Athletic Conference tournament, where they finished sixth in the nation, last season.

That's a pretty hard act to follow, particularly when three starters — Katresa Savisky, Ashley Campbell and Rachel Douthett — moved on.

"It's hard losing people as big as Katresa, Ashley and Rachel," Fleegeer said. "It's a big loss. It's hard to fill that."

Savisky, who is now playing basketball at Point Park University, and Douthett were teammates of Fleegeer and Wise at Butler.

They won three section titles together with the Golden Tornado.

"I think that's what helped us so much last year. Me, Emily, Katresa and Rachel all played together since we were like in the fourth grade," Fleegeer said. "We won a lot of games together. We played with Ashley in AAU. This year, we're all thrown together from everywhere, so it's hard to get that chemistry, to play together as a unit."

Campbell, a Karns City grad, is playing volleyball at Point Park.

BC3 started slowly last season before going on a roll that resulted in a Region XX championship and a trip to the national tournament.

"Last year, we didn't even think we'd make it to nationals," Wise said. "So, maybe this year we will still make it. We just have to stay positive, I guess."

Second-year coach Dick Hartung, who is also the men's basketball coach at the college, is making that a bit easier.

Even during a lopsided loss to Mercyhurst North East on Wednesday, the coach was barking out encouragement to his players.

"He's a character," Wise said, laughing. "He makes it fun. He helps us a lot."

Fleeger said she hopes to continue playing at another school after this season. She hopes to land somewhere with Wise at her side.

"I wish we could play together somewhere," Fleeger said. "That would be awesome. It'll be weird to not play together."