

Ashley Malloy was so short as a freshman, by the state's standards, she was supposed to ride in a car seat while traveling on the team's bus.

Former SHS Head Coach Wade Tomlinson remembered that story after learning his former player scored 30 points in a 54-47 win over Mitchell on Jan. 5.

Malloy has always out-played her frame. She is listed at 5'4" on Salem's roster, but that might be true in high heels. She said she has heard all her life that she is too small to play basketball.

"I heard a quote and it's kind of been something I remembered every time I got down or people said my size would keep me from playing," she said. "God makes things small, so when they succeed, people will see how big He is!"

That attitude has helped Malloy and her Salem teammates turn a season with low expectations into a 7-6 record.

"I think a lot of people had low expectations and underestimated us in the beginning and we've kind of proved them wrong," she said. "We heard how much we were losing with six seniors and we've really stepped up. We almost beat Brownstown and it's been good so far."

Malloy, who is the daughter of Duane and Jamie Malloy, said she really didn't see indications that she was going to be able to score as much as she did. She said after a few of her shots went in, she gained confidence.

The scoring out-put wasn't her favorite part of her night, however.

"It was my career-high so I was really excited about it, but I was more excited because we were able to pull out the win," Malloy said.

Winning is something Malloy has gotten used to. In fact, she started basketball season after she and her teammates had a history-making cross country season.

The Lady Lion runners won the Mid Southern Conference, then followed that with sectional and regional championships.

"That was crazy, it was awesome," Malloy said. "I can't even describe the feeling. I was so over-come with joy about our season."

Malloy said the cross country team's goal was to just win conference, but as they had success throughout the season, they gained confidence.

"We just decided we had beaten all those teams before, so we knew we could do it again," she said. "We put our mind to it and then just went out and did it."

She said she hopes the Lady Lion basketball team can work up some of the same kind of magic the cross country team did with a sectional title.

"I don't see why we couldn't win it," she said. "We've played the teams in it pretty close, so anything can happen."

If things play out the way she plans, Malloy will graduate this spring with 12 varsity letters. She lettered all four years in cross country, basketball and track.

While she hopes there are lots of exciting moments waiting in the upcoming weeks for basketball, Malloy is also looking forward to the track season.

She normally participated in distance events, but she said Head Coach Roger Bundy said she might try her in some sprinting.

“If he really does try to turn me into a sprinter, it will be interesting,” she said. “I know we want to try to win conference and then hopefully we can advance some athletes out of sectional and regional.”

After high school, Malloy said she isn't sure what she plans to do.

“I want to play basketball,” she said. “It's really been a debate in my mind. Do I love running the most? Or, do I love basketball more? If I played basketball, I'd be thinking about Hanover or IUS.”

Malloy isn't 100 percent sure what she wants to study, but said she is leaning toward pre-dentistry.

More than the trophies she has helped to put in the SHS trophy case and more than any individual accomplishment Malloy has earned, she wants to leave something bigger with her underclass teammates and the girls at junior high who might be hearing they will never play.

“I would tell them to never lose confidence and never let people underestimate you, because being small, people always told me I wouldn't be able to play in high school,” she said. “I have played and I have been successful. So I am proof that it can be done.”