

Junior qualifies for state again

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton Community High School girls tennis team placed fourth in the Class 3A Regional Tennis Tournament held Friday and Monday in WaKeeney and one Lady Jay, junior Tawni Griffey, qualified for the second straight year for the State Tennis Tournament.

Trego won the tournament with 13 points, followed by Phillipsburg, 9; Greeley County, 9; Norton, 7; Beloit, 6; Osborne, 5; Russell, 3; Hoisington, 3; Scott City, 3; Victoria, 0.

Griffey won the singles competition and will compete in the State Tournament in Dodge City today and Saturday. The top six finishers in singles and doubles in each of the four regional tournaments qualified for the state tournament.

"The Regional was a seeded tournament with ten teams," said Norton head coach Jim Green. "Tawni received the No.1 seed but all of our other entries were in the draw and their placements depended on luck. We didn't get the best draws.

"Haley Wallingford drew in against the three seed. In the doubles, Sierra Black and Katie Koch drew in the feather bracket against Scott City, which fed in against the third seeded team. Rickele Green and Ashley Hildebrand received the worst draw by drawing in against the one seeds from Trego. The draws could have been worse but they could also have been a

lot better."

Tawni received the No.1 seed and defeated Katy Barrett, Hoisington, 6-0, 6-0, in the first round. In her second match, she shutout Brenna Beason, Scott City, 6-0, 6-0. Next she played Allison Carr, Trego, and also shut her out, 6-0, 6-0.

In the finals on Monday, Tawni met Shelbi Wiles, Beloit, the No.2 seed, and outscored her 6-3, 6-1.

"Tawni lived up to her No.1 seed," said coach Green. "She easily won her first two matches. In the first round, she was at the top of her game and won over Barrett of Hoisington, 6-0, 6-0. She quickly dispatched her next opponent, Beason of Scott City, 6-0, 6-0.

"Because of the weather forecast for Saturday, it was decided to play the semifinal match on Friday. Normally, this match would be played on the second day. The semifinals match was against fourth seed Carr of Trego. Carr is a talented and athletic player. This match had a number of exciting points. Carr is a great competitor and always gives her best. Again, Tawni won and advanced to the finals. The finals were scheduled for Saturday but the weather forecast was correct and rain caused the tournament to be postponed until Monday.

"Monday found Tawni up against the number two seed, Wiles of Beloit. Wiles had just finished a three set victory over the three seed. She started the

match blazing hard low shots cross court and up the line. Tawni found herself behind in the match. Tawni is such a strong competitor. Being down 0-40 in a game is only a challenge that she is more than able to meet. She was able to get the game to deuce and, after a number of deuces, win the game and move ahead in the set. Tawni won the first set 6-3 and seemed to be in control of the match. Wiles quickly won the first game of the second set at love. Again, Wiles had the early lead but that was the only game she would win in the second set as Tawni went to close out the match by winning the second set 6-1."

Also playing singles for Norton was sophomore Haley Wallingford. She drew No.3 seed Sage Ratliff, Phillipsburg, for her match. She played Ratliff well but lost 6-3, 6-4 to end her season. Ratliff won one more match before losing to Wiles.

"Haley gave a great effort against the three seed," said coach Green. "I was extremely pleased with the way she played. Haley was ahead early in the first set, covering the court well and hitting strong shots. Losing the first set 6-3, she continued to battle in the second set. It was also very close, ending at 6-4. If Haley had received a better draw, I believe that she would have advanced to the State Tournament."

Playing doubles for Norton were sophomores Rickele Green and Ashley Hildebrand

and juniors Sierra Black and Katie Koch.

Green and Hildebrand drew a match versus No.1 seed Amelia Fabrizius and Leah Flax, Trego Community, and lost 6-0, 6-0.

"Rickele and Ashley have improved a lot from the beginning of the season," said coach Green. "They played well against the number one seeds who went on to win the doubles bracket.

"The tournament is single elimination for the feeder brackets and the first round matches. Playing the best team in the tournament makes it very difficult to advance."

In the other Norton doubles match, Black and Koch played a feather bracket match versus Kathryn Buehler and Callan Rice, Scott City, and lost 9-7.

"Sierra and Katie played against Buehler and Rice of Scott City," said coach Green. "This match feeds against the three seed. The feeder bracket matches were changed to an eight game pro-set to speed up the early rounds because of the rain in the forecast

"Our girls played an extremely close match with the Scott City girls. They tied it up at 7-7, forcing extra games in the set. It was one of those matches which could have gone either way."

The Norton tennis team had a great season and will lose only one senior, Rhees Carlson, from this year's squad.



Norton junior Tawni Griffey slams the tennis ball toward an opponent during Class 3A Regional Tennis Tournament competition on Friday in WaKeeney. Tawni remained unbeaten for the season in winning the gold medal and qualifying for the State Tournament for the second straight season.
- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Lady Jays volleyball team defeats Golden Plains and Logan

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton Community High School girls varsity volleyball team defeated both Golden Plains and Logan in matches held Tuesday night in the Stull Gym in Norton.

The Lady Jays outscored Golden Plains 25-18, 25-14 and defeated Logan 27-25, 26-24. Logan was recently ranked in the state in Class 1A.

In the other match, Logan defeated Golden Plains 25-14, 25-16.

It was "Senior Night" for Norton and the seniors were honored along with their parents. Norton senior players are Mariah Farber, Kylie Nuzum, Caren Thomson and Erin Terrell. Senior manager is Alyssa Boser.

Coach's comments

"We improved in some areas, especially serve receive but we still have to get better," said Norton head volleyball coach Kevin Jilka.

"Next up is the Mid-Continent League Tournament and we have our work cut out for us but you never know what can happen. We just need to keep improving by sub-state tournament time."

GOLDEN PLAINS

"Our girls played much better in this match," said coach Jilka. "We let them back in the first game but our girls found a way to win.

"In the second game, our girls played well the entire game and eventually we pulled away for the win."

Senior Erin Terrell led in kills with 20, followed by sophomore Bailey Ambrosier, 3; senior Caren Thomson, 2.

Assists leaders were junior Teslee Nickell with 16 and sophomore Johnnye Ruder with 15.

Thomson had 3 blocks, followed by Ambrosier, Terrell, 1 each.

Thomson was digs leader with 13, followed by Ruder, 10; junior Alec Melvin, 6; senior Mariah Farber, 5; Nickell, 5; Terrell, 4; Ambrosier, 3.

Farber served 4 aces, followed by Ruder, Melvin, Nickell, Terrell, 1 each.

LOGAN

The match with previously state-ranked Logan was much closer but the Lady Jays survived the challenge from their strong 1A opponents.

Norton trailed 23-16 in the first game but rallied to tie the score at 23-all and win 27-25!

Norton took the lead in the second game but Logan rallied to tie the score at 18-all, then lead 23-20 before the Lady Jays tied the score at 23-all and went on to win 26-24!

"What a night for our seniors to remember," said coach Jilka. "We are so proud of the way they played in both games as that was probably the hardest we played all year long and also hustled!

"In the first game, we came back from seven points down and our girls would just not quit. We made a lot of great hustle plays to keep us alive and then



Norton senior Kylie Nuzum returns a Logan serve during the Lady Jays' hard-fought win over the visiting Lady Trojans on Tuesday evening in the Stull Gym in Norton. Also pictured is senior Erin Terrell. It was "Senior Night" for Norton.
- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

got the ball where we needed it to score.

"In the second game, we came back again and did what we had to do to win.

"We have lost these kinds of

games this year but being in those games has helped us. You have to give Logan credit as they also played great all night long."

Terrell led again in kills

with 13 in this match. She was followed by Thomson, 5; Ruder, Ambrosier, 2 each; Nickell, 1.

Ruder led in assists with 13, followed by Melvin, 3; Ambrosier, 1.

Thomson had 2 blocks and Ambrosier had 1.

Digs leader was Nickell with 11, followed by senior Kylie Nuzum, 6; Melvin, 5; Terrell, 5; Ambrosier, 4; Thomson, 4; Ruder, 3.

Ruder served 3 aces; Farber and Melvin each served 1 ace.

Junior varsity

Norton's junior varsity played Logan in a best 3 out of 5. Norton was the winner by the following scores: 25-18, 25-22, 24-26, 25-17.

"Our girls had a great night," said Norton assistant volleyball coach Jodi Ward.

"We have had some injuries and players moving to varsity and our girls filled the necessary roles and really came through.

"I saw confidence tonight that I haven't seen much this season. It's the time of year when they need to bring together all the things we've worked on so far this season and, most importantly, have fun. Our girls definitely had fun tonight and won in the process."

Next action

Norton will compete this Saturday in the annual Mid-Continent League Volleyball Tournament, which will be held in Hill City.

Competing in addition to teams from Norton and Hill City will be squads from Smith

Center, Phillipsburg, Osborne, Ellis, Stockton, Plainville and Trego Community.

Plainville and Trego are seeds No.8 and No.9, respectively, and they played a feather bracket match on Thursday to determine which team would play in Saturday's tournament. Plainville's record at the time of seeding was 4-19 and Trego's record was 3-22.

The other seeds and team records at the time of seeding are: Hill City, No.1, 25-3; Smith Center, No.2, 27-4; Phillipsburg, No.3, 24-6; Osborne, No.4, 15-11; Ellis, No.5, 9-10; Stockton, No.6, 10-12; Norton, No.7, 10-14.

Norton's pool play will be in the Elementary School with Smith Center, Phillipsburg and Stockton. The other pool will be in the High School where Hill City, Osborne, Ellis and the winner of the Plainville-Trego match will compete.

Norton's first match will be versus Smith Center and it will follow the Phillipsburg-Stockton match and is estimated to start around 10 a.m.

The Lady Jays' second match will be next versus Phillipsburg and Norton will play Stockton in the fifth match of the day.

Four of the Mid-Continent League teams are state ranked. Smith Center is ranked No.1 in Class 2A and Hill City is ranked No.3.

Phillipsburg is ranked No.3 in Class 3A and Victoria is ranked No.3 in Class 1A-II.

Norton Junior Varsity tennis team finishes fourth in tournament

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton Community High School junior varsity tennis team finished fourth in the Junior Varsity Tennis Tournament on Saturday, Sept. 24 in Phillipsburg.

Hays won the championship with 32 points, followed by Phillipsburg, 26; Beloit, 19; Norton, 14. Colby entered a partial team and Phillipsburg played a second team.

"Our junior varsity tennis team had some great wins at Phillipsburg on September 24," said Norton assistant coach Crystal Montgomery. "We just needed more consistency."

Sophomore Jessica White competed at No.1 singles for the Lady Jays. She lost to Sara

Schoenthaler, Hays, 6-4; played Heather Miller, Phillipsburg, and lost 6-4 and lost to Norton freshman Brooke Sumner 6-5(7-3). Sumner played for Colby.

"Jessica had three close matches," said coach Montgomery. "She was down in both her matches but came back to only lose 6-4. It's tough to fight your way back in a match and then let it slip away at the very end."

At No.1 doubles, junior Ruth Kendell and sophomore Shauna Gibson played for the Lady Jays and placed fourth. They played Naomi Basgall and Katelyn Hecker, Hays, and lost 6-2; played Karlye Stephen and Taylor Beach, Phillipsburg No.2, and won 6-3 and lost to Tori Farwell and Molly Krier,

Beloit, 6-2.

"Ruth and Shauna played well together in doubles," said coach Montgomery. "They worked hard and had a great win over Phillipsburg because of it."

Freshman Molly Scott played No.2 singles for Norton and won the gold medal. She outscored Julie Balzer, Hays, 6-4; shutout Amy Pugh, Phillipsburg No.2, 6-0 and beat Tifani Eller, Phillipsburg, 6-3, to win the championship.

"It was nice to see Molly take first place," said coach Montgomery. "She had a tough match against Hays but she persevered and came out with the win.

"Molly worked hard all season long and was proud of that first place win."

At No. 2 doubles, sophomore

Kristen Burge and senior Rhees Carlson played for Norton and placed fourth. They lost to Kelsey DeBoer and Molly Barnett, Hays, 6-2; defeated Alex Isernhagen and Danielle Slack, Phillipsburg No.2, 6-3 and lost to Sidney Coomes and Kyla Ellis, Phillipsburg, 6-1.

"Kristen and Rhees also played well together," said coach Montgomery. "Rhees had some fantastic volleys at the net. Both Rhees and Kristen have come a long way in their tennis careers."

Playing for Colby, Norton's Sumner lost to Victoria Main, Phillipsburg, 6-0; lost to Beloit's Audrey Wichers, 6-2 and defeated teammate White to place fifth.

"Brooke played No.1 singles

for the first time," said coach Montgomery. "Although the scores don't show it, Brooke

had some long points and kept her opponents working during the matches."

SAL

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