



Department plans league this spring

By Andy Heintz
Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansas.com

The Colby Recreation Department plans to start a youth basketball league this spring, with games from March 27 to April 26 on Saturday mornings at the grade school gymnasium. The league will be divided into four groups: third- and fourth-grade girls, third- and fourth-grade boys, fifth- and sixth-grade girls and fifth- and sixth-grade boys. The fee is \$25 per person. Teams will be coached by Colby High and college players.

The department also plans to hold the third annual Triple Threat Basketball Camp starting Saturday at the grade school gym. The camp, open to kids in preschool through sixth grade, will run into February.

The camp's name is based on a basketball position that gives players the option to pass, shoot or dribble, said Recreation Director Stacey Lee.

Sessions will continue on three Saturdays, Jan. 16, Feb. 6 and Feb. 13, with different times for four age groups. Sessions for preschoolers and kindergartners will be from 8:15 a.m. to 9 a.m.; first and second graders,

9 to 9:45; third and fourth graders, 9:45 to 10:45; and fifth and sixth graders, 10:45 to 11:45.

Players and coaches from Colby High and Colby Community College will be helping out with the camp. Lee said sessions will center around fundamental skills such as dribbling, passing and shooting. All four camp groups will perform during halftime of Trojans' men's basketball games on Wednesday, Jan. 20, and Saturday, Feb. 20, at the Community Building.

The department recently made a change in how it will keep the public informed about the latest programs, deadlines, races, meetings and camps, Lee said. Instead of mailing brochures to people every four months to remind them of the newest events and deadlines as was done in the past, she said, the department has put together a 2010 Activities Calendar that will cover everything they are doing this year.

The calendar is free and will be available in two weeks at the department's office upstairs in the Community Building and at the Sports Shoppe. If you have any questions, you can call the department at 460-4440 or e-mail recreation@cityofcolby.com.

Eagles try to build momentum

By Andy Heintz
Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansas.com

The Colby High boys will try to cut back on mistakes and build some momentum when they play their first game in over two weeks against Holcomb.

Holcomb (2-2) won its first two games of the season, but it has lost the last two. They team hopes to end its losing streak tonight in a road game against Lakin.

Coach Jon McKee said the Longhorns have a pretty good team, but only one starter returning from last season.

Colby (1-5) will be trying to recover from a 41-29 loss to Oakley in its last game. They struggled throughout the contest, turning the ball over 26 times and shooting 32 percent from the field.

The boys have faced plenty of adversity in their first six games this season.

"We need to quit turning the ball over," the coach said. "Turnovers are not allowing us to get in any flow on offense."

The coach said his team needs to do a better job of making their opponents work hard on defense. He said the Eagles needed to focus on getting the ball to players who are in a position to attack the basket.

"We need to make defenses rotate," said the Coach.

Jon McKee also said his team needed be able to exploit weaknesses in the opposing defense.

Despite the Eagles' slow start, the season is still young and there's still time for the boys to turn it around.

Coach McKee said the boys have had some good practices during Christmas break. He said they have been focusing on improving their team chemistry and getting their offense to run more smoothly. He said the team has also been working on its inside game.

"Both the guards and the big guys have been working on getting an inside position," McKee said. "We need to play stronger inside."

The coach said his players were



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press
Colby High sophomore Jordan Rasmussen dribbled the ball down the lane during the Eagles' basketball team's practice on Tuesday morning at the Colby High School gymnasium.

learning how to post up and seal off their defenders at recent practices. He said the team had also been trying to improve its defense.

"We have to make sure everyone is in the right place on defense," he said.

He said his squad has to figure out which players will be the main

scorers and which are going to be role players.

The boys played a terrific second half that helped them pick up their first victory of the season over St. Francis 49-42 on Dec. 15. After playing an abysmal first half, they hit 5 of 10 three-pointers and made 15 of 30 shots from the field. They will need to replicate that

performance several times over to turn their season around.

The Eagles have several players capable of having a big game on offense, including junior Corbin Stephens and seniors Braden McKee, the coaches' son, and Chaz Winger.

McKee had the highest scoring game of any Eagles' player this season when he made 24 points against Newton in the Hays City Shootout on Dec. 4. He was unbelievable from beyond the arc, nailing five of five three-pointers.

Stephens led the Eagles in scoring with 17 points against St. Francis. His strong performance in the third quarter helped the Eagles cut into a nine-point halftime deficit on their way to taking the lead and picking up a victory.

Winger scored a team-high 18 points in the boys' season opener against Riley County in the Hays tournament, and he made some crucial baskets that helped his team defeat St. Francis. Winger was a model of efficiency against Riley County, knocking down six of nine shots. Against St. Francis, Winger rebounded a missed three pointer by senior Kale Arnberger and stuck it back in to give his team a 47-42 lead with 1:53 remaining.

Colby has several players who have shown they are capable of knocking down three pointers, including McKee, Stephens and seniors Kale Arnberger, Brock Wagoner and Ryley Haas.

Arnberger hit three big three-pointers in the fourth quarter of the game against St. Francis, one of which broke a 42-42 tie with only 2:31 remaining. He hit another key three pointer earlier in the quarter to give the Eagles a 41-40 lead. Arnberger's clutch shooting showed what a big role three-pointers can play. Haas and junior Spencer Tubbs both had 7 points in a losing effort against Hays on Dec. 10.

Sophomore Braden Sager, Tubbs, Wagoner and McKee have all played at forward this season. McKee and Wagoner are capable of playing at guard or forward.

Last-second free throws lead to Nuggets victory

DENVER (AP) — With the Golden State Warriors' Monta Ellis right on him, J.R. Smith launched a 3-pointer from about 40-feet away just before the buzzer sounded and missed badly.

A dejected Smith, thinking the game was over and the Denver Nuggets were on the short end, began walking off the court. Then, he caught sight of an official signaling he had been fouled by Ellis.

One of four Nuggets to finish with at least 20 points, Smith hit two free throws with 0.4 seconds remaining to lift the Nuggets to a 123-122 victory over the Golden State Warriors on Tuesday night.

The officials ruled Ellis made

contact with Smith as he was throwing up the desperation 3-pointer an instant after taking an inbounds pass from Kenyon Martin.

Ellis, who had 32 points, declined to comment on the foul call.

Warriors coach Don Nelson wouldn't comment directly on the call but said his squad lost a game they deserved to win.

"You lose at the buzzer, it's tough," he said. "Bad teams just don't get breaks. Let's face it, you just don't get breaks. That was our game. We played our hearts out, and I can't ask any more than what my team gave me."



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