



Women stay atop standings

The Colby Community College softball team split a doubleheader Sunday with nationally-ranked Seward County, keeping them atop the Jayhawk West standings with a 5-1 record.

The Lady Trojans won game one 2-0 with Holly Denny picking up the victory. Denny limited No. 9 Seward to just three hits and one walk in 7 innings. She picked up her eighth win of the season and improved to 3-0 against Jayhawk West competition. Sophomore Peggy Nichols was two for three. Her double over the left fielder's head in the bottom of the sixth drove in a run and extended the Lady Trojans' lead to 2-0. Nichols dropped a fly ball to center field with one out in the top of the seventh, but she fired a relay throw to sophomore shortstop Kali Brester at who threw out the Lady Saints' runner trying to score. Denny got the next batter to hit her a ground ball that she tossed to first to end the game.

Denny said playing a good team motivates her to play well.

Freshman Casey Dirks was two for three in the contest with a run scored.

In game two, the Lady Trojans took a 1-0 lead as Denny hit a home run in the bottom of the second inning. However, Seward responded by scoring one run in the third, fifth and sixth inning to win game two 3-1. Both teams stranded several runners in the game.

"We couldn't string hits together, but we made good contact," Nichols said.

Sophomore starting pitcher Jamie Main scattered 14 hits in seven innings, keeping the Lady Trojans in the game. Sophomore Ashley Primm was two for three in the contest.

"I thought we played well today," coach Ryan Sturdy said. "We took game one and had a chance



Lady Trojans' freshman pitcher Holly Denny threw a 2-0 shutout against Seward County Community College in the first half of a doubleheader on Sunday at Carl Adams Field.

Andy Heintz/Colby Free Press

to win game two in the bottom of the seventh. However, Seward is a very good team and they made the plays in game two to win."

"We could have had a little more intensity in the second game," added Denny.

Sturdy also said the team continues to play well in areas vital

for success.

"Our pitchers threw well for the second consecutive conference doubleheader and our defense continues to play well," Sturdy said. "We need to continue to play well because we have big games still remaining."

Freshman Courtney Bloski said

she thought her team's defense played very strong in the game.

With the win, the team improved to 12-8.

The Lady Trojans play Central Nebraska on Tuesday at home at Carl Adams Field and they play Cloud County from Concordia Wednesday at home.

Colby High boys will utilize speed

By Andy Heintz

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This year's Colby High Eagles baseball team will be looking to exploit their speed advantage this season.

"We're going to be a speed team," coach Rick Williams said. "We have a lot of gap to gap line drive hitters."

"We're going to be playing more small ball," added senior Brandon Rasmussen.

This year's team will feature a new coach and several new players. They will not look anything like the squad who made to the class 4A state championship last season. Last year's team had some speed guys, but they also had the luxury of being able to rely on power hitters like Brent Arnberger, Levi Schlick, Stephen Dinkel and Eric Blanton to drive in runs.

Williams replaces Kevin Cox as Colby's head coach. Williams was an assistant on last year's team.

Senior Preston Krzycki said practice is being run differently under Williams.

"There's not as much standing around," he said. "We're always doing something different."

Despite the loss of some key players, the Eagles still have several veteran players returning including seniors Brandon Rasmussen, Garrett Rogers, Chaz Winger and Krzycki.

The team will need some of its younger players to throw some varsity innings this year, said Wil-

liams. Rasmussen, Krzycki and Rogers all pitched last year, but they will need help from younger players because two of last year's key pitchers - Schlick and Dinkel - graduated. Williams said sophomores Jordan Rasmussen and Braden Sager will have to log some varsity minutes on the mound this season.

Williams said Rogers will play first base, sophomores Daalan Organ and Sager have both been practicing at third base and Krzycki and Rasmussen are both practicing at shortstop. The coach said Winger will play centerfield, and senior Ethan Stickel, juniors Sam Kendrick and Andrew Ketchum and freshman Todd Kane are competing for starting spots at right and left field. Stickel and Kendrick didn't play last year, but they have played baseball before, the coach said.

Colby will have to play really well if they want to equal or eclipse their 24-2 season last spring. Several of last year's key players graduated including pitcher Schlick, Cade Carter, Cory Sager, Arnberger, Dinkel and Eric Blanton. All six players have gone on to play at the college level. Arnberger, Blanton, Dinkel and Carter are all playing for the Colby Community College baseball team. Dinkel is playing this year and the rest of the guys are red-shirting.

The boys season starts at 4 p.m. Tuesday at Scott City in a doubleheader.

Colby native pitcher recognized by his league

Colby native Matt Augustine earned Mid-America Intercollegiate Co-Pitcher of the Week honors on March 17 for his performance against Northwest Missouri State in Hays. Augustine is a senior at Fort Hays State University.

This is Augustine's second pitcher of the week award this year. He joins Alex Schell of Pittsburg State this week for the honor.

Augustine helped Fort Hays State to a series win over Northwest Missouri with strong start in the final game of the four-game series. He struck out a season-high nine batters in just six innings of work, scattering five hits. He allowed just one walk. It lowered Augustine's season earned run average to 2.95. He now has 24 strikeouts in 21.1 innings of work. He's allowed one run or less in three of his four starts this year.

Lady Eagles look to continue winning tradition

By Andy Heintz

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The Lady Eagles' softball team is getting geared up for another season.

The girl's softball squad has not had a losing record in 10 years and this year's team hopes to keep that streak intact. But Colby will have its hands full this season. Coach Jack Elliot said this year's schedule is one of the hardest he's ever seen, if not the hardest.

The Lady Eagles schedule includes games against solid team's and Class 6A schools such as Garden City, Hays, Dodge City, Great Bend and Thomas More Prep-Marian from Hays.

The team will need to have solid seasons from returning players like juniors Brittany Bange, Caitlyn Wark and Skyler Mengel.

Bange led last year's team in runs batted in with 22 and she ranked second on the team in

batting average and number of hits. Bange batted 409 and had 27 hits last season. Bange will have to help fill the void left by Colby graduate Jordan Krzycki. Krzycki led the team in batting average, hits and runs scored last season.

"Brittany needs to step up and shoulder some of the burden," said Elliot.

Wark was another one of the Lady Eagles' best hitters last year. She ranked second on the team in runs batted in with 21.

"I look for Caitlyn to have a really good year," said the coach.

Mengel started in the overwhelming majority of the Colby's games last season. The sophomore workhorse had a tremendous season last year striking out 86 batters in 118 innings and finishing with 1.73 earned run average. Elliot said he expects Mengel to be the top pitcher again this season, but he said several freshman players may end up pitching for the varsity. Elliot said freshmen Karly Kriss, Bailey Terrell

and Kenzie Curry all have pitching experience and may take some of the load off Mengel.

The Eagles have several other key players returning this season including juniors Shelby Terrell, Bailey Koerperich and Tera Raymond.

Coach Elliot said he's been impressed with the freshmen and the girls coming out for the first time.

"They may end up challenging the older girls for playing time," said Elliot.

The coach said his team's goal is to win their class 4A regionals and get to state.

Koerperich said practice has been going well and her team is really excited for their first game. She said the older players are trying to make sure the younger player feel like they fit in.

The Lady Eagles first game is at 4 p.m. Thursday at Scott City.

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