

Girls win ninth straight

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
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The Lady Eagles' basketball team just keeps winning. The Colby High girls stretched their streak to nine after picking up a 51-32 win in the first round of the Orange and Black Classic on Thursday at the Community Building.

The girls used the now-familiar formula of rebounding, minimal mistakes and tough defense to get the win. The Lady Eagles out-rebounded Liberal 33-21 and they held the Lady Redskins to about 39 percent from the field - without allowing them to shoot a free-throw the entire game. The girls forced 14 turnovers, while committing 12 of their own.

"We played a smart defensive game," coach Parker McKee said.

Senior point guard Kayla Hockersmith added that her team played a lot of good help defense.

The girls' rebounding dominance helped them score 13 second-effort points to Liberals' three.

Junior Morgan Bell's hot shooting continued as she led the Lady Eagles with 18 points on 6-of-11 shooting.

Bell has become the team's most reliable scorer since having a breakout game at Goodland earlier this month.

Colby hit the offensive glass hard early in the first quarter, grabbing three boards on one possession that led to a three pointer by senior Katherine Kaus. Hockersmith drilled a three to give her team an early 8-0 cushion.

The Lady Redskins' Justice Norah grabbed an offensive rebound, dribbled out beyond the three-point line and buried a shot, cutting the Lady Eagles' lead to 10-3. Norah, who led her team with 20 points, was a thorn in Colby's side throughout the game.

The girls answered the three by going on an 8-0 run to end

the quarter. Sophomore Lauren Bell, Morgan's sister, flashed to the middle of the lane and buried a jumper to make it 22-5 early in the second quarter.

Liberal went on a 6-0 run, led by Norah's 4, that cut the Colby lead to 11. Then Hockersmith faked like she was going away from the basket and cut sharply towards to the hoop, caught a pass and put in a layup. Colby led 25-15 at the half.

Senior Kelsey Shields knocked down a jumper and senior Katrina Kaus, Katherine's twin, grabbed an offensive rebound and stuck it back in during the third.

Norah knocked down a three, narrowing the gap to 39-28 in the fourth. Moments later, Morgan Bell made a layup while drawing contact. She made her free throw, extending Colby's lead to 42-28. Then Bell knocked down a three. The Lady Eagles went on to win 51-32.

Hockersmith said the game was a little different than usual because Liberal could match Colby's quickness.

"We are used to being the quickest team," she said. "It was really hard. It throws our game off, but we adjusted well."

The Lady Eagles only shot about 38 percent from the field, but they made up for that by taking eight more shots than their opponents and knocking down six threes. The girls made 9 of 11 free throws.

Hockersmith and Lauren Bell had 7 each, Shields and Katrina 6, Katherine, 5; and junior Emilea Finley, 2.

With the win, the Lady Eagles improved to 10-1. They play in the semifinals against McCook High from Nebraska at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Building.

If they win, the girls will play in the championship at 6 p.m. Saturday at the Community Building. If they lose, they'll play for third at 4 p.m.



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press
Colby High senior Katrina Kaus got ready to deliver a pass during the Lady Eagles' game against Liberal on Thursday at the Community Building.

Eagles spunky for powerhouse

By Andy Heintz

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The Colby High boys came out like a team with nothing to lose at the start of their game against Bel-Aire based superteam Sunrise Christian on Thursday, playing with a degree of fearlessness that helped them hold their own early.

Unfortunately, the Eagles couldn't maintain that high intensity and Sunrise built up a 17-point lead in the second quarter before turning the game into a blowout in the second half during the opening round of the Paul Wintz/Tom Bowens Orange and Black Classic at the Community Building. When the final buzzer sounded, the Buffaloes had beaten Colby 79-27.

The lopsided score doesn't do the game justice, because the Eagles stayed with Sunrise during the much of the second half. But the second was all Buffaloes. Sunrise blanked Colby 26-0 in the third quarter, turning a 34-17 lead into a 60-17 lead.

The first two minutes of the contest didn't go well. The Buffaloes' Eric Katenda buried a three, giving the Wichita team an 8-0 lead. Then Colby senior Andrew Ketchum nailed a three, cutting Sunrise Christians' lead to 8-3. Senior Spencer Tubbs banked in a hook shot off the backboard. The Eagles played tenaciously throughout the quarter, getting to loose balls, grabbing rebounds against their much bigger opponents, blocking shots and creating turnovers. They trailed 17-11 at the end of the period.

"We've come a long way since the beginning of the year," said

freshman Zane Winger. "We showed that in the first half."

The Buffaloes' Buddy Hield finished a fast break with a one-hand slam, giving his team a 23-11 lead early in the second quarter. Moments later, Hield tried to score again, but Tubbs swatted his shot out of bounds.

Colby senior Corbin Stephens made a jumper. Then Tubbs blocked another shot and freshman Luke Cox darted into the lane and stole a pass. Cox, in a what can be described as a trial by fire, made his varsity debut, bringing the ball up court against the Buffaloes' swarming defense. Cox, who saw a lot of time in the game, ended with 6 turnovers; but he did a laudable job given the circumstances. Colby trailed 34-17 at the half.

The Buffaloes dominated the third quarter, drilling jumpers and making shots inside the lane. Hield had a one-hand tomahawk slam over Cox, giving his team a 45-17 lead. The Buffaloes scored the next 15 points.

Stephens found Ketchum with a beautiful pass from above the free-throw line for a layup early in the fourth. He got a tough guarded shot on the left baseline to roll around the rim and fall in. Sunrise Christian won 69-27.

With the loss, the Eagles record is 0-11. They will play Palmer Ridge from Monument, Colo., at 8:15 p.m. tonight at the high school. If the boys win tonight they will play for fourth place at 2 p.m. Saturday at the high school and if they lose, they will play for seventh place at noon at the Community Building.

Baylor crushes Kansas

LAWRENCE (AP) - The sad and scary part for Kansas is this was more or less an average night for Brittney Griner.

No. 1 Baylor's 6-foot-8 star had 22 points - her season average. She blocked five shots, a shade better than her 4.9 average. Only her 15 rebounds were significantly above her norm in a thorough and decisive 76-37 humbling Wednesday night of the overmatched Jayhawks.

"She's a once-in-a-lifetime kind of player," Baylor coach Kim Mulkey said.

The Bears (17-1, 4-0 Big 12) dominated from start to finish on a cold, snowy night, scoring the game's first 11 points and racing to a 30-7 lead with

about 9 minutes remaining in a lopsided first half. Freshman Odyssey Sims had 21 points for the Lady Bears.

Baylor, running its winning streak to 14 straight, had 55 rebounds to just 25 for Kansas. In its 17 previous outings, the Jayhawks had outrebounded opponents by an average of 8.2 per game.

Carolyn Davis, who came into the game averaging 19.5 points for Kansas, was guarded most of the night by Griner and managed only two points.

Her shooting percentage of 67.5 percent had been second in the nation but the 6-3 post player was only 1 for 6.

Late-game rally leads to Bulldogs victory

By Judy Rogers

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A fantastic last-minute finish helped the Bulldogs junior varsity boys defeat the Logan Trojans 45-41 in Rexford.

The boys got started Jan. 7 with a tip from Trey Schwarz to Tristan Schwarz, but they missed several shot attempts as Logan pulled ahead 5-0.

Then Grant Spesser made the Bulldogs' first points with 2:50 left in the first quarter. The boys trailed 7-4 at the end of the period. The second quarter was all Trey Schwarz and Kalyn Weber, as Schwarz made a bucket and Weber knocked down a free throw to tie the game.

Weber had several steals, but

the Trojans managed to pull ahead 11-7. Then Trey Schwarz made a shot and Weber tied the game with a steal and a bucket. The Trojans weren't giving up, and they pulled ahead with 48 seconds left in the half. However, Weber was determined and tied it at 13 with a bucket at the end of the quarter.

The teams continued to trade baskets throughout the third. They were knotted at 17 at one point, then Logan went on a 7-2 run to go up 24-19.

During the fourth quarter, the boys posted an additional 26 points, more than their first three quarters combined. The Bulldogs

were down by just a point, 37-36, with two minutes left.

Logan put in a couple of free throws to extend the lead before Andrew Luna stole the ball and went down for a layup. He missed, but Schwarz grabbed the rebound and put it back in, narrowing the gap to 39-38 with 1:15 left. Then Weber grabbed a loose ball off the floor and put it in, giving the Bulldogs a 40-39 lead.

With Logan in possession, Tyler Stevenson blocked a shot and the Bulldogs got the ball back. Stevenson was fouled before he could get a shot off. He made both free throws to put the 'Dogs up by

three. Logan was not about to give up, answering with a bucket that cut Golden Plains' lead to one. A full-court pass down the floor to Luna led to a bucket, giving the 'Dogs a 44-41 lead with 17.2 seconds left. They went on to win 45-41.

Weber and Schwarz led the Bulldogs' offensive attack with 15 and 14 points apiece. They were assisted in the win by Andrew Luna and Ethan Walter, who scored 4 each; Stevenson and Schwarz, 3 each; and Grant Spesser, 2.

"We played well all four quarters," Schwarz said.

Kansas State drops out of ratings

MANHATTAN (AP) - As the final seconds ticked away in Colorado's first victory over Kansas State in 10 games, a loud voice in a quiet arena rang out.

"This one's on you, Frank," someone shouted.

It's anyone guess whether Frank Martin heard the disgusted fan, but the emotional head coach of the Wildcats would not have argued. As a once-promising season threatens to turn into a nightmare for the preseason Big 12 favorites and disappointed fans send out a searching party for scapegoats, Martin is offering up himself for sacrifice.

"When the fish stinks, it stinks in the head first," he said. "If we stunk the way we've been playing, it starts with me, not the kids."

After losing 75-59 to No. 13 Missouri on Monday, the Wildcats are 13-6 overall and 1-3 in the conference. They've been in a Top 25 freefall, plunging from No. 3 all the way out of the rankings.

In the past month, the program has been rocked with player suspension and player defection. Some promising young players have shown no progress from last year, and even appear to have regressed.

Martin's even found himself trying to explain how a team leader's embarrassing declaration was misunderstood.

Pullen, the top scorer and acknowledged team leader, sat out three games and Kelly missed six after questions were raised over clothing they obtained at a Manhattan Dillard's store.

Almost as soon as he came back, Pullen created another controversy following the loss to Colorado.

"This is my last go-around. I'm not going to the NIT," he told reporters. "I won't play basketball

in the NIT. I'm saying that now, if we lose and we have to go to the NIT, I will not play."

To most people who heard it, Pullen seemed to be saying he was not willing to adjust his goals, that he still planned to qualify for the NCAA tournament

But around the country, his words were viewed as arrogance. All this from the team that won a school-record 29 games last year.

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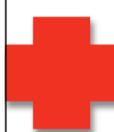


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