



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

The Colby High School football team's defense stopped a Russell running back Thursday at Dennen Field. The Eagles won the game 32-20, ending their season with a win.

Colby football team wins last game of season

By Kayla Cornett
Colby Free Press
colby.sports@nwksas.com

Despite it being about 30 degrees Thursday night, Head Coach Chris Gardner was drenched with Gatorade and loving every minute of it.

The Colby High School football team dumped a cooler of Gatorade on him Thursday after beating Russell 32-20 at Dennen Field in its final game of the year.

"It was a nice way for these kids to end it, it was a nice way for the seniors to end it the last time on their home field," Gardner said. "Those guys have put in four years of hard work and it's good that you can get a pay off at the end of it."

Colby (2-7) was leading Russell by one touchdown early in the third quarter after sophomore quarterback Luke Cox ran 43 yards for the score. A failed extra-point kick left the score at 18-12.

However, the Broncos answered with a 47-yard run for a touchdown just 1 minute, 32 seconds later. With a successful two-point conversion, Russell had taken the lead 18-20.

The Eagles worked hard on the next drive to regain the lead, and with 4:59 remaining in the third, junior running back and linebacker Beau Brown ran 6 yards for a touchdown. A complete pass from Cox to junior tight end and defensive lineman Trek Keck brought

the score to 26-20.

By the end of the third, the Broncos (2-7) were once again knocking on the door. On fourth and 9, Russell decided to go for the first down instead of punting. The quarterback drew back from the line, threw toward a receiver on the left side of the field, and Cox snatched the ball mid-air for the interception, shutting down the Broncos' chance for a win.

"Luke had a great game, they all did," Gardner said. "I thought the line really blocked well tonight, I thought we ran real well tonight offensively. Defensively, that single wing is hard to dissect at first, but once we got it dissected, I thought we played it pretty well."

Cox put the team on his back all night, racking up an impressive 181 rushing yards and 2 touchdowns, both of which were over 40 yards rushing. He also completed 3 of 7 passes.

Brown finished the game with an amazing 256 total yards and 2 touchdowns. Sophomore running back and linebacker Andrew Taylor carried the ball for 76 yards and 1 touchdown as well.

The Eagles defense also did its part to keep Russell's offense off the field. In the second quarter, senior running back and safety Konnor Kriss grabbed an interception with 6:01 on the board. In the fourth quarter, senior offensive and defensive lineman Andrew Elling recovered a fumble, and then with 25 seconds left in the game,

Kriss intercepted another pass to put the game away.

"It doesn't matter necessarily how you play sometimes. If you turn the ball over, it doesn't help you," Gardner said. "You always gotta benefit yourself and so tonight we benefitted ourselves and it turned out OK for us."

The only damper on the evening was the amount of penalties both teams accumulated. By halftime, both teams had had touchdown runs that were called back because of holding penalties on their offenses. Colby had 95 yards in penalties and Russell had 65 yards in penalties by the end of the night.

The Broncos had taken the lead early in the first quarter when they ran the ball into the end zone from the 1-yard line with 9:25 left on the clock. Russell attempted a two-point conversion, but it came up short, leaving the score 0-6.

Colby answered back with 2:48 left in the first when Cox ran 48 yards for a touchdown. The extra-point kick was no good, tying the score at 6-6.

Both teams scored another touchdown in the second quarter, with Colby's coming from a 43-yard run by Taylor. Both had failed attempts at two-point conversions, and they were tied at 12-12 before Colby took the lead in the third.

"Overall (I'm) very pleased, we bookend the season with wins," Gardner said. "Next year we want to try and get some in between those two and then get after it."

Volleyball team ends season at 30-9

The Colby High School volleyball team traveled to Hugoton for its sub-state tournament Saturday, and the Lady Eagles ended up losing in the semifinals. They finished their season with a 30-9 record.

In the first round, Colby played against Haven and was able to beat them in two sets. The first set was 25-16 and the second was 25-18.

The Lady Eagles' next match was against Cheney in the semifinals. They lost in two sets, 17-25 and 18-25. Cheney was the eventual cham-

pion of sub-state.

Head Coach Lesley Wagoner said the Lady Eagles still had a great season outside of sub-state.

"This year, the girls won the Liberal Invitational Tournament with Shelby Gardner (named) MVP of that tournament," Wagoner said. "They won the Oakley Invitational and were GWAC League Champions! Not only are these girls good players, but they are an academically strong team and many of them are involved in other activities and sports."

Lady Trojans win, beat Pratt in three sets

The Colby Community College Lady Trojans defeated Pratt Community College in three sets with scores of 25-20, 27-25 and 26-24 at Pratt in their final regular season match on Wednesday evening.

The Lady Trojans, 11-1 in the Conference and 27-13 overall, will host Cloud County Community College, 6-27 and 27-13, in the Community Building at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The game will be a first-round playoff match for the Region VI, Division I conference.

If Colby wins Tuesday against Cloud, they will play on Saturday, Nov. 5, at 2 p.m. at Newman University in Wichita. They will play the winner of the Pratt/Seward match. The winner of the 2 p.m. match will play again at 6 p.m. on Saturday. The finals are on Sunday, sbeginning at noon.

The volleyball team has announced a theme for the match on Tuesday.

"The theme for the rest of our season is 'True Blue Believers,'" said Head Coach Carey Jones.

"We have shirts with that slogan and we talk about it before everything we do. Last summer when Dr. Vacik met with the coaching staff, he told us that we could do great things if we just made true believers out of our players."

Fans are asked to wear navy blue to the match on Tuesday to display their "True Blue Spirit."

"We're asking everyone to come to the game at 6 p.m. in their navy blue," said Jones. "It will help energize the team when they see everyone while warming up."

Middle school season winds down in Tribune

By Koi Wessel and Austin Rivera

Golden Plains Middle School

The Golden Plains Middle School football season came to a close Oct. 20, when the Bulldogs played the Greeley County Panthers in Tribune.

The game started out with the Bulldogs winning the toss and receiving. They drove the ball down the field before fumbling. Greeley County recovered, and scored on their drive, taking an early 8-0 lead.

The Bulldogs took the ball down the field again, and again fumbled the ball and allowed the Panthers to recover. Greeley County scored, making the score 16-0.

Golden Plains punted in the next series and the Panthers got a safety. Seventh grader Jesus Aragon had a beautiful kick deep into Greeley County territory, but the Panthers took the ball down field and scored again.

In the second quarter, the Panthers scored twice more making the score 36-0 at halftime.

The Bulldogs had several defensive stops in the third quarter including a blocked punt by eighth grader Feliciano Bermudez and a recovered fumble by Koi Wessel.

However, Greeley County scored twice more in the fourth quarter to win the game 50-0.

"If we would have kept the ball and tried like we did in the second half the whole game, I think we would have had a big chance of beating them," Austin Rivera said.

The middle school football team finished its season winless, scoring only in the Heartland-Healy flag game.

"It was a difficult year," Coach Travis Betz said of the season. "It all starts in work ethic. We need to improve ours and improve it quickly so that we can be competitive in the future. We need to improve our speed, strength, and football mentality. Get to the weight room whenever possible. If you can't make it to the weight room, do something at home to make yourself better."

"We need our community to buy into an offseason condition program (weights and speed work). Buying in meaning holding each kid accountable for participating in this program and having 100 percent attendance. The schools with strong programs that we face have this in place and have buy in from the community."

"We had a good season and tried every game," Koi Wessel said. "I had fun this year."

"It makes me sad that football season is over," Rivera said. "Next year, I hope we can redeem ourselves and do better."

Golden Plains team plays in Sharon Springs tourney

By Angela Ritter and Hailee Spresser
Golden Plains High School

The Lady Bulldogs volleyball team traveled to Sharon Springs on Oct. 14 to compete in a dual game with Wallace County. The varsity played best three out of five matches and the junior varsity played best two out of three.

The Wildcats defeated the Bulldogs in the first three matches with scores of 9-25, 16-25 and 7-25.

"We seemed very intimidated," Jordan Christensen said. "I think we were not prepared to play to

the best of our ability and backed down when we needed to step up."

"We tried to take the outcome of our performance that game and use it to improve for the tournament the following day," Morgan Walz added.

Both varsity and junior varsity played in the Western Kansas Liberty League tournament, also in Sharon Springs, on Oct. 15.

The junior varsity girls had a close game losing 16-25 in the first match and 21-25 in the second match. This was their final game of the season. They finished

their season with a record of 4 wins and 5 losses.

"As a freshman, it was fun being able to start and play in all of the JV games," Brooke Wark said. "It took a lot of hard work and overall I was really pleased with the outcome. I'm really looking forward to next year's volleyball season."

Other teams competing there were Golden Plains, Dighton, Grinnell-Wheatland, Healy, Weskan, Wallace County, Triplains-Brewster, and Cheylin. Compet-

ing in the same pool as the Lady Bulldogs were Dighton, Wheatland-Grinnell, and Healy.

The varsity squad started out the day with a match up against the Dighton Hornets. Golden Plains started out great, but could not quite cut it, losing 16-25. In the second match, the Lady Bulldogs came out ready and slipped by the Hornets 27-25. Not ready to give up, Golden Plains fought hard but came up short 22-25.

Right after, Golden Plains competed against the Wheatland-Grinnell Thunderhawks. The Lady Bulldogs were not ready for the wrath of the Thunderhawks with the first match ending 4-25. Putting the first match behind them, Golden Plains battled hard, but couldn't pull it off and lost 21-25.

Wanting to end with a win, the Lady Bulldogs took on the Healy Eagles. The Lady Bulldogs destroyed Healy 25-14 in the first

set. Then Golden Plains devoured the Eagles in the second set 25-9.

"We played more together as a team and had some really close matches," sophomore Kylie Jones said. "We plan to work hard this week and be tough competitors at sub-state."

Eventual league champions were Weskan with Wheatland-Grinnell named runner-up.

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