

Eagles take second place in home tourney

By Kayla Cornett

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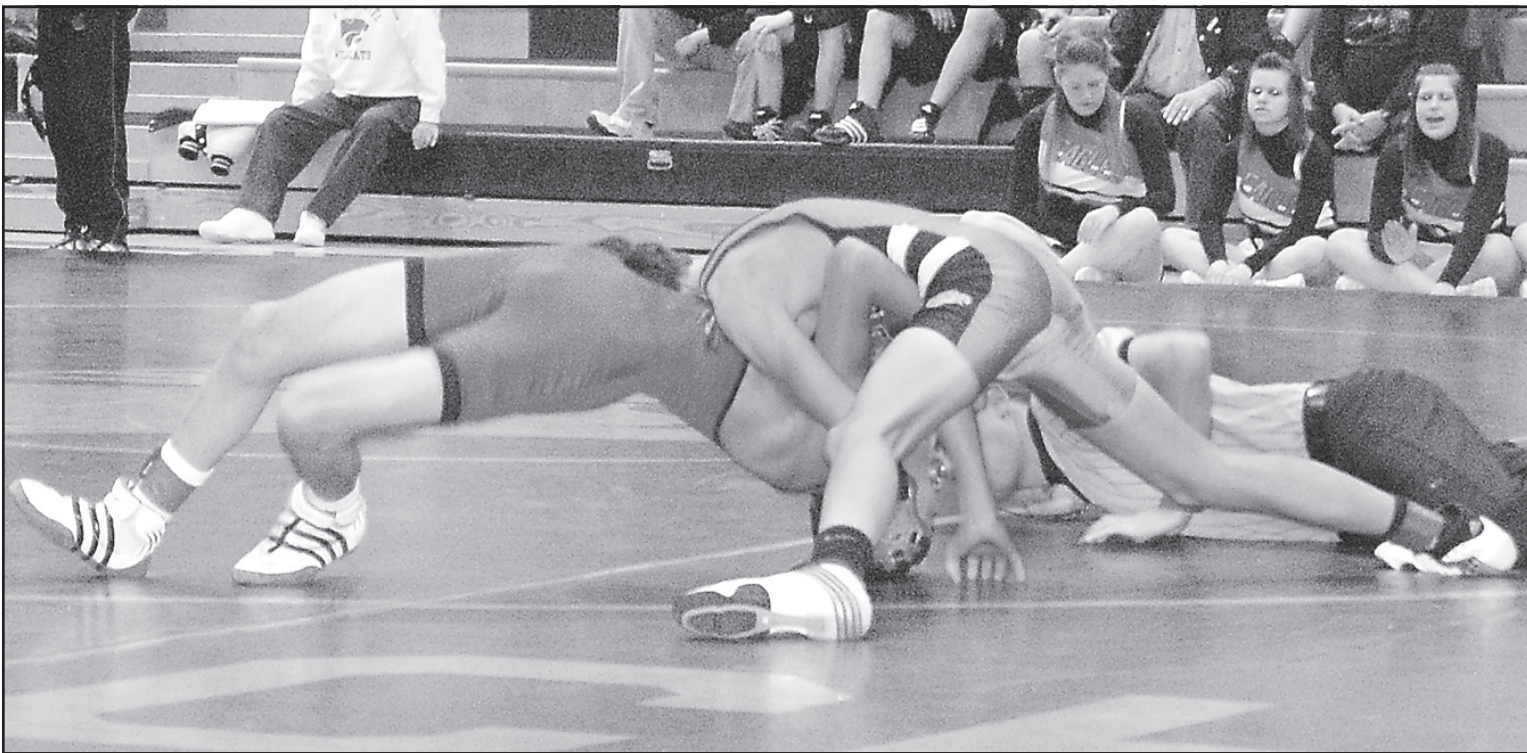
The Colby High School wrestling team took second place in the 26th annual Eagle Invitational Wrestling Tournament on Friday and Saturday after winning six out of seven dual matches.

Colby beat all of the teams in the No. 1 pool to claim first place and compete for first, second or third place for the whole tournament. There were 18 teams total divided into three pools.

The Eagles' only loss came against Pine Creek High School from Colorado Springs, Colo., the first place team from the No. 2 pool. Pine Creek won with a score of 56-12, and then went on to beat the first place team from the No. 3 pool, Valley Center High School, 59-12. Both wins landed Pine Creek in the top spot for the invitational.

Colby had to compete against Valley Center to determine second and third places, and it beat Valley Center 40-27 to claim the silver. The rest of the teams in the tournament competed in the same format to determine fourth through 18th places.

Hays came in fourth place with Garden City following in fifth, Concordia claimed sixth place, Hoxie landed in seventh, and Decatur Community of Oberlin finished in eighth place. Eaglecrest High School of Aurora, Colo., came in ninth, Goodland ended up in 10th place, Hutchinson took 11th, Oakley grabbed 12th place and Scott City finished in



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

A Colby High School wrestler worked on pinning his opponent from Liberal on Friday during the Eagle Invitational at the high

school gym. Colby won the match 62-7 and won the rest of their pool matches as well.

13th. Phillipsburg followed in 14th place, Legend High School of Parker, Colo., landed in 15th, Liberal came in 16th place, Wray High School took 17th and St. Francis finished in 18th place.

Colby's first match of the tournament was against Liberal and the Eagles won it 62-7. In the 132-pound weight class, Michael Tubbs pinned his opponent in 18 seconds to win by fall. Taylor O'Leary, 113 pounds, and Clayton Appelhans, 195 pounds, both pinned their opponents in under one minute as well, with O'Leary

at 49 seconds and Appelhans at 58 seconds.

The Eagles' next opponent was Decatur Community and they won the dual 66-12 with only one wrestler losing his match. In this dual, 285-pound Zell Bieberle had the fastest pin with 29 seconds and Dustin Reed, 120 pounds, was able to win by fall just one second behind Bieberle. Tubbs had another fast pin in this dual at 43 seconds.

Concordia followed and the Eagles took care of business once again, winning 49-27. Bieberle came out fast again and won by

fall in just 24 seconds. David Mainus, 106 pounds, also took down his opponent quickly, pinning him in 31 seconds.

Colby faced Legend after that and dominated the match 63-15. Only two wrestlers lost their matches in this dual and Reed won by fall in 36 seconds.

The Eagles' last dual before their finals matches was against Hutchinson and they came out on top with a score of 49-21. Bieberle again had the fastest pin, which was 29 seconds, and Reed had a 34-second pin in this dual.

At the end of the tournament, several wrestlers were awarded for having the fastest pin, the most pins or for being the most outstanding wrestler, and three Colby wrestlers received these titles.

In pool No. 1, Tubbs of Colby and Brad Hake of Concordia shared the fastest pin title for the lower weight classes with pins of 18 seconds. Dalton Luce of Hutchinson won fastest pin in the upper weight classes with an 11-second pin.

For most outstanding wrestler, Konnor Kriss of Colby, who won

all but one of his matches, grabbed the title in the lower weight classes and Skyler Hittle of Concordia won outstanding wrestler in the upper weight classes.

The most pins title went to Reed of Colby, who had 5 total, in the lower weight classes and to Hittle in the upper weight classes.

In pool No. 2, fastest pin went to Trenton Watson of Pine Creek in the lower weight classes with a pin of 18 seconds. Brandon Tribble of Pine Creek received the title for an 11-second pin in the upper weight classes.

The most outstanding wrestlers were Jerry McGinty of Pine Creek in the lower weight classes and Preston Weigel of Hays in the upper weight classes.

The title of most pins went to Derrik Ortiz of Pine Creek in the lower weight classes and Weigel in the upper weight classes.

In pool No. 3, Josh Warren of Valley Center earned the fastest pin in the lower weight classes with a time of 22 seconds. Eric Albers of Oakley and Joey Arellano of Garden City shared the title in the upper weight classes for pins of 21 seconds.

The most outstanding wrestlers were Clay Mulligan of Scott City in the lower weight classes and Albers in the upper weight classes.

Most pins was achieved by James Jurgens of Scott City in the lower weight classes and Garrett Foster of Valley Center in the upper weight classes.

Chiefs' interim coach names new starting quarterback

By Dave Skretta

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Romeo Crennel stepped to the podium inside the Chiefs' practice facility, gripping both sides of it with his meaty hands, and promptly named Kyle Orton as starting quarterback.

Let the changes in Kansas City begin.

In just a shade over 48 hours since he was appointed the interim coach in place of the fired Todd Haley, Crennel has already put his stamp on the franchise. Tyler Palko is out and Orton is in as the starting quarterback, the daily schedule of weight lifting and practice has been reworked, and tension that coursed through the Chiefs over the past several weeks seems to have lifted.

Perhaps the biggest change is Crennel himself, who cracked jokes and answered every question he was posed Wednesday with the kind of direct honesty that Haley lacked during his tenure.

"In meeting with the players today, I think they were attentive, they were excited about getting started, they know it's a big challenge to face, and I think they're ready to face the challenge," said Crennel, whose first game couldn't be more daunting: the Green Bay Packers on Sunday.

"I talked to the about the challenge," Crennel said, "and what we have to do, how we have to play the game. I talked to them about change, and distractions, and when there's change there's some uncertainty because you really don't know what to expect sometimes. We're going to try to stay as much on schedule as we can, but then I told them we're going to change some things."

That starts with the quarterback situation.

Palko was bumped from the starter to the third team after leading the Chiefs to only two touch-

downs in four games since taking over for the injured Matt Cassel. Orton will start against the Packers unless an injury to the index finger on his throwing hand causes him problems.

In that case, fifth-round draft pick Ricky Stanzi will make his first career start.

Orton took snaps under center with the first-team offense Wednesday during the brief portion of practice the media was allowed to observe. He was wearing a sleeve to protect the finger, which he dislocated on his only play as a member of the Chiefs two weeks ago at Chicago.

Crennel said he made the decision Wednesday morning to switch quarterbacks, let Palko know and then informed general manager Scott Pioli. Crennel said he didn't want the situation to become much of a distraction during a week of pronounced change within the organization.

"I'm feeling very comfortable with the offense," said Orton, who was claimed off waivers from the Denver Broncos a few weeks ago. "I do what I'm told and do it to the best of my ability."

Crennel said he considered waiting until later in the week to make the announcement because he wanted every possible advantage over the Packers, who at 13-0 are chasing a perfect season.

Then it occurred to Crennel that the Packers probably don't care who is starting.

Packers coach Mike McCarthy said that was precisely the case.

"We're just trying to lock down on their offense," McCarthy said, "and be prepared whether it's Ricky Stanzi or Kyle Orton."

Haley earned a reputation during his first NFL head coaching job of being evasive, difficult to please and often overly intense. Crennel couldn't be much more opposite.

While the Chiefs' defensive coordinator can be demanding, line-

backer Derrick Johnson said he also has a soft side that allows him to relate well to players. Johnson said that's part of the reason the pall in the locker room had lifted — players were generally upbeat on Wednesday, despite having lost five of their last six games and falling out of playoff contention.

"You'd think there would be a lot of distractions going on right now, but there's really not," Johnson said. "We know this business is about change all the time, so as players you have to be professional about what goes on."

Defensive back Brandon Flowers said the decision to fire Haley before the end of the season caught him by surprise, but then Flowers reasoned that he's on his

third head coach in four years and that nothing should surprise him.

"I wasn't expecting it, but you have to roll with the punches. That's not our call — that's upper management's call," Flowers said. "Everybody's going to pack their bags. I'm going to pack my bags, it's just a matter of when. Nobody is going to be here forever. With Coach Haley, it was a couple days ago."

"We can't keep thinking about that coaching change," Flowers said, "we just have to go out there and win games."

As far as Flowers is concerned, that would be the best change of all.

Lady Bulldogs win first home game

By Judy Rogers

Golden Plains High School

The Golden Plains High School varsity girls basketball team started off its season with a great game and a win against the Greeley County Lady Jackrabbits from Tribune on their home floor on Dec. 2.

Sophomore Hailee Spresser started off the game with a couple of early baskets. With additional points coming from sophomores Kylie Jones and Jordan Christensen, the girls held a 12-6 lead by the end of the first quarter. Continuing to be successful under the basket, the girls added another 12 in the second quarter while the defense held the Lady Jackrabbits.

The Lady Bulldogs led 24-15 by halftime.

The second half saw the girls playing steady and strong as they once again out-performed the Lady 'Rabbits adding 17 points in the third and 6 in the fourth for a final score of 47-27.

Spresser led the team with 15 points along with 12 from Christensen and another 10 from Jones. Junior Angela Ritter contributed 7 and sophomore Leea Juenemann put in 3.

"We've really been pushing to work together as a team this year, and I think that showed," Christensen said. "All of our hard work and determination paid off and we came out with a win to start our season off in the right direction."

In other stats, Spresser and Jones both shot

100 percent of their free throws. Jones also pulled down 14 rebounds along with 13 from Christensen. Juenemann and Spresser each grabbed 6 rebounds and sophomore MiKayla Lobato and Ritter claimed 2 apiece. There were 4 steals in the game — 1 each by Ritter, Jones, Christensen, and sophomore Macayla Easton. Ritter and Christensen both had 4 assists while Juenemann and Spresser each had 1.

The girls headed into the Castle Rock Tournament in Castle Rock, Colo., with a 1-0 record where they faced the Hoxie Lady Indians for the first round of play last Thursday.

"I am really looking forward to the rest of the season," Spresser added,

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