

Signing day



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

Colby High senior Dustin Reed (center) told Wrestling Coach Matt Sims (left) and his parents, Mellissa and Jason Reed, that he is excited to attend Newman University next year on a full-ride wrestling scholarship. He signed a letter of intent with Newman for four years. Reed, a three-time state finalist and

two-time state champion, has a 3.95 grade average and is the Student Council and National Honor Society president at Colby High School. He is also a member of the Young Humanitarians organization. "Newman has signed a great wrestler, student and young man," Sims said.

Middle school boys start season

By Hailee Spresser
Golden Plains High School

The Golden Plains Middle School boys basketball team traveled to Brewster in the preseason tournament. The A team lost both its games while the B team won both of its.

This was the middle schools' first games of the season. Competing in the tournament Nov. 9 and 10 were Triplains-Brewster, Golden Plains, Grinnell-Wheatland and Northern Valley.

First, the A-team boys played the Triplains-Brewster Titans. In the first half, the Bulldogs put in 9 points to the Titans' 22. The Titans overwhelmed Golden Plains in the second half to end the game 39-11. Scorers for the Bulldogs included Nick Brown with 4, Dawson Spresser 3 and Cole Bingham and Devin Carter each chipped in 2 points.

On Saturday, the A-boys took on the Northern Valley Huskies. Golden Plains couldn't stop the Huskies at first, with the score at halftime 25-5. The Bulldogs never quite got a grip, falling to the Huskies, 55-8. Carter had 6 points and Brown and Jesus Aragon each making a free throw.

"The games were a lot faster than we have been used to in the past," eighth grader Carter said. "I felt like we didn't shoot the ball and we passed the ball too much. We stayed together and worked as a team through those tough losses, but we have a lot of room for improvement. It is the beginning of the season, after all."

The B-team boys first faced Triplains-Brewster, holding the Titans to only 2 points in the first half to lead 16-2. The Bulldogs finished them off in the second half to take the game 32-2.

Leading the Bulldogs in points was A.J. Camacho with 16, followed by Jeron Shutte 10, Jacob Ritter 4 and Nolan Ritter 2.

Next, the B team played the Grinnell-Wheatland Thunderhawks. The Bulldogs came out and played a close first half with the Thunderhawks, 9-8, but with baskets in the second half by Camacho and Shutte, Golden Plains outscored the Thunderhawks 8-6. The B-boys claimed their second win, 17-14.

Camacho and Shutte led the Bulldogs with 6 points each, J. Ritter contributed 3 and Caleb Korte put in 2.

"The games were awesome. We had a mass amount of steals," said sixth grade Camacho. "We worked together as a team the whole time, and that is what made us successful."

The boys were to play in Logan on Thursday.

Colby squad ranked first in preseason

By Kayla Cornett
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The Colby High wrestling team is ranked first in the state in Class 4A in a preseason poll by the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association.

Bonner Springs follows in second, Andale third, Pittsburg fourth, Chanute fifth, El Dorado sixth, Concordia seventh, Smoky Valley eighth, Buhler ninth and Baldwin 10th.

In preseason individual rankings, eight Eagle wrestlers made the top six of their weight class.

- Ranking first were senior Dustin Reed at 126 pounds and senior Zell Bieberle at 285.
- Senior Quade Woofter is third at 160 and senior Beau Brown at 182.
- Junior David Mainus is fourth at 106, junior Andrew Taylor at 170 and senior Troy Quenzer at 195.

Senior Macen Shull ranked fifth at 138. Last year, the Eagles headed into state ranked third in Class 4A and 10 wrestlers qualified for the tour-

namment. Reed and senior Konnor Kriss came home state champions in the 120 and 138 weight classes, respectively, and three other wrestlers earned medals at state.

Coach Matt Sims said neither he nor his wrestlers pay much attention to the rankings.

"As far as the team goes, we don't talk about rankings," Sims said. "Our focus is on making ourselves better each week. No one on this team is a state qualifier until the regional tournament in February, so we have to get better and work hard."

He said the team didn't care when it wasn't ranked last year, so it doesn't matter to the Eagles if they are ranked this year.

"Last year, we didn't pay attention to the rankings when they didn't have us ranked," Sims said, "and this year they have us ranked first, and the same idea applies this year. We don't buy into the press."

According to the association's website, the next rankings were released on Tuesday after the first week of practice. The first season ranking will be released on Tuesday, Dec. 4.

Brewster teams hold tournament

The Triplains-Brewster junior high basketball teams held a preseason tournament with Golden Plains, Grinnell-Wheatland and Northern Valley.

On Nov. 9, the Triplains-Brewster boys and girls played Golden Plains.

The A-team boys dominated Golden Plains 39-11 while the B-team boys lost big, 32-2.

The A-team and B-team girls both lost to Golden Plains. The A-girls were defeated 22-15 while the B-girls lost big, 44-4.

On Nov. 10, the A-team girls played a close game with North-

ern Valley, but lost 28-21. The B-girls played at the same time against Grinnell-Wheatland, who overcame the Lady Titans 37-3.

Then, the B-team boys played a tough game with Northern Valley, falling 32-4. The A-boys, however, came out on top with a 31-28 overtime win over Grinnell-Wheatland.

The junior high teams were to play at 4 p.m. Tuesday against Golden Plains in Rexford and will then go to McDonald at 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 29, to face Chey- lin.

Broncos running back out with bad knee

By Eddie Pells
AP National Writer

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — The lockers of the running backs who might take Willis McGahee's spot in the Broncos lineup are conveniently lined up, four in a row.

Lance Ball. Knowshon Moreno. Jeremiah Johnson. Ronnie Hillman.

Barring an unlikely free agent signing, some combination of those four will be asked to fill in for the foreseeable future for Denver's leading rusher, McGahee, who tore a ligament in his right knee and will be out for what's expected to be a six-to-eight week stint.

"We've all got to step up and do our part," Hillman said.

Coach John Fox said McGahee's injury, suffered in the second quarter of Denver's 30-23 victory over San Diego on Sunday, will not require surgery and that the Broncos had no immediate plans to put the 10th-year veteran on injured reserve. Asked about reports that McGahee had also fractured his leg, Fox said, "I don't want to get into too much of the exacts, other than he will not be on IR."

By not putting him on injured reserve, the Broncos, at 7-3 and

with a three-game lead in the AFC West, could be thinking about a playoff-time return for their leading rusher, who has 731 yards this year and was having one of his best games of the season — 55 yards on seven carries — before the injury Sunday.

In the meantime, they must find a fill-in for McGahee, who was more reliable than explosive and spearheaded a 19th-ranked running game that's averaging 105.3 per contest. Unlike last season, when Tim Tebow was at the helm, the running game is more complementary than integral to an offense now run by Peyton Manning.

McGahee has built his career on adjusting to circumstances.

Back in 2003, he was finishing his college career at Miami and was considered among the very top prospects. But in the Fiesta Bowl, he tore all the ligaments in his left knee. After multiple surgeries, McGahee fell to 23rd in the draft, and even then, he sat out his first NFL season while rehabilitating the knee.

From there, he opened his career with three 1,000-yard seasons over his first four years. He went on to surpass 8,000 yards over a sturdy decade at a position where careers are often cut short. The

Broncos are his third NFL team and he is ranked first among active players with 33 100-yard games.

"His leadership. Power running. You talk about a guy who gets you the tough yards. Those are things we're definitely going to miss," cornerback Champ Bailey said. "But there's a good young group behind him."

Listed behind McGahee on last week's depth chart was Hillman, the NFL's youngest player at 21 years, 2 months, 5 days old. He's a third-round draft pick out of San Diego State who ran for 1,711 yards for the Aztecs last season and has slowly been getting more playing time with the Broncos as he has picked up the intricacies of NFL pass protection.

At 5-foot-10, 190 pounds, he looks more like a so-called "change-of-pace" back, though offensive coordinator Mike McCoy said earlier this season that the Broncos hadn't slotted Hillman solely for that. Hillman said he could carry the ball 20 or more times if asked.

"If it happens, it happens. If not, I'll just come in and play my role," he said.

The next candidate is Ball, a fourth-year veteran out of Maryland, who has been a dependable

backup and special teams player but is still looking for his first NFL start. Shutting in and out with Hillman after McGahee went down against the Chargers, Ball's biggest play of the day came when he slid over to block an oncoming Chargers linebacker, allowing Manning time to throw a 20-yard touchdown pass to Eric Decker.

Ball's biggest rushing game came last year at Kansas City — where the Broncos play next — when he ran 30 times for 96 yards after both McGahee and Moreno went out with injuries.

"I think we all have each other's back," Ball said. "If Ronnie needs to come out or if he feels like I need to step in for him, I think we keep it rolling. I think that's our mentality, is we keep the ball rolling."

Moreno, the team's 2009 first-round draft pick, recovered from a torn knee ligament in that game at Kansas City last year and was expected to get playing time in 2012. He hasn't been on the active roster, however, since losing a fumble in Week 2 against Atlanta.

Johnson, meanwhile, has been on Denver's practice squad all season — a demotion of sorts after playing in eight games last season, rushing 14 times for 77 yards.

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