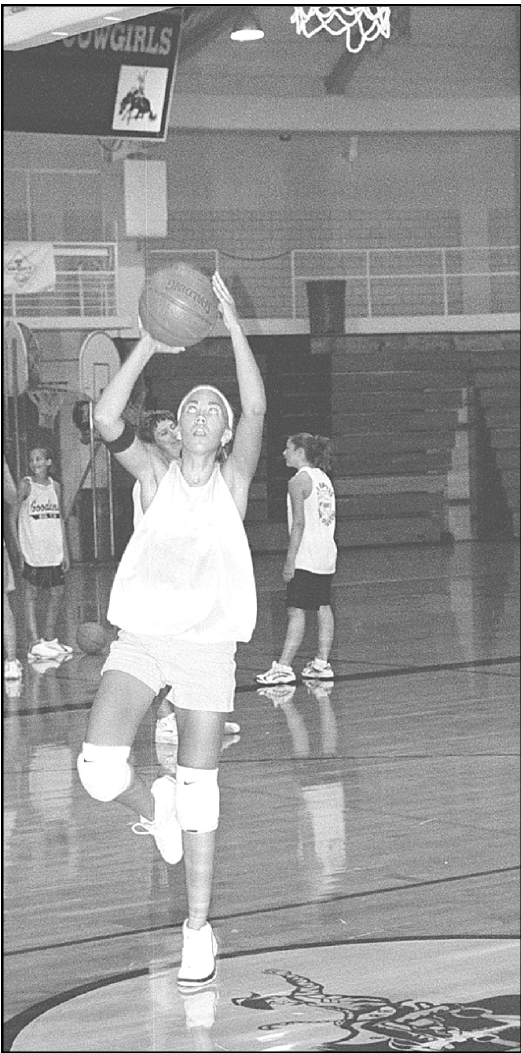


Senior Annie McCoy (above) tried to find out how many baskets she could make sitting on the floor at a basketball camp Tuesday at Max Jones Fieldhouse. Tess Schultz (right), a senior, laid in a basket during a drill. Melissa Swager (below), a freshman picked a ball off the ground, pivoted, and took a shot.

Photos by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

## Having fun on the court



# Players get summer practice

By Doug Stephens

*The Goodland Daily News*  
Incoming freshman basketball players are getting a chance to match up with experienced players at a four-day camp at Max Jones Fieldhouse ending today.

About 25 high school players and hopefuls are going to the evening camp sponsored by the city/county recreation department and run by Connie Livengood and other Goodland coaches. Livengood said about 21 younger girls, in sixth through eighth grade, are working on their skills in a morning camp.

There is a wide range of talent on the floor. The experienced players run through cross-over exercises and passing drills smoothly and with confidence, while some of the younger ones are a little awkward on the floor.

In one dribbling drill, the players switch hands by passing the ball between their legs while running down the court. Some of the freshmen had to stop running, change hands, then start moving again. A few of the older players gave tips to them, and encouraged them not to give up.

Good humor is evident throughout the camp. During one drill Tuesday, when one player tried to dribble down court while being guarded by another, Livengood pretended to get ready to blow her whistle, then doubled over in laughter when the girls jumped the gun.

During their periodic water breaks, necessary in the hot gym, the girls gossiped and joked around with each other, and one girl played with a basketball, first pretending it was a soccer ball, then a volleyball. When they get involved with scrimmages, though, the players are all business.

One drill, focusing on offense, pitted three girls against two defenders. When the defenders got control of the ball, either by the other team scoring or with a turnover, another girl joined them and they ran down the court to try their luck against two new defenders.

The way the drill was set up, the teams changed with every turn, giving

the players a chance to practice with different people. One side of the court, two assistant coaches joined the line and gave the girls somebody more experienced to go up against.

At one point, the girls were split into two groups, and each group into three teams. The three teams alternated defense and offense in a serious scrimmage. Livengood mixed up the teams at regular intervals to see how they interacted with each other.

One group was made up of mostly freshmen and sophomores, while the other was generally filled with experienced players, but it wasn't a strictly followed set-up.

"We have some freshman in this group," Livengood said. "We wanted to mix it up a little."

Livengood ran a complex passing drill, where the players run in a circle to frustrate the defense. The older girls jumped right into it while the younger girls spent most of the time learning how it worked.

With all the running, jumping and shooting, not to mention the wind sprints run by the losing team of a shooting contest, the girls started dragging about an hour before the practice ended. But they still had enough energy left to play "Pac-Man."

Four girls, one from each grade, volunteered to be the "ghosts" and try to tag the other players. Everyone had to dribble a basketball, and they were only allowed to run along the lines of the court.

Jayci Stone, a senior, really got into the game. She made noises like a video-game while chasing everyone during the first game. In the second, she survived longer than any other player, running in circles, or squares, around the four ghosts, often baiting them, then breaking into bursts of speed.

"The kids enjoy that kind of stuff," Livengood said. "It's not the same old up and down the court, but they're still getting the same stuff out of it."

Each day's practice was pretty much like the others, Livengood said, although some days were more focused on offense, while others on defense.

## Cardinals lose to Giants

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Benito Santiago saw the sign he wanted and got a pitch he liked. One swing gave the San Francisco Giants a win.

Jeff Kent tied the game with a home run in the eighth inning and Santiago hit the go-ahead homer in the ninth as San Francisco rallied for a 5-4 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals on Wednesday.

Santiago hit a 3-0 pitch from reliever Dave Veres (3-5) into the left-field seats with one out, helping the Giants overcome a 4-1 deficit.

"I was happy to get the sign to hit on 3-and-0," Santiago said. "I was looking for something to drive."

Giants manager Dusty Baker said he thought allowing Santiago to hit was a good idea, even though he was followed up by No. 8 hitter Tsuyoshi Shinjo.

"There's always some hesitation,"

Baker said. "When you see who we had coming up, the No. 8 spot. Nothing against Shinjo. He's more of a fastball hitter than an offspeed hitter. Veres throws that splitter.

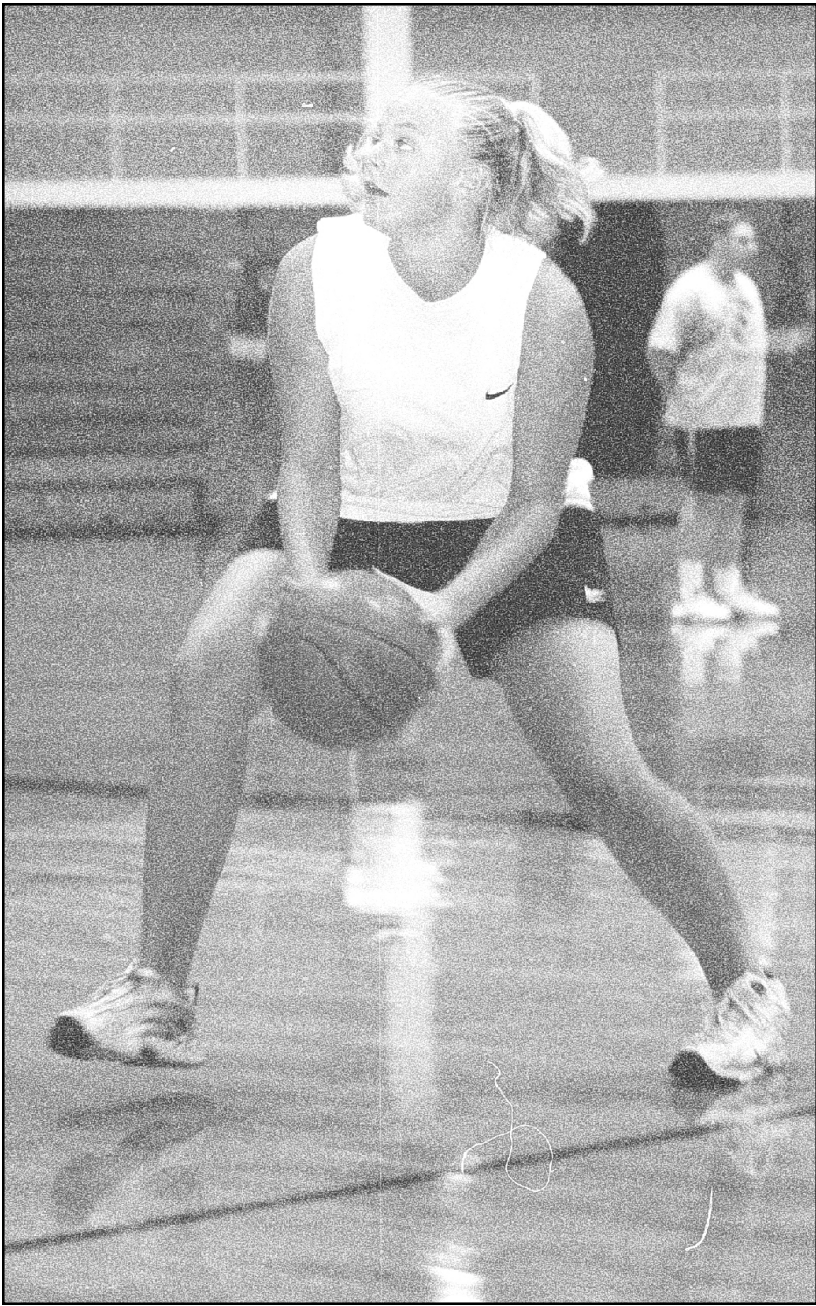
"So I thought, 'Let's go for it now, especially on the road.' Sometimes, you just have to go for it."

Veres switched from his normal breakingball to a fastball and it cost him.

"He (Veres) got beat on a 3-0 fastball," St. Louis manager Tony La Russa said. "He put a good swing on the ball. A lot of guys overswing and he didn't."

One inning earlier, Kent hit a 1-2 pitch from reliever Mike Timlin to tie it at 4.

Before the home run, Timlin and Cardinals starter Jason Simontacchi combined to retire 14 of 15 Giants' batters.



The junior high girls worked more on fundamentals than anything else, she said.

"We just want to give them a chance to play in the summer. Get a ball into their hands," Livengood said, adding that she would like to run the camp earlier in the summer, but that can be hard to arrange with the girls playing

on summer teams, or going on vacation.

The camp, which started Monday, saves time when the winter season starts, Livengood said.

"Sometimes we introduce a new offense," she said, "and this might save us three or four days when we start our official practices."



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## Rockies try to unload high-priced pitchers

DENVER (AP)—The Colorado Rockies know what they want to do in the current trading season, but they also know it might be impossible.

Baseball's trading deadline is July 31. Seventeen teams have completed trades involving 42 players since the June 23 deal that sent left-handed reliever Alan Embree from the San Diego Padres to the Boston Red Sox.

Despite transactions involving a few demotions and injuries, the Rockies have yet to participate in any trades.

"I know what we have to do," said general manager Dan O'Dowd. "I'm not sure we're going to be able to do it."

O'Dowd wants to trade Mike Hampton and Denny Neagle, primarily because the two pitchers will have \$143.8 million remaining between their contracts after this season. With Aaron Cook and Jason Young developing at Triple-A and available at \$200,000 a year, O'Dowd would rather spend the

money on power-hitting position players and veteran relievers.

"I don't think anybody can be a dominant pitcher in our ballpark for an extended time, but I think you can be a good pitcher here," O'Dowd said. "What we need in our park is players having all-star caliber production at almost every position."

During O'Dowd's three seasons in charge, payroll changes have been his primary goal during the trading season.

He traded away center fielder Tom Goodwin in 2000 and short-stop Neifi Perez in 2001 because he wanted to swap roughly \$7.1 million in combined salaries for Juan Pierre and Juan Uribe, who came up from the minors making \$200,000.

"It never works out when you're dumping money," O'Dowd said. "If you get a team who will take on the salary, you're going to have to take what they will give you. Even if you're trading with your best friend in the world, he's going to give you something that he really doesn't mind losing."

## Manager could get extension

DENVER (AP)—The Colorado Rockies have begun negotiating a contract extension for manager Clint Hurdle that could be in place before August, a Denver newspaper reported.

Team spokesman Jay Alves would not confirm the report published in Wednesday's Denver Post, saying all contract negotiations are confidential.

Hurdle also declined to discuss the issue before Tuesday's game against the San Diego Padres.

"These things have a way of working themselves out," he said.

Since Hurdle took over April 26, the Rockies have gone 38-34, salvaging what appeared to be a certain last-place finish in the National League West for the third time in four years. Hurdle's contract runs out at the end of the season.

Hurdle was the Rockies' hitting coach the past six years before officials fired former manager Buddy Bell. The team had gotten off to the worst start in club history.

General manager Dan O'Dowd has said he's happy with Hurdle's performance, a stance echoed by vice chairman Charlie Monfort.

## Royals beat White Sox 8-6

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Brent Mayne reached career highs in hits, RBIs and stolen bases.

In each case, the number was four. "It's about time," said the Kansas City Royals catcher, who was 4-for-4 with four RBIs in an 8-6 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday. "This is what I've been waiting for all year."

After stroking his fourth single in the eighth, Mayne stole second, padding his season total to four. He'd never stolen more than three bases in a season.

Mayne, who'd been struggling at the plate, hit an 11th-inning home run to beat Texas 5-4 on Tuesday.

"It's definitely turned around," he said. "The home run and then today, that's pretty positive."

Neifi Perez reached base three times and scored three runs for the Royals, who won their sixth in a row, their best streak since winning six straight from June 26-July 1 last year.

"Everybody will be here tomorrow morning probably at 8 o'clock," Royals manager Tony Pena said. "I might sleep here tonight. It's fun when you win. You can't wait to play the next game."


Frank Thomas was 4-for-5 with three doubles, including a two-run drive off rookie reliever Ryan Bukvich that pulled Chicago within two runs in the seventh. He has seven hits in 10 at-bats since a 2-for-37 slump.

Todd Ritchie (5-13) went deeper into his spiral, allowing eight runs and 12 hits in 5 2-3 innings.

Ritchie leads the major leagues in losses and tops the AL in runs allowed (93). With an ERA of 5.98 ERA, he's lost eight consecutive road decisions since a 7-1 win at Cleveland on April 23.

"Since about the middle of May, I've been totally terrible," Ritchie said. "This team has been carrying dead weight as far as I am concerned."

## FOOTBALL IS BACK East vs. West



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