

Norton will play football with undefeated Osborne tonight

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School football team will travel to Osborne this evening for a Mid-Continent League contest.

Kickoff will be at 7 p.m. The Blue Jays are 1-2 for the young season after losing their opener to Oakley, defeating Plainville and losing last Friday to Smith Center. Both Oakley and Smith Center are undefeated and the Osborne Bulldogs also have a perfect record.

Under second year coach Clint Merritt, Osborne finished strong last season and won their district. They have picked up where they left off last year. They have five returning starters on offense and four on defense. Their returning starters are: Adam Conway, 6'2", 190 pound senior wide receiver and linebacker; Dustin Spears, 6'3", 210 pound senior tight end and defensive lineman; Casey Corbett, 6'0", 170 pound junior running back; Dustin Patee, 5'11", 240 pound junior offensive lineman; Joe Princ, 5'11", 230 pound junior offensive lineman; Tyler Schultz, 6'3", 185 pound senior linebacker; Josh Conway, 6'0", 170 pound junior defensive back.

Adam Conway was a second team all-Mid-Continent League selection at wide receiver last season. He caught 25 passes for 425 yards for a 17 yards per catch average. He is also an outstanding linebacker. Last season he recorded 96 tackles and intercepted three passes.

Spears was a second team all-league defensive end and honorable mention tight end last season. Schultz was a second team all-league choice at linebacker.

With only three returning starters and eight lettermen, the Blue Jays are gaining valuable experience with each ball game. Michael Sprigg, Norton's 285 pound senior tackle, was all-league honorable mention on offense last year and senior Ryan Maddy, a 195 pound tight end and linebacker, received honorable mention all-league at both positions.

Other Norton lettermen are: Seth Mills, 5'10", 165 pound senior quarterback and defensive back; Blake Hillebrand, 5'7", 210 pound senior offensive guard and defensive tackle; Aaron Overlease, 5'9", 155 pound senior tailback and defensive back; Kyle Kats, 5'8", 176 pound senior fullback and defensive back; Justin Shirk, 6'1", 195 pound senior tight end and defensive end and Paul Juenemann, 6'3", 180 pound senior offensive guard and defensive end.

After three games, Mills is leading the Norton offense. He has completed 21 of 37 passes for 56.8 percent accuracy and 296 yards. He averages 14.1 yards per completion and 98.7 yards passing per contest. Mills also has rushed for 71 yards and averages 122.4 yards of total offense per game. Shirk is his leading receiver with 7 catches for 141 yards and a 20.1 yards per catch average.

Defensively, the Blue Jays are

led by Hillebrand and Maddy with 27 tackles each. Sprigg has 20 total tackles.

"I saw more good things on the film of the Smith Center game than I thought I would," Coach Graber told the Blue Jay Booster Club on Wednesday evening. "Defensively, we didn't tackle very well and, offensively, we hurt ourselves with turnovers. We let down some after that quick Smith Center touchdown in the third quarter. We need to play hard all 48 minutes. We're still very young as far as knowledge and minutes of playing time are concerned I think we're getting better but we'll have to prove it on Friday night."

"Osborne has a very, very big team. Except for their center, their line averages 230 pounds and they have two big backs. I expect them to run the Power-I and try to stuff the ball down our throats. Big, powerful teams have been giving us trouble. We must become more physical."

"Coach Merritt is a former great athlete for Smith Center and he has done a tremendous job at Osborne. They are playing well and don't have many turnovers."

Coach Graber said that Kats, who was injured early in the Smith Center game, will be ready to play against Osborne. Clay Madden received a slight concussion in the Smith Center game and will not play. Chris Davis received a knee sprain and is expected to miss two weeks.

Lady Jays freshmen volleyball team gets one win, loses two

By DICK BOYD

Coach Joan Bolt's Norton Community High School freshmen girls volleyball team opened the 2004 season with a narrow loss at Hill City on September 13, then defeated Hays and lost a close match to Colby in Norton last Thursday.

Hill City

Norton lost to Hill City 22-25, 23-25, 22-25.

"We played very nervous," said Coach Bolt. "Defensively, we did okay but we needed to be much more aggressive on offense. We need to focus on improving our footwork, floor coverages, confidence and communication. We also struggled a little on serving and serve receive."

As a team, Norton served 79 percent, attacked 67 percent with a 6 percent kill ratio and dug a very good 64 percent.

Megan Kats led serving with 12 points and 5 aces; Haley Jones scored 7 points and 4 aces; Chantille Campbell, Thea Wiseman and Alyssa Farber had 4 points each. Kats was leading set-

ter with 48 of 52 and 11 assists and Wiseman was 12 of 14 with 4 assists. Campbell led spiking with 15 of 18 and 9 kills, Haley Jones was 8 of 10 with 4 kills. Kats, Farber and Lacy Ellis had 2 kills each.

Kylie Morel led serve receive and Campbell passing and digs with 19 of 22. Kats led serves with 4, followed by Campbell and Jones, 3 each; Wiseman and Ellis, 2 each.

Hays

The young Lady Jays defeated Hays 15-25, 25-17, 15-10.

"We played very fundamentally sound," said Coach Bolt. "We covered the court well and had great offensive play. I am very pleased with our improvement in play since our Hill City match. We also showed much more confidence."

Campbell led serving with 7 points, 5 aces, followed by Kats, Sara Lentz, 6 points each; Jones, 4; Wiseman, Karlynn Kent, 3 each; Farber, 2.

Kats led setting with 43 of 46 for 93 percent accuracy, followed by Wiseman, 11 of 12, 92 percent. Campbell and Morel led passing.

Kats led digs with 5 of 6 for 83 percent, followed by Campbell, 6 of 8, 78 percent. Farber led spiking with 11 of 13, 5 kills. Jones and Lentz followed with 3 kills each. Ellis had 2, Sydney Cliff and Morel, 1 each.

Colby

Norton lost to Colby 23-25, 25-10, 12-15.

Campbell and Wiseman had 1 point each. Hitting was shared by Campbell and Jones with 2 kills each. Rachael Hickman, Lentz, Farber and Ellis had 1 kill each. Campbell led saves with 3; Jones had 2.

"We also played very soundly against Colby," said Coach Bolt. "We had a little trouble getting momentum in the first game, despite making a number of substitutions. Our communication on the floor still needs some work."

"We had several long rallies and I feel we played a little sluggish in the third game."

"Overall, I see much improvement and I'm very pleased with the progress our girls are making."

Norton junior varsity volleyball team defeats Hays and Colby in matches

By DICK BOYD

Coach Peggy Cox's Norton Community High School junior varsity girls volleyball team defeated both Hays and Colby in matches played September 16 in Norton.

Victory over Hays High

Norton defeated Hays High 25-11, 22-25, 15-7.

"We controlled the match most of the time," said Coach Cox. "The only time we really struggled was during the second game. We got stuck in one rotation where we couldn't get the ball up and keep it playable. The Lady Indians went on a six-point run that we couldn't shut down. Once we put the ball to the setter, our sets and hits were on target."

"Overall, we served 93 percent and were 19 percent in kills.. our second highest for the season."

Match statistics were: serving — Courtney Cox, 18-18, 2 aces; Courtney LeClair, 9-10, 2 aces; Brianna Felton, 8-8; Lexi Wolf, 12-12; Lacey Roe, 6-8, 2 aces; passing/setting/hitting — Naomi



Streck and Roe led the way in passing. Wolf and Cox had 11 and 7 assists, respectively. Streck, Maggie Nielsen, Felton and LeClair had a great night with over 20 percent of their hits being kills.

Win over Colby

The Lady Jays outscored Colby 25-22, 27-25.

"This was an exciting match to watch, although, at times it was very frustrating," said Coach Cox. "We played well but, in the second game, we were up 24-18 and lost the lead. A side-out gave Colby a point but all we needed to win was a side-out. We allowed Colby to

rally and take a 25-24 lead. We had to win the next point or go into a third game. We did win the next point and went on to win the next two after that for the game and match."

Serving statistics were: Cox, 12-12, 1 ace; Streck, 5-5, 1 ace; Wolf, 12-13, 1 ace; Roe, 6-8, 1 ace; Felton, 6-7, 1 ace. "As a team, we served 90 percent, which is our goal," said Coach Cox.

"LeClair, Streck, Amber Waggoner, Roe, Nielsen and Felton passed extremely well. Our back row players are really working at not letting any balls hit the ground and that helps keep our numbers up. Wolf had 12 assists and Cox had 8 for the hitters. Hitting continued to be strong for Felton, Streck, LeClair and Dana Hillebrand. Nielsen had a block for a point. Touches on blocks are occurring more often as our girls learn placement and timing."

"Overall, we were 17 percent in kills, which is fairly consistent with what we had in the win over Hays High."



Norton senior Amber Engelbert digs a ball during the Lady Jays' match with Hill City on Tuesday in Norton. Ready to help if needed is junior Amanda Antrim, No. 2.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton Lady Jays varsity spikers beat Stockton, lose to Hill City

By DICK BOYD

Coach Jill Lively's Norton Community High School girls varsity volleyball team defeated Stockton but lost to Hill City in Mid-Continent League play on Tuesday in Norton.

Stockton

Norton outscored Stockton 25-23, 25-8.

"We started the first game with a lot of confidence but, after taking an 18-9 lead, we let Stockton score 10 points in a row," said Coach Lively. "A loss of momentum like this is very difficult to recover but we managed to side out to our next rotation and finish the game with a win."

"Ninety percent serving with six aces was the key to winning this match. Our hitters did a great job of putting the ball down and our defense covered the floor well."

Team statistics were: serving, 90 percent; hitting, 83 percent; kills, 24 percent; blocks, 8; digs, 13.

Individual statistics leaders were: serving, Casey Carter, 100 percent, 2 aces; serve receive, Klaire Mann, 2.25 on 3.0 scale; setting, Chelsea Cox, 8 assists; hitting, Amber Engelbert, 100 percent, 7 kills; blocking, Cox, 5;

digs, Cox, Engelbert, 3 each.

Hill City

Norton lost to Hill City 18-25, 17-25.

"Prior to the match with Hill City, we recognized our seniors and their parents. Casey Carter, Pam Foley, Stacy Reeves, Amber Engelbert and Kylee Witt are our senior players this season," said Coach Lively. "I have really enjoyed coaching these girls and am looking forward to their leadership during the rest of the season."

"Manager Lacey Ninemire is also a senior this year. She really does a great job of keeping things in order for us."

"Pam and Stacy also honored their grandmother, Alice Foley, who was 100 years of age on Tuesday."

"Overall, we didn't play as well against Hill City as we are capable of playing. Our serving percent was low and our setting and hitting were a bit off. We just struggled to keep the momentum during this match. Needless to say, we were disappointed with the loss and feel we could have played much better."

Team statistics were: serving, 83 percent; hitting, 75 percent; kills, 1 percent; blocks, 2; digs, 11.

Individual statistics leaders were: serving, Mann, 100 percent, 1 ace; serve receive, Whitney Newell, 2.67 on 3.0 scale; setting, Cox, 9 assists; hitting, Becca Ebert, 6 kills, blocks, Cox, 2; digs, Rachael Lentz, Carter, Engelbert, 2 each.

Other matches Hoxie defeated Hill City 25-10, 16-25, 25-18 and Hoxie outscored Stockton 25-13, 25-17.

Next action

The Norton varsity volleyball team will play Liberal and Hays High on Saturday at Hays High. Hays will play Liberal at noon, followed by the Norton versus Liberal match scheduled for 1:30 p.m. and the Norton versus Hays match expected to begin around 3 p.m.

The Norton freshmen volleyball team will play in the Hill City Tournament on Saturday, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and will host Osborne on Monday in Norton, beginning at 5 p.m.

On Tuesday, the Norton varsity and junior varsity volleyball teams will travel to Atwood to play Atwood and Colby. Matches begin at 4:30 p.m.

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