

Youth play summer basketball

By DICK BOYD

For the past 11 years, Mid America Youth Basketball has provided games that are a valuable playing experience for thousands of youth in the midwest, including Norton area boys and girls from fourth through 12th grade.

Tournaments are held statewide, but the feature is the National Invitational Newton Summer Kickoff Tournament, which was held June 11-13 in 93 gyms in the Newton area, home of the founder.

Around 800 teams from more than 20 states competed.

At the end of three days, the Norton seventh-grade girls team had compiled the best record of Norton teams, placing second in the B Division, the second toughest. They took a perfect 7-0 record into the finals, where they lost to finish with a 7-1 record.

Team members are Laura Lee Baird, Ashley Colip, Amanda Delimont, Wiyanna Paxton, Kara Jo Jones, Taylor Rossi, Hayli Bozarth and Whitney Taylor. All are from Norton except Taylor, who lives in McCracken. Coaches are Jim Baird and George Rossi.

There were 57 teams in the seventh-grade division. They were divided into 13 pools. The top three teams from Pools A-E advance to the A bracket and the others move into the B bracket. Norton was in Pool K.

"The A bracket teams usually consist of elite all-star teams from many different states, such as Nebraska, Iowa, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Colorado, as well as teams from Kansas such as the Kansas Belles and the Kansas Dream Team," said Coach Rossi.

The Norton seventh-grade girls began pool play on Friday afternoon by defeating the Kansas Sparks from Andover 40-13. The next game, Norton defeated Team Hoopla from Wichita 49-18.

"We had a great defensive game, shutting down Team Hoopla's three 5-foot, 10-inch girls," said Coach Rossi.

The final pool game was on Saturday against the Wichita Mustangs. Norton won 38-18 to place first in their pool and advance to the B division. The bottom teams from pools A-E and the top two teams from pools F-M went to the B division with the bottom teams from pools F-M going to the C division. There were 20 teams in the B division.

Norton defeated Southeast Kansas Hoopsters (Coffeyville area) 38-27, then routed the Wichita Northstars 54-8. In their third game, Norton defeated the Colorado Lady Lions from Denver 44-32.

"This game was our best of the tournament," said Coach Rossi. "The Lady Lions were very aggressive and pressed very hard the entire game. We played great man-to-man defense to stop their inside game. We hit 20 of 30 free throws to seal the game in the final min-

utes with many of them coming in the last three minutes. The win advanced Norton into the semi-finals, where we played the Buhler Sparks.

"Buhler started in a man-to-man press and played very tight defense. We did a great job of attacking their press and executing our man offense to get many inside shots. We forced Buhler to play a zone defense for the first time in the tournament."

The Lady Jays won the game 43-27 to advance to the finals of the B division against the Kansas Dream Team, an all-star team with girls from central and southcentral Kansas.

Both teams had only 15 minutes rest after the semi-finals. The Dream Team opened the game by hitting four straight three-point shots. Norton answered with baskets of their own and trailed by just eight at halftime.

In the second half, Norton was able to close within two points with about four minutes remaining, but the Dream Team responded with four three-point baskets to put the game out of reach and win 49-33.

"We were extremely proud of all our girls in this tournament," said Coach Rossi. "Our girls played very good team basketball. We were able to rise to meet every challenge until the final game. The Dream Team shot the ball so well, we just could not keep pace with their scoring."

"This tournament gives the girls a great opportunity to play many different teams from several states and to see some great players in their age group. We watched some fantastic teams play. Our girls realize how hard you must work if you want to be at or near the same level as the best players."

The seventh-grade girls also competed in the Hays Tournament on June 5-6 and won the championship.

They played in a seven-team round robin and won every contest. Games played and scores were: Norton 41-33 over the Hot Shots, 38-15 over the Smith Center Blaze, 43-23 over the Quinter/WaKeeney Hot Shots, 24-19 over Claflin, 49-35 over Hoisington and 44-17 over Hoxie.

"This was a good tournament to start the summer season," said Coach Rossi. "We played teams that were very similar to us. Our girls played hard and have a great work ethic and desire to get better."

Sixth Grade Girls

The sixth-grade Norton Lady Jays also competed in the Newton invitational. They were one of 44 competing teams and compiled a 3-3 record.

Team members are Raven Brown, Alyssa Thomson, Amanda Ray, Bethany Winkel, Shelby Jones, Ashlie Stewart, Kaitlyn Wolf, Hannah Waggoner, Lacy Keilig and Brooklyn Winkel. Coaches are Darin Winkel, David

Wolf and Joan Bolt.

In their first game, Norton played the KICO Shooters, a team they had beaten the previous weekend in the Hays Tournament. Once again, they triumphed with a 41-9 score.

In the second game, Norton edged the St. John Devils 25-24.

The Lady Jays suffered their first loss by a 27-23 score to the Haysville Thrillers in their third contest.

Next opponent for Norton was the Lucky Lady Basketball team but their luck ran out as Norton won 29-11.

Next, Norton played the Liberal Heat, a top 10 ranked team. Norton lost 29-18.

Norton's last game was on Sunday against the Blue Fury. The Lady Jays lost by a 32-22 score.

The sixth-grade Lady Jays also competed in the Hays Tournament on June 5-6 and placed second with a 5-1 record.

They defeated the Blue Smooth Eez 50-24, the Kansas Trailblazers 49-14, the Hoisington Sparks 45-10 and the KICO Shooters 35-13. After losing 28-24 to the Shooters, they defeated the Hot Shots 50-14.

11-12th Grade Girls

The Norton 11th and 12th grade girls team did not compete at Hays, so the Newton tournament was their first of the summer. They ran into some tough competition and compiled a 1-6 record.

Team members are Whitney Newell, Chelsea Cox, Klaire Mann, Amber Overlease, Chelle Donovan, Becca Ebert, Karlie Jones and Amber Engelbert. Coaches are Dave Newell and Jenni Sloan.

9-10th Grade Boys

The Norton 9th and 10th grade boys team called themselves the Norton Gold. The Norton 8th and 9th graders wanted to play together, so they are playing on the team and playing one class lower than the members of other teams.

They compiled a 2-4 record in the Hays Tournament and went 1-5 in the Newton Tournament.

Team members are Jared Cox, Logan Kats, Todd Bolt, Wes Geogeson, Jared Engelbert, Nic Lewis, Preston Herman, Patrick Eland, all of Norton, and Trey Wilberger, Scottsbluff, Neb. Team coaches are Clayton Cox and Trent Richmond.

11-12th Grade Boys

The Norton 11th and 12th grade boys have nicknamed themselves Da Heels. They compiled a 4-3 record in the Newton tournament.

Team members are Aaron Overlease, Ryan Maddy, Kyle Kats, Seth Mills, Heath Vincent, Josh Jackson, Nathan Morse, Jason Green and Justin Shirik. Coach is Matt Overlease.

Next Action

The Beloit Tournament will be held this Saturday and Sunday and the Colby Tournament will be held July 9-11.

Softball season hits midpoint for Division I and II play

Division I and Division II softball action reached the mid-point of the season with games June 7 through June 17.

Division II Softball

New Age 8, Logan 8

New Age got on the scoreboard first on June 7 with a first-inning run from Steph Hager. Logan took the lead 5-1 in the bottom of the inning with runs from Michaela Girard, Kodi VanLaey, Whitney Melder, Katie Pearl and Courtney Schnieder.

New Age cut Logan's lead to 5-4 with three runs in the top of the second. Kayla Coffee, Emily Schulze and Ashley Hildebrand scored for New Age. Girard scored for Logan in the bottom of the inning to make the score 6-4.

New Age tied the game in the top of the third with a pair of runs scored by Hildebrand and Schulze. Logan took a 7-6 lead in the bottom of the inning when Elizabeth Johnson scored.

New Age took the lead back 8-7 with runs from Kamilla Jones and Kaitlyn Campbell in the top of the fourth. Logan tied the game in the bottom of the inning when Girard scored. Both teams were held scoreless from there and the game ended in a tie.

New Age 13, Prairieland Electric 8

New Age scored three first-inning runs in its June 8 game with Prairieland. Nichole Tacha, Steph Hager and Jones scored. Prairieland came back with a pair of runs in the bottom of the inning. Rickelle Green and Darcy Bainter scored the runs.

New Age rallied for six in top of the second to take a 9-2 lead. Scoring were Hildebrand, Schulze, Tacha, Jones, Adrienne Hager and Gabbe Brown.

Prairieland scored three times in the bottom of the third to make the score 9-5. Scoring were Bainter, Brianna Karnopp and Katelin Koch.

New Age added four runs in the top of the fourth. Scoring were Jones, Adrienne Hager, Brown and Marisa Maddy.

Green and Bainter scored for Prairieland in the fourth and Bainter added another run in the fifth, but it was not enough and New Age won 13-8.

End Zone 3, Logan 2

The June 10 game between End Zone and Logan was stopped in the fourth inning due to rain. End Zone held a one-run lead when the game ended.

Logan scored its two runs in the top of the first when Girard and VanLaey came around to score. Julia Kent and Johnnye Ruder scored for End Zone in the bottom of the first and Sierra Griffith added a third End Zone run in the second inning.

season

walked just three batters. Norton had just two hits in the contest.

"On Sunday, we were missing four players but we stayed in the game," said Coach Gay. "We made our share of mistakes but we didn't lose control of the game. We came to the tournament wanting to get some good experience against good teams and I'll take an 8-0 loss if we can learn from it."

Win over Grand Island

Grand Island held a 4-2 lead after three innings. Norton scored in the first stanza when Schlegel walked and scored. In the third inning, Roeder slammed a home run.

The Blue Jays won it in the fifth inning when McChesney singled, Look walked and Mindrup singled and McChesney, Look and Mindrup scored to earn the 5-4 victory.

Norton had six hits in the game. Leading hitter for the Blue Jays was McChesney who went 3 for 4. Winning pitcher was Denton Bailey who gave up just four hits and struck out five batters and gave up no walks. Losing pitcher was Jeff Rosacker.

Next Action

Norton will host Plainville in a doubleheader on Tuesday, June 29 at John Ryan Field. The first game begins at 6 p.m.

PrairieLand Electric 22, Logan 11

PrairieLand scored first and often in its June 11 game with Logan. Karnopp, Bainter and Katelin Koch scored for PrairieLand in the top of the first. Logan took the lead in the bottom of the inning with four runs. Scoring were Morgan Goble, Girard, Schneider and Melder.

An eight-run second inning gave PrairieLand an 11-4 lead. Green scored twice in the inning and scoring once were Karnopp, Bainter, Koch, Shelbi McKenna, Molly Grose, and Steph Hager. Johnson scored for Logan in the bottom of the inning to make the score 11-5.

PrairieLand put the game away in the third with a seven-run inning that gave them an 18-5 lead. Scoring were Green, Karnopp, Bainter, Koch, McKenna, Erin Archer and Steph Hager. In the bottom of the inning, Melder, Crysta Stanton, VanLaey, Pearl and Johnson scored for Logan to make the score 18-10.

PrairieLand added four more in the top of the first when Green, McKenna, Archer and Steph Hager scored. Melder scored for Logan in the bottom of the inning for the final run of the game.

New Age 12, End Zone 10

New Age took an early 4-0 lead in the top of the first in its June 14 game with End Zone. Tacha, Steph Hager, Jones and Maddy scored for New Age. Jessica White scored in the bottom of the inning for End

Zone to make the score 4-1.

New Age extended its lead to 8-1 with a four-run third inning. Tacha, Steph Hager, Jones and Brown scored. Four runners scored for End Zone in the bottom of the inning, cutting New Age's lead to 8-5. Scoring for End Zone were Ruder, White, Kelsey Mordecai and Alec Melvin.

New Age had its third four-run inning of the night in the fourth when Schulze, Steph Hager, Jones and Maddy scored. Ruder and White scored in the bottom of the inning for End Zone.

End Zone added two more runs in the bottom of the fifth when Alexis Lively and Katelyn Engelbert scored. However, End Zone's comeback attempt was halted from there and new Age won the game 12-10.

1st Choice Insurance 8, Almena 1

1st Choice Insurance scored twice in the top of the second to take an early lead in their June 17 game with Almena. Shelby Jones and Nicole Pavelka scored for 1st Choice Insurance. Amber Shelley scored in the bottom of the second to make the score 2-1.

1st Choice Insurance scored four runs in the top of the fourth to take a 6-1 lead. Kaitlyn Wolf, Jones, Pavelka and Alexis Henson scored.

Abby Bainter and Wolf each added a run for First Choice Insurance in the top of the fifth. 1st Choice Insurance held Almena scoreless in the bottom of the inning and won the game 8-1.

Cold, wet weather slows annual wheat harvest

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A poor crop hurts the economic bottom line of not only the farmer, but restaurant owners, motels, gas stations, parts stores, grocery stores and the list goes on.

Neil Severns, is a driver for *The Norton Telegram* in addition to being a wheat farmer.

He said he drives west from Norton through Sheridan, Thomas and Sherman counties three times a week. He has had a chance to

watch the wheat all season.

"It all looks about the same," he said. "I haven't seen too many combines along the way. The only one I saw today (Monday) was about two miles west of Norton."

Deb Field, Almena, said she has heard her husband Dan say that he expects his yield to vary from field to field.

But with typical farmer's optimism she said, "If the sun comes out, we'll cut."

County bridges doing well

(Continued from Page 1)

evaluation in their annual inspection. Mr. Brannon said any problems that were found were already being taken care of.

- Held a 15 minute closed session to discuss acquisition of real estate.

- Discussed the possible hiring of a new emergency medical technician with Acting Ambulance Service Director Andy Nielsen. Mr. Nielsen also discussed the Ambulance Service staff's fee for

assisting with classes. Mr. Nielsen will return to the board with a recommendation on the fee.

- Held a 10 minute closed session to discuss non-elected personnel.

- Heard from Solid Waste Supervisor Curt Archibald, who reported he would be receiving a bid for hauling trash from the Norton County facility to the Phillipsburg landfill. The bid period will end Monday.

Norton Legion team opens season

By DICK BOYD

The Norton American Legion Baseball Team opened their 2004 season by competing Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the Holdrege, Neb. Tournament.

The Blue Jays' scheduled opener on June 15 versus Stockton had been rained out so they had to start the season in a tournament, which is not an ideal situation.

They were scheduled to play Hastings in the opener on Friday but it was canceled due to rain.

Their opener was on Saturday versus Phillipsburg. Norton lost 14-3 to the Panthers, then played Holdrege in the evening and lost a close 6-3 contest.

After losing to Beatrice 8-0 on Sunday morning, Norton finished strong on Sunday evening with a 5-4 win over Grand Island.

"We improved every game of the tournament," said Coach Brandon Gay. "We started shaky against Phillipsburg but our baseball maturity grew consistently from that point on.

"I'm always optimistic about this team's chance but they really outplayed my optimism. The Holdrege Tournament is a tough way to start this season but it turned out to be the perfect way because we gained a lot from it and left with momentum.

"It reminds me a little of the year this group of boys won the K-18 state championship because they improved every single game that season. We don't have all the players we had then but, hopefully, we have the same spirit.

"I was especially pleased with our pitching. When we needed an out, the pitching generally came through. In baseball, great pitching, good defense and just enough offense is a great formula for success. We need to work on the defense and the hitting will come but it's nice to know our pitchers are going to give us an opportunity to win every game."

Game with Phillipsburg

Phillipsburg scored two runs in the second inning, one in the third, six in the fourth stanza and five in the fifth. Norton's only runs came in the third inning when Corey Look walked and scored and in the fifth inning when Josh Green singled and scored, Chris Wilson, Dan Roeder and David Schlegel walked and Look reached on a fielder's choice and scored.

Norton's two hits in the game were singles by Green and Jared Mindrup. Schlegel was the Norton pitcher. He allowed 16 hits and walked five batters. Lane Patterson was the Phillipsburg pitcher.

Right fielder Jared Foley left the game in the top of the fourth inning with a shoulder injury. He slammed his right shoulder into the ground diving for a ball.

"We expect Foley to be out only about 10 days but it might require surgery," said Coach Gay.

Game with Holdrege

Holdrege took an early lead with two runs in the second inning and one in the third. Norton scored in the fourth inning when Brock McChesney slammed a solo home run.

Both teams scored one run in the fifth inning to make the score 4-2. Norton's run came when Wilson walked and scored.

Holdrege scored one run in the sixth and one in the seventh inning. Norton's final run came in the seventh inning when Wilson walked again and scored.

Tyler Rutherford was the Norton pitcher. He gave up just five hits and walked eight batters. He had four strike outs. Winning pitcher was Marcus Anderson.

Norton recorded just two hits.

Game with Beatrice

Beatrice scored once in the first inning, four times in the second inning and three times in the fourth inning.

Dan Roeder was the Norton pitcher. He gave up six hits and

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