

Norton junior guard Whitney Newell passes to junior Amber Waggoner during girls basketball practice on Tuesday. On defense (partially hidden) is junior Klaire Mann. Assistant coach George Rossi is in the background. — Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton girls return four starters

By DICK BOYD
Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton Community High School girls varsity basketball team will open the 2004-'05 season on Thursday when they play Holyoke, Colo. at 3 p.m. (central time) in the opening round of the Topside Tipoff Basketball Tournament in the Max Jones Fieldhouse at 12th and Arcade in Goodland.

Also competing in the tournament will be teams from Goodland; Burlington, Colo.; Wray, Colo.; McCook, Neb.; Ottawa and Weskan.

Norton, Holyoke, Burlington and Ottawa will be in the top bracket. Burlington and Ottawa will play at 5 p.m.

In the bottom bracket, McCook and Wray will play at 4 p.m. and Goodland and Weskan will play at 7 p.m.

Winners of the Norton-Holyoke and Burlington-Ottawa contests will play at 3 p.m. on Friday and winners of the Goodland-Weskan and McCook-Wray games will play at 7 p.m. on Friday in the championship semi-finals. Losers will play at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., respectively, in the consolation bracket.

The championship game will be at 6 p.m. on Saturday in the fieldhouse. The third place contest will be at 2 p.m. on Saturday. The consolation championship and seventh place games will be at noon on Saturday.

Coach Jilka has nine returning letter winners, four of whom were starters last season.

Returning starters are Amber

Engelbert, 5-foot, 8-inch forward, senior; Whitney Newell, 5-6 guard; Chelsea Cox, 6 foot center; Karlie Jones, 5-5 guard, juniors.

Other returning letter winners are Jessi Duscher, 5-5, senior; Amber Overlease, 5-5; Rebecca Ebert, 5-11; Klaire Mann, 5-3; Chelle Donovan, 5-3, juniors.

Other varsity team members are Amber Waggoner, 5-4; Rachael Lentz, 5-9, juniors; Lacey Roe, 5-4; Maggie Nielsen, 5-9, sophomores.

Freshmen members of the Lady Jay team are Kylie Morel, 5-2; Chantille Campbell, 5-7; Ashley Martinez, 5-6; Haley Jones, 5-4; Megan Kats, 5-3; Jessica Strickland, 5-6; Thea Wiseman, 5-4; Lacy Ellis 5-7; Courtney Cox, 5-6.

Assistant coaches again this season are George Rossi and Joan Bolt. Student manager is Darci Darling.

"We have had great practices so far," said Coach Jilka. "We are really trying to emphasize the defensive end of the floor more than in the last couple of years and, so far, our girls have been doing a great job."

"Our experience should help us with four starters coming back but we have to find a supporting cast that can help us. Defense will be our key to this season. We are going to pressure a little more and try to force more turnovers and get some easy baskets in transition."

"Free throw shooting, rebounding and a belief in ourselves are also things we need to improve this season if we want to achieve

our goals.

"We are looking forward to an exciting year."

Coach Jilka feels that the Mid-Continent League race is wide open this season. "Smith Center, Osborne, Victoria and Trego are probably the front runners but we like our chances as well," said Coach Jilka. "Our problem is that we have to play all four of these teams on the road so we have our work cut out for us."

Coach Jilka is beginning his 23rd season as head coach of the Lady Blue Jays. During his tenure, the Norton girls have won 381 games and lost only 123 for a 76 percent winning average.

The 2000-'01 team compiled an 18-7 record en route to a fourth place finish in the Class 3A state tournament.

Coach Jilka's 2001-'02 Lady Jays finished 13-9 and placed fourth in the league. After losing eight seniors from that squad, Coach Jilka had to start over in the 2002-'03 season with only three returning letter winners, none of whom were starters. The Lady Jays finished just 4-16 that season.

The Lady Jays compiled a 12-9 record in 2003-'04. They had a 7-2 record in the league, which tied them for second in the league with Trego behind champion Smith Center, who was undefeated in league play. Norton was seeded No. 5 in the sub-state tournament at the end of the season and played No. 4 seed Beloit in the first round. An exciting game on the Lady Trojans' home floor ended in a 56-49 overtime loss to end Norton's season.

Awards banquet honors Blue Jay gridders

By DICK BOYD
The 2004 Norton Community High School football team was honored at the annual football banquet sponsored by the Blue Jay Booster Club on Sunday in the Norton County 4-H Building.

The Blue Jay gridders had another outstanding season, compiling an 8-3 record en route to a second place finish in the tough Mid-Continent League behind state champion Smith Center, a District championship, Bi-District championship and Regional runnerup.

Following a carry-in meal, Coach Bruce Graber introduced the team and made comments to the crowd about each player as he called them forward.

Coach Graber also presented individual awards, which had been voted upon by the coaches and players.

By vote of his teammates, senior lineman Blake Hillebrand received the "Most Inspirational Player" award, the most prestigious of all the awards.

The players and coaches chose Hillebrand and senior tight end and linebacker Ryan Maddy as team captains.

Valuable Defensive Lineman" and "Most Valuable Offensive Lineman"; senior Ryan Maddy, "Most Valuable Linebacker"; senior Justin Shirk, "Most Valuable Pass Receiver"; senior Kyle Kats, "Most Valuable Offensive Back" and "Most Valuable Defensive Back"; sophomore Mark Scheetz, "Scout Team Player of the Year".

Receiving Gatorade Awards, which were voted upon by the coaches, were: sophomore Blake VanEaton, "Rookie of the Year" and "Special Teams Player of the Year"; senior Blake Hillebrand, "Player of the Year" and "Will to Win Athlete of the Year"; senior Kyle Kats, "Offensive Player of the Year"; senior Ryan Maddy, "Defensive Player of the Year".

Coach Graber was complimentary of this season's team, which had 10 seniors. "The senior members of our team have had great careers," said Coach Graber. "They have had 30 wins and only five losses the last three years."

Senior members of the team were: Jason Green, Kyle Kats, Seth Mills, Aaron Overlease, Lucas Wiseman, Paul Juenemann, Blake Hillebrand, Michael Sprigg, Justin Shirk and Ryan Maddy.

The seniors presented a full-color quilt with each senior's picture in uniform, a framed picture of themselves and a framed picture of the 2004 team to Coach Graber.

Coach Graber thanked the players; assistant coaches Kevin Jilka, Lucas Melvin, Jason Jones and Todd Fulton; managers Jared Mindrup and Carson Braun; faculty and students, cheerleaders, band, news media and the entire community for contributing to the successful season.

"People expect to win here and that puts pressure on players and coaches but I wouldn't have it any other way," said Coach Graber. "We graduated a lot of players from the previous team so had a lot of holes to fill. We knew after the first game that we had a lot to get done. Our players and coaches went to work and we got better every week."

"It was great watching this team grow up and mature. They overcame a lot of things and answered a lot of questions this year. They played hard and the end result was very rewarding. We need to be very grateful for this team and what they accomplished. They didn't just become better players but they became leaders. I'm extremely proud of them."

Norton wrestling lineup set for Hoxie Invitational

By DICK BOYD
The Norton Community High School varsity wrestling team will compete in the annual Hoxie Invitational Tournament on Saturday at Hoxie High School.

Competing, in addition to Norton and Hoxie, will be teams from Dodge City, Oakley, Oberlin, Plainville and Trego.

Wrestling will begin at 8:30 a.m.

Following Wednesday evening's seeding meeting, Coach Bill Johnson released a tentative first-round lineup:

103 - Sophomore Logan Keiswetter, No. 1 seed, drew a

bye.

112 - Junior Clay Madden, No. 1 seed, versus Chris Bersinio, Dodge City.

119 - Sophomore Nathan Broeckelman, No. 2 seed, versus Gage Reichert, Oberlin.

125 - Sophomore Kent Mann, No. 2 seed, drew a bye.

130 - Junior Jon Harding, No. 3 seed, drew a bye.

135 - Junior Jeremy Harding, No. 3 seed, versus Royal Fisher, Oberlin.

140 - Junior Luke Pfannenstiel, No. 1 seed, versus John O'Crotty, Dodge City.

145 - Sophomore Blake

VanEaton versus Canaan Bishop, Oberlin.

152 - Junior Lance Roe, No. 2 seed, versus Luke Brin, Plainville.

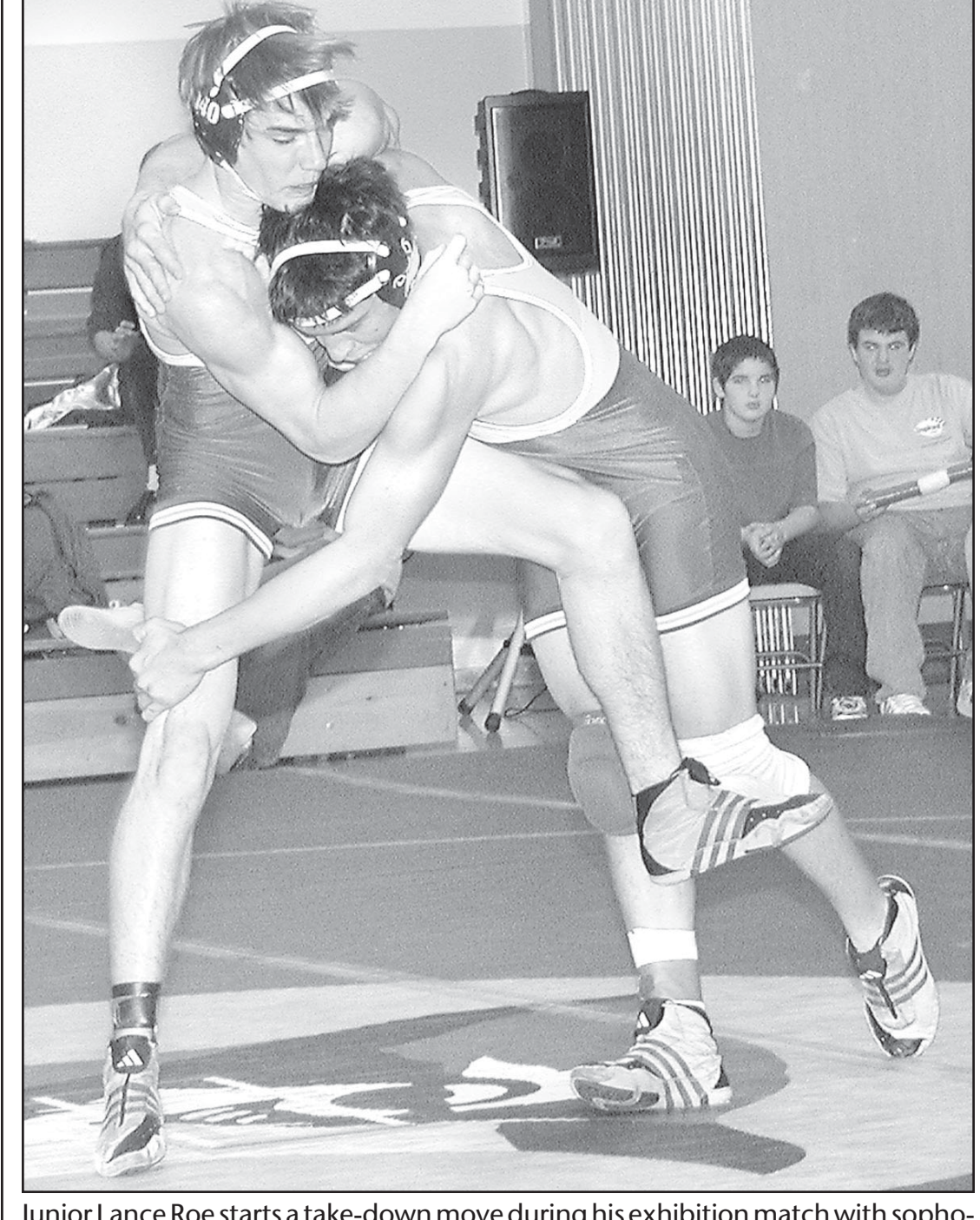
160 - Senior Korey Look versus Conner McMullen, Plainville.

171 - Junior Davvid Stanley, No. 4 seed, versus Tobi Dirks, Trego.

189 - OPEN

215 - Senior Blake Hillebrand versus Tim Erwin, Hoxie, No. 1 seed.

275 - Senior Michael Sprigg, No. 1 seed, versus Andy Brown, Plainville.



Junior Lance Roe starts a take-down move during his exhibition match with sophomore Blake VanEaton during the Norton wrestling ranking matches on Tuesday evening. Roe won this match but both Roe (152) and VanEaton (145) won ranking matches in their weight class and will wrestle Saturday in the Hoxie Invitational Wrestling Tournament. —Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Pittsburg to host playoff game

By DICK BOYD
No. 1 nationally ranked Pittsburg State University, who is quarterbacked by Norton senior Neal Philpot, will host No. 14 ranked University of North Dakota in the semi-finals of the NCAA Division II playoffs on Saturday at Brandenburg Field/Carnie Smith Stadium in Pittsburg.

The winner will advance to the 2004 Division II National Championship game on Saturday, Dec. 11, in Florence, Ala.

The Gorillas, champions of the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association, posted a 50-36 victory over fourth-ranked Northwest Missouri State University in the quarterfinals last Saturday in Pittsburg.

Pittsburg State trailed 23-21 at halftime of the Northwest Missouri game. In the second half, a 10 yard touchdown pass from Philpot to Mike Warren gave the Gorillas a 36-29 lead. Pitt State put the game away in the fourth quarter when Philpot ran 25 yards to score.

Philpot rushed for a game-high 131 yards and passed for 50 in the game.

Pittsburg State extended its perfect record to 13-0. They are the only remaining undefeated team in Division II. After earning a bye in the first round of the 24-team playoffs, the Gorillas rolled to a 70-35 second-round win over fifth-ranked Colorado School of Mines on Nov. 20.

North Dakota rallied in the fourth quarter to defeat 15th-ranked Grand Valley State University, the two-time defending na-

tional champion, by a 19-15 score in the quarterfinals last Saturday. North Dakota, last season's national runner-up, defeated 17th-ranked St. Cloud State University 20-17 in overtime on Nov. 13, then bested ninth-ranked Michigan Tech University 20-3 on Nov. 20 to advance to the quarterfinals.

With its 50-point output against Northwest Missouri, the Pitt State offense became the most prolific scoring offense in the history of NCAA football (all divisions). The Gorillas have scored 775 points in 13 games (59.6 ppg), bettering an 118-year-old mark set by Harvard University in 1886 when they scored 765 points in 14 games.

Pitt State also leads the division in rushing with an average of 373.3 yards per game and total offense with 629.5 yards per contest. The Gorillas have compiled 8,183 yards of total offense this season.

Philpot, who is 6-foot, 4-inches and weighs 254 pounds, is averaging 256.8 yards per game of total offense. He has rushed for an average of 105.4 yards and passed for an average of 151.5. He has compiled 2,825 yards of total offense this season, despite missing two games and parts of others due to injury.

Philpot has rushed for 4,098 yards and passed for 5,672 yards for 9,770 yards of total offense in his career.

NORTHWEST
Kansas Technical College

GOODLAND, KANSAS
800-316-4127

Enroll now for
January classes
AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY
and COSMETOLOGY

www.nwktc.org

NEWEST Program
Respiratory Therapy!

• Auto Body Repair	• HVAC/R	• Business Technology
• Automotive Technology	• Engineering Tech	• Computer Graphics Tech
• Diesel Technology	• Welding	• Cosmetology
• Carpentry	• Communications Tech	• Medical Assistant
• Electrical Technology	• Electronics & Computer Tech	• Respiratory Therapy

REAL EDUCATION FOR THE REAL WORLD!!!