

Norton girls return four starters

By DICK BOYD

Coach Kevin Jilka has eight returning letter winners for his Norton Community High girls basketball team.

Four of them were starters on last season's 17-5 team, which went through the Mid-Continent League undefeated to win the championship and won the championship of the league tournament. The Lady Jays were ranked as high as No.9 in the state in Class 3A during the season.

Returning starters are: Whitney Newell, 5-foot, 6-inch guard; Chelsea Cox, 6-0 center; Rebecca Ebert, 5-11 center/forward and Karlie Jones, 5-4 guard, seniors.

Other returning letter winners are: Klaire Mann, 5-3; Amber Overlease, 5-5; Chelle Donovan, 5-3, seniors and Maggie Nielsen, 5-9, junior.

Other varsity team members are: Rachael Lentz, 5-8; Amber Waggoner, 5-4, seniors; Haley Jones, 5-4; Chantille Campbell, 5-7; Megan Kats, 5-3; Kylie Morel, 5-5-3; Courtney Cox, 5-7, sophomores.

Freshmen members of the Lady Jay team are Taylor Rossi, 5-2; Katharine Roy, 5-6; Laura Lee Baird, 5-7; KaraJo Jones, 5-8; Amanda Delimont, 5-7; Ashley Colip, 5-4; Wiyanna Paxton, 5-8; Hayli Bozarth, 5-9.

Assistant coaches again this season are George Rossi and Joan Bolt. Student managers are Darci Darling, Lori Ebner and Lucy Gosselin.

"Overall, our practices have been going very well," said Coach Jilka "Our experience has been showing up and we have been able to progress at a nice rate.

"Offensively, we have to find some other people to step up and score at crucial times in the game.

"Defensively, we need to be consistent and get after people for

32 minutes. We have a tendency to relax at times.

"We have a chance to have an outstanding year but our players will have to work hard all the time and work to improve every game.

"Right now, we are pleased with where we are. Practices have been very competitive and our girls have really been getting after it.

Norton Basketball Schedule

Thurs.-Sat., Dec. 8-10—Topside Tipoff Tournament in Goodland, TBA

Friday, Dec. 16—Phillipsburg, There, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 17—Stockton, Here, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 3—Decatur Community in Oberlin, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 6—Osborne, Here, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 13—Trego Community, Here, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 14—League Tourney Feather Bracket Games, TBA

Mon., Tues., Thurs.-Sat., Jan. 16-17, 19-21—Mid-Continent League Tournament, TBA

Tuesday, Jan. 24—Goodland, There, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 31—Smith Center, Here, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 3—Hill City, There, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 7—Decatur Community, There, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 10—Plainville, There, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 14—Hoxie, Here, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 17—Ellis, There, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 21—Colby (Senior Night), Here, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 27—Boys Sub-State Quarter-finals, TBA

Tuesday, Feb. 28—Girls Sub-State Quarter-finals, TBA

Thursday, March 2—Boys Sub-State Semi-finals, TBA

Friday, March 3—Girls Sub-State Semi-finals, TBA

Saturday, March 4—Sub-State Finals, TBA

Wednesday, March 8—Boys 3A State Tournament, TBA

Thursday, March 9—Girls 3A State Tournament, TBA

Fri.-Sat., March 10-11—3A State Tournament, TBA

Norton boys return two letterwinners

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High boys basketball team compiled a 15-7 record last season en route to a second place tie in the Mid-Continent League race and third place in the league tournament.

Norton lost 50-47 in the sub-state semi-finals to Thomas More Prep of Hays to end the Jays' season. Thomas More won the tournament and continued on to win the Class 3A State Championship.

Coach Doug Reusink has just two returning lettermen from last season. They are Heath Vincent, 6-foot, 6-inch senior center, who averaged 9.9 points and 6 rebounds per game and Nathan Morse, 6-0 senior guard, who averaged 5.4 points and 2.4 rebounds per game.

Other members of the squad are: Dane Krizek, 5-9, senior; Jared Engelbert, 5-11; Brian Juenemann, 5-10; Blake Wolf, 6-0; Nic Lewis, 6-3; Logan Keiswetter, 5-9, juniors; Logan Kats, 5-8; Zach Dole, 5-8; Jared Cox, 6-0; Wes Georgeson, 6-3; Logan Rynnion, 6-1; Preston Herman, 6-2, sophomores; Matt Stanley, 5-8; Zach Dreher, 6-1, freshmen.

"We're coming into the season with very little experience with just two returning starters and no other lettermen," said Coach Reusink.

"Early in the season, we will probably lean on Heath Vincent and Nathan Morse to make plays

for us. We'll need others to develop quickly for us to have any chance of success.

"Our players are working hard in practice and they will get better as the season progresses. We have a lot of players new to our program but they are a good group to work with.

"Ottawa will be an excellent team. We'll learn a lot about ourselves during the three days of the Goodland tournament."

Coach Reusink said he felt that Plainville, Phillipsburg and Trego should be the strongest teams in the Mid-Continent League based on the players they have returning.

"I'm sure, there will be other quality teams pushing them," he said. "I guarantee there will be no easy game in the league for us this year."

Under the leadership of Coach Reusink, the Blue Jay boys are always competitive. The 2002-'03 team won the Class 3A state basketball championship with a 22-5 record and the 2003-'04 Blue Jay squad was also outstanding, compiling an 18-4 record.

Coach Reusink's overall record in Norton is 180 wins and 126 losses. He is beginning his 27th year of coaching high school boys teams and has compiled an overall record of 394 wins and 172 losses for an outstanding 69.6 percent victory record. This is an average of 15 wins and 6.6 losses per year.

Norton girls will play Ottawa on Thursday

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High School girls basketball team will open the season on Thursday when they play Ottawa at 3 p.m. (central time) in the opening round of the Topside Tipoff Basketball Tournament in Max Jones Fieldhouse at 12th and Arcade in Goodland.

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

Norton, Ottawa, Weskan and Burlington will be in the top bracket. Weskan and Burlington

will play at 5 p.m.

In the bottom bracket, Goodland and Wray will play at 7 p.m. and McCook and Holyoke will play at 9 p.m.

Winners of the Norton-Ottawa and Weskan-Burlington contests will play at 3 p.m. on Friday and winners of the Goodland-Wray and McCook-Holyoke 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.

The Norton girls placed third in the tournament last season.

Trophies will be awarded to the first, second, third and fifth place teams. Members of the top three teams will receive individual medals. An all-tournament team will be selected.

The tournament will feature a three-point contest as well as team free throwing competition. A spirit award will also be given.

Norton boys to open basketball at Goodland

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High boys basketball team will open the season on Thursday when they play Ottawa at 5 p.m. (central time) in the opening round of the Topside Tipoff Basketball Tournament.

The tournament, which also features teams from Wray, Holyoke and Burlington, Colo.; McCook, and Weskan will be held in the Max Jones Fieldhouse at 12th and Arcade in Goodland.

In other first round games on Thursday, Weskan will play Burlington at 3 p.m.; McCook will

play Holyoke at 7 p.m. and Goodland and Wray will play at 9 p.m.

Winners of the Norton-Ottawa and Weskan-Burlington games will play in Friday's championship semi-finals at 5 p.m. and winners of the McCook-Holyoke and Goodland-Wray contests will play at 9 p.m. The first round losers will play in the consolation bracket at the same times on Friday.

The championship finals will be at 8 p.m. and the third place game at 4 p.m. Saturday in the fieldhouse. The consolation championship game will be at 4

p.m. on Saturday in the junior high gym and the seventh place game at 2 p.m.

The Norton boys lost 44-42 to Goodland in last year's championship finals.

Trophies will be awarded to the first, second, third and fifth place teams and members of the top three teams will each receive a medal. An all-tournament team will also be selected.

A three-point and team free throw competition is planned and a spirit award will round out tournament honors.

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