

# Norton Blue Jay tennis season wrap up

By DICK BOYD

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Coach Jim Green's Norton Community High School girls tennis team had another outstanding season, which finished with a fourth place in the Class 3A Regional Tournament and individual runner-up in the Class 3A State Tournament in Dodge City.

The team will lose just one senior to graduation so prospects for another great season are excellent.

Junior Tawni Griffey was the only Lady Jay returning from last year's varsity and was very instrumental in this season's success. Tawni won the state championship in her first year on the team last season and came within one match of repeating when she finished state runner-up this year.

Norton opened the season in the annual Trego Round Robin in WaKeeney on Saturday, Aug. 27 and placed fifth in the always tough tournament. Griffey played No.1 singles and shut-out four players to win the gold medal. Sophomore Haley Wallingford and junior Katie Koch played No.1 doubles and placed sixth with a 1-3 record. It was their first time to play together. In No.2 singles, junior Sierra Black went 2-2 to place fifth in her first varsity competition. Sophomores Rিকে Green and Ashley Hildebrand were also new to varsity competition and placed eighth in No.2 doubles with an 0-4 mark.

Norton sophomore Jessica White played No.1 singles for a mixed team and was 0-4.

On Thursday, Sept. 1, Norton traveled to the Hays Invitational and returned with the runner-up trophy. Griffey shutout three opponents to place first in No.1 singles. Wallingford and Koch played No.1 doubles and placed runner-up with a 3-2 record. Black went 1-2 in No.2 singles for fifth. Junior Carla Jo Robinson and Green went 1-5 for fifth place in No.2 doubles.

"Tawni continues to dominate," said coach Green. "She has not lost a single game. Haley and Katie put on an exceptional performance. They lost to Russell in their first match then came through the back side to beat Russell and advance to the finals."

The Lady Jays had another

good day on Saturday, Sept.3 in the Colby Invitational Tournament when they tied for third. "The weather changed from 109 degrees at Hays to 60 degrees at Colby," said coach Green.

"The cold weather gave the girls some problems." Griffey shutout three more opponents to earn the gold medal once again. In No.1 doubles, Wallingford and Koch went 1-2 for fifth. Juniors Ruth Kendell and Robinson played as another varsity team to gain experience and went 0-3. Black placed third at No.2 singles with a 3-1 record. "Sierra had a great day," said coach Green.

Green and Hildebrand played No.2 doubles again and went 1-2 to finish fifth. Their one win was over Norton's mixed team of sophomore Kristen Burge and freshman Molly Scott, who went 0-3.

On Saturday, Sept. 10, Norton hosted their only tournament of the season, the Norton JV Round Robin and the Lady Jays placed runner-up after losing a tie-breaker to Colby. White played No.1 singles for Norton and went 2-1 to finish runner-up. Kendell and Robinson played No.1 doubles and won two matches to place third. Molly Scott went 2-1 at No.2 singles to place runner-up. Senior Rhees Carlson and sophomore Kristen Burge played No.2 doubles and went 3-1 to place runner-up.

The Norton varsity returned to action on Tuesday, Sept. 13 in the Phillipsburg Quad where they finished fourth. White was 1-2 in No.1 singles to place third. The No.1 doubles team of Carlson and Hildebrand went 0-3 to place fourth. It was their first time to play together. Scott placed third in No.2 singles with a 1-2 record. Sophomore Shaina Gibson and Kendell teamed up in No.2 doubles and went 0-3. It was their first time to play together.

On Thursday, Sept. 22, Norton placed fifth in an eight-team tournament in Russell. Griffey remained unbeaten by defeating two players to win the gold medal. Wallingford and Koch went 1-2 to place fifth in No.1 doubles. They defeated a Russell team they had lost to twice earlier in the season. At No.2 singles, Black went 1-2 to place fifth. Green and Hildebrand also placed fifth with a 1-2 record at

No.2 doubles. Norton competed in the Trego Invitational in WaKeeney on Saturday, Sept. 24 and placed fifth. Griffey defeated four more players at No.1 singles. Wallingford and Koch were 2-2 to finish tenth at No.1 doubles. Black was 2-2 in No.2 singles to also finish tenth. Green and Hildebrand were 1-3 at No.2 doubles to finish 12th.

On Tuesday, Sept. 27, Norton finished fourth in the Colby Invitational. Griffey was the champion again after defeating two opponents. Wallingford and Black played No.1 doubles together for the first time and placed fourth with a 1-2 record. Green played No.2 singles for the first time and placed sixth with an 0-3 mark. Sophomore Jessica White and Hildebrand teamed together for the first time at No.2 doubles and placed fifth with a 1-2 record.

Mulford, Kendra Cadawalader, Kira Robertson, and Sylvia Estes each scoring two points a piece. Then Kylie Perez and Alexis Hartwell each hit a free throw for one point each.

Plainville had 8 players contributing to their 19 points. Nine of the Lady Jays were able to grab at least one rebound. Lauren Mordecai retrieved the most with three boards. Shelby Mulford and Alexis Hartwell each had two steals apiece and several others had one steal apiece.

The seventh grade girls were victorious with a score of 26 to 10.

Miah Melvin was the Lady



Norton junior Sierra Black returns the tennis ball during a match in the Russell Tournament on September 22. Sierra was playing No.2 singles for the Lady Jays. This was her first year to play varsity and she had an excellent season.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

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and doubles qualified for the State Tournament. "Tawni was the No.1 seed but the rest of our players were drawn and their placements depended on luck," said coach Green. "We didn't get the best draws."

Wallingford played No.2 singles and drew No.3 seed Sage Ratliff of Phillipsburg. She lost 6-3, 6-4 to end her season. "She gave a great effort against the No.2 seed," said coach Green. "If she'd received a better draw, I believe she would have advanced to the state tournament"

Green and Hildebrand played doubles and drew the No.1 seed Amelia Fabrizio and Leah Flax of Trego and lost 6-0, 6-0. Black and Koch also played doubles for Norton and lost a close feather bracket match to Kathryn Buehler and Callan Rice, Scott City, by a 9-7 score.

"We had a great season; our only senior was Rhees Carlson so we will have experienced players returning," said coach Green.

Griffey competed in the Class 3A State Tennis Tournament on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 14-15 in Dodge City. She was the defending champion and suffered her first and only loss of the season in the championship finals to finish the season 30-1.

"Tawni had a great State Tournament and played a great match in the finals," said coach Green. "Tawni had the No.1 seed and had a difficult road into the finals. In the first round on Friday, she played the eventual sixth place finisher. In the quarterfinals, she met the eventual fifth place finisher and in the semifinals she played the eventual fourth place finisher. All of these players were talented and accomplished players. With only six singles players qualifying from each of the four regionals, only the very best players make it to the State Tournament."

In her first match, Tawni defeated Meggie Hall, Sabetha, 6-1, 6-1. In her second match she beat Miranda Erisman, Shawnee-Marath Academy, 6-0, 6-2. In the semifinals on Saturday morning, Tawni outscored Dani Schwartz, Marysville, 6-2, 6-0. Tawni played Sara Goodwin, Prairie Village-Kansas City, for the championship. Goodwin's record was 19-1 with her only loss coming in her first match of the season.

"It was a very close match with many exciting points," said coach Green. "Tawni came from behind to tie the first set and send it into tie-breaker. Sara got ahead early in the tie-breaker and won the first set."

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"In the second set, Tawni jumped out to a 5-2 lead and looked like she would win it and send it to a third and final set. Sara came back and tied the set at 6-all and forced another tie-breaker. Sara won the first six points and only needed one more point to win the match. Tawni ran off five straight points but Sara won the next point and the match."

"It was a very close match that could have gone either way. I am extremely proud of the way Tawni played and the way she conducted herself during the match and afterwards. She is definitely an outstanding competitor and person."

"Sara's coach commented after the match what a good player Tawni was and that no one had ever played Sara that close. Tawni's season was a tremendous accomplishment."

## Season comments

"Last year, we graduated nine seniors who were out for tennis," said coach Green. "Five of those seniors played on the varsity. We lost all that experience for this year."

"We did have the defending state singles champion back for her second season, which was a major plus for our team. Our varsity team consisted of our singles champion and five new members. Two of the new members were out for tennis for the first time. As the season went along, our players gained experience and showed great improvement. Improvement in tennis is a very slow process. I was extremely pleased with the effort our girls put forth and their improvement."

"Tawni Griffey put together another outstanding season, winning the regional and advancing to the state tournament. She defeated three outstanding tennis players in the state tournament before playing a great match in the finals where she played the eventual champion closer than any other player had."

"I can not be more proud of our girls' effort and the way we conducted ourselves during the season."

## Norton seventh grade girls win at Plainville

By Cheri Brooks

Last Thursday, the Junior High Lady Jays traveled to Plainville to take on the Lady Cardinals. The seventh grade was victorious and the junior varsity lost a close one.

In the junior varsity game the Lady Jays led 9 to 4 after the first quarter, 10 to 8 after the 2nd quarter, and 17 to 11 after the 3rd quarter; but after the Lady Cardinals outscored the Lady Jays 8 to 0 in the 4th quarter they lost 19 to 17.

Lauren Mordecai was our leading scorer with seven points but we had several others that contributed including: Shelby

Mulford, Kendra Cadawalader, Kira Robertson, and Sylvia Estes each scoring two points a piece. Then Kylie Perez and Alexis Hartwell each hit a free throw for one point each.

Plainville had 8 players contributing to their 19 points. Nine of the Lady Jays were able to grab at least one rebound. Lauren Mordecai retrieved the most with three boards. Shelby Mulford and Alexis Hartwell each had two steals apiece and several others had one steal apiece.

The seventh grade girls were victorious with a score of 26 to 10.

Miah Melvin was the Lady

Jays leading scorer with 11 points, but Baylee Miller was right behind her with eight points and Caitlyn Cox tallied five points with Jena Risewick rounding up our scoring with two points.

Amy Casey scored six points for Plainville and Jasmine Creighton tallied four points.

Caitlyn Cox was our leading rebounder but had a lot of help from Jena Risewick, Baylee Miller, and Miah Melvin. Caitlyn Cox, Baylee Miller, Macayla Kent, and Miah Melvin were also able to get several steals throughout the game.

Miah Melvin was the Lady

## Grid play-offs continue

By DICK BOYD

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The Plainville Cardinals (10-1) from the Mid-Continent League are still alive in their quest for a Class 2A state football championship.

They defeated Stanton County 6-0 in a defensive struggle on Friday night to advance to a semi-final game versus undefeated La Crosse (11-0) in Plainville at 7 p.m. this Friday.

Plainville's only loss this season was to the same La Crosse team by a score of 15-8 in District play. Since the top two teams in District football advance, the Cardinals are still playing and will get a chance for revenge with a state championship game as the reward.

The winner of the Plainville-

La Crosse contest will play the winner of the Centralia (8-3) at Pittsburg Colgan (11-0) game, which will also be played at 7 p.m. on Friday night.

Thunder Ridge in 8-Man II defeated Otis-Bison 54-26 on Friday night at Otis-Bison as Joel Struckhoff rushed for 210 yards and five touchdowns. Struckhoff is the state's eighth man career rushing leader.

Thunder Ridge (12-0) will play Baileyville (11-0) for the state championship at 3 p.m. on Saturday in Athletic Park in Newton.

In 8-Man I play on Friday, Osborne hosted South Gray in the semi-finals and the Bulldogs of the Mid-Continent League were outscored 42-38 to end their season at 10-2.

South Gray (11-0) will play Madison (12-0) at 11 a.m. Saturday at Athletic Park in Newton for the state championship.

In the Class 3A quarter-finals on Friday, Beloit (9-3) traveled to Garden Plain (11-1) and was outscored 50-34 to end their season.

Also in the Class 3A quarter-finals on Friday, Scott City (11-1) played at Conway Springs (11-1) and was defeated 39-21.

Conway Springs will play at Garden Plain at 7 p.m. on Friday night with the winner advancing to the state championship game versus the winner of the Rock Creek (9-3) at Silver Lake (11-1) game, which will also be played at 7 p.m. on Friday.

## Eighth grade girls basketball team brings home a victory

By Cheri Brooks

Last Thursday, the Norton eighth grade girls basketball team traveled to Plainville to compete. The 8th grade girls were victorious over the Lady Cardinals 31 to 19.

It was only three to two after the first quarter and 15 to 10 at halftime, with the Lady Jays barely on top.

The Lady Jays were still ahead by a small margin after the 3rd quarter, 21 to 16.

Finally, in the 4th quarter, the Lady Blue Jays were able to

stretch their lead by outscoring Plainville ten to three for the win.

Casey Ambrosier was our leading scorer with 15 points. Lauren Mordecai added seven points, Hanna Brooks added four points, Peyton Renner and Lexi Voss added two points, and Molly Maddy also contributed one point on a successful free throw.

The Lady Jays shot approximately 30 percent from the field and were seven of 14 from the free throw line for 50 percent.

Casey Ambrosier was our leading rebounder as well, she pulled down nine boards, Peyton Renner grabbed eight, Molly Maddy also retrieved six boards. All together as a team we had 33 rebounds.

Molly Maddy led the team in steals.

Eilers was Plainville's leading scorer with eight points.

The girls will play again in Norton tonight against Phillipsburg and again on Thursday, against Osborne.

## Northern Valley senior chosen for All League team

Northern Valley senior Melissa Hawks was chosen by the league coaches to the All League Honorable Mention team for the 2011 volleyball season.

Melissa was chosen for her defensive abilities as she displayed a desire to not let the ball hit on her side of the net and most of the time if she could get to the ball it did not.

She was also a very consistent server plus was the team's most consistent hitter in her senior season.

Way to go Melissa!!!

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