

High school madness hits Sunflower Shootout

By Mike Hughes

Fans were treated to an outstanding boys contest in the fourth annual Sunflower Shootout all star basketball games in Smith Center on Saturday, March 22.

It was a close game throughout, with the Mid-Continent League all stars holding a one point 48-47 advantage at half-time over the all stars of North Central Kansas. The game was tied 95-95 at the end of regulation, then the NCK squad outscored the MCL team 7 to 4 in overtime to win 102-99. The single team record was broken with the 102 points, as well as points by both teams with 201 points!

"This was an outstanding ball game," said Smith Center Recreation Director Mike Hughes. "The biggest lead of the contest

by either team was 8 points as it was close throughout. There were some outstanding players on both teams and it was a shame one team had to lose."

Concordia's Grant Holmes set an individual scoring record with 32 points for the NCK team. Tristan Schwarz of Golden Plains added 18 and Beloit's Payton Vetter 14. Also scoring were Hoxie's Chase Kennedy with 8 points, Josh Meyer of Linn 7, Northern Valley's Jordan Baird 6, Justin Underwood of Lakeside and St. John's Beloit/Tipton's Connor Eilert 5 points apiece, Kade Spreser of Hoxie 4, and St. John's Beloit/Tipton's Luke Eilert with 3.

NCK coaches were Lance Bergman of St. John's Beloit/Tipton and Aaron Dardis of Hoxie.

Jordan Gottschalk of TMP

led the MCL squad in scoring with 20 points. Also scoring in double figures were Trey Ellis of Phillipsburg 15, Hill City's Shane Jones 13, Hadley Gillum of Plainville 12 and Oakley's Austin Baalman with 10. Also scoring were Smith Center's Taylor Zabel with 9, Darius Herl of Oakley and Smith Center's Kody Molzahn 6 apiece, Plainville's Logan Frederking 4 and Stockton's Reed Stephens (who won the 3-point contest) with 2 points.

Stockton's Tom Stephens and Joe Burgardt of Smith Center were the coaches of the MCL squad.

The North Central Kansas girls dominated their contest, winning over the Mid-Continent League 111-66. The 111 points was a single team scoring record!

"The MCL girls just couldn't get their shots to fall offensively, and struggled defensively," Hughes stated.

Osborne's Jessica Princ led the NCK girls squad with 21 points, followed by Kellen Niewald of St. John's Beloit/Tipton with 14, Pike Valley's Courtney Freed 13, and Hoxie's Kristina Farber, Brooke Hammond of Northern Valley, and Osborne's Caitlyn Miller, all with 10 points apiece. Concordia's Megan James and Taylor Noel of Osborne added 9 points apiece, Gabi Spreser of Hoxie 8, and Jordan Christensen of Golden Plains 7.

NCK coaches were Parker Christensen of Golden Plains and Michael Wahlmeier of Concordia.

The MCL girls were led in scoring by Oakley's Laura Den-

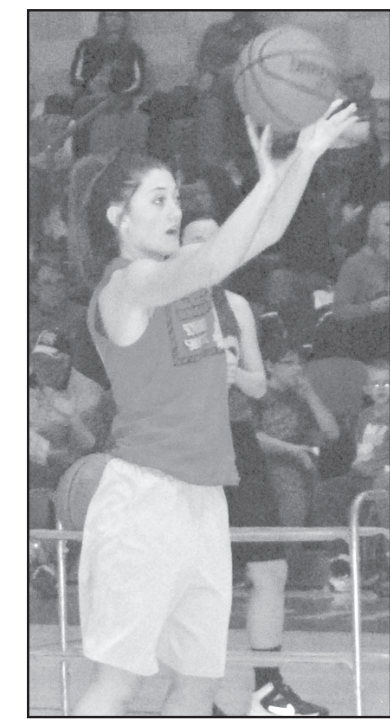
nis with 20 points, followed by Oakley teammate Brooke Ottley with 10. Trego's Addie Zeman, Colbie Decker of Smith Center and Kenzie Hemmert of Oakley added 6 points apiece, Norton's Bailey Ambrosier and Kaleigh Sonneson of Ellis 5 apiece, Phillipsburg's Shania Wilkison 4 and Johnnye Ruder of Norton 3. Hill City's Mae-gan Gosselin did not score but did win the 3-point contest.

George Rossi of Norton and Plainville's Ron Wolf were the MCL coaches.

"These were a great group of kids and represented their schools and communities well," Hughes stated. "We appreciate them giving up their time to participate, as well as the coaches. And thanks to all the fans that turned out to support these athletes.

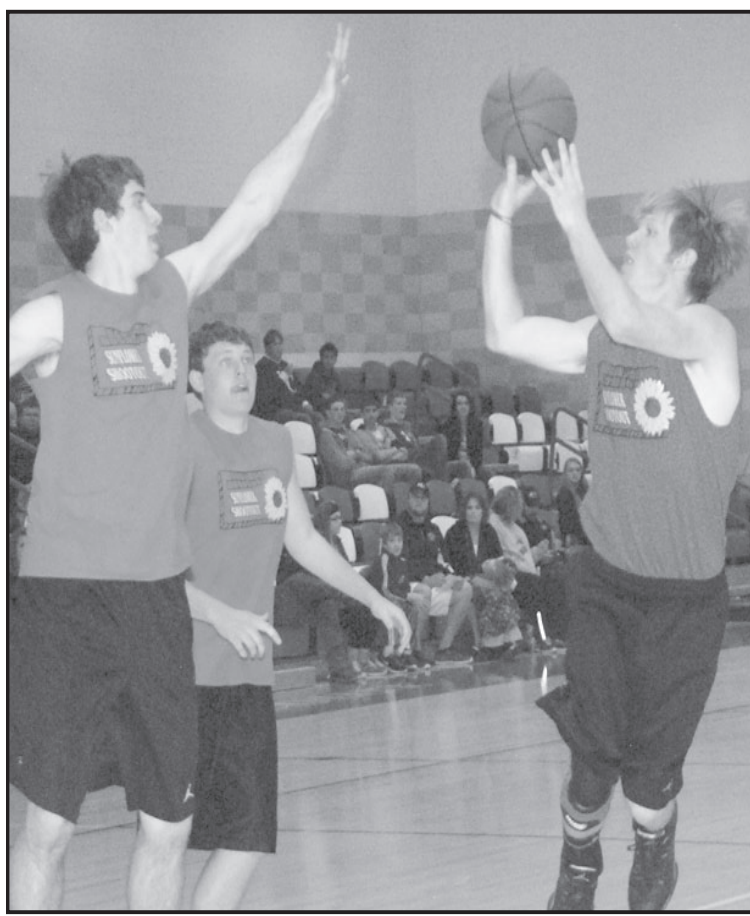
"We want to thank USD 237 for use of their facilities, the Smith Center Chamber of Commerce for their support and furnishing the drinks, the Son-Shine Church for the concession stand, the Smith County Kiwanis Club and Smith Center Rotary Club for taking tickets, thanks to the SCTV crew for filming the game for the DVDs that go to the athletes, the Smith County Bank for providing the noon meal, and Nick Linn and the SCHS IHT class for doing our programs. Also thanks to all the volunteers that gave of their time to pull this event off as we couldn't do it without them."

The Sunflower Shootout was sponsored by the Smith Center Recreation Commission.



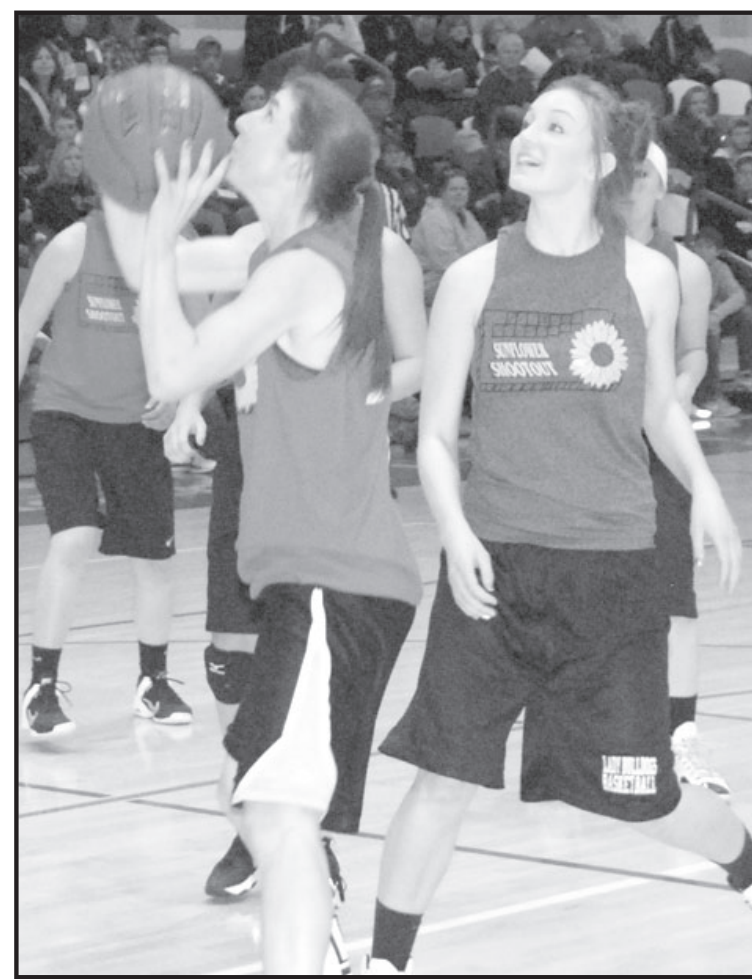
The Lady Jays' Johnnye Ruder puts up a shot during the three-point contest held between games in the Sunflower Shootout in Smith Center on Sunday. She scored three points in the Mid-Continent League's loss to the North Central all stars.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



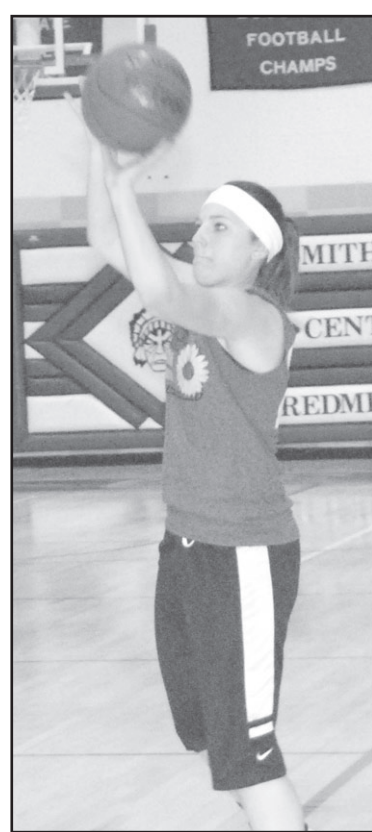
Northern Valley's Jordan Baird swishes a jump shot over the outstretched arm of a Mid-Continent League player during the North Central all stars overtime win in the Sunflower Shootout. Baird was all over the court, scoring 6 points and playing aggressive defense.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



Norton's Bailey Ambrosier, a member of the Mid-Continent League all stars, scores inside during the Sunflower Shootout. Bailey tallied 5 points in the game.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



Northern Valley's Brooke Hammond, a member of the winning North Central all stars team, puts up a jump shot during the Sunflower Shootout. Brooke scored 10 points.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton's track season to start

By DICK BOYD

nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

Eighth year head coach Jason Jones has welcomed 55 athletes to this spring's Norton Community High School girls and boys track and field teams.

There are 23 girls and 32 boys on the rosters.

Both girls and boys teams return 11 letter winners.

Norton will open the track season on Monday, April 7 in the Kiwanis Junior Varsity Track Meet in Smith Center, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Norton Invitational Meet

Varsity competition for Norton will begin next Friday, April 11 with the annual Norton Invitational Track Meet on the Jep Byrum Track at Travis Field.

Field events will begin at 3:30 p.m.

The 3200 meter relay will begin at 5 p.m. and will be followed by the running events around 5:45 p.m. No preliminaries will be held and all events will be run as finals.

In addition to Norton, competing teams will be from Colby, Logan, Northern Valley, Oberlin and Smith Center.

Plaques will be awarded to the first and second place teams in both girls and boys divisions. Medals will be awarded to the first three places in each event.

During a break in the action, Norton senior track and golf athletes and their parents will be honored.

Assisting coach Jones again this season will be Dale Engelbert, Doug Reusink, Lucas Melvin and Jeremy Hawks.

Student manger this season is Dawn Herring.

Head coach's background

Coach Jones is a Logan native. A 1994 Logan High School graduate, he was the Class 1A state pole vault champion.

He attended Fort Hays State University in Hays on a track scholarship and pole vaulted for the Tigers. He was an all-con-

ference performer and graduated in December, 1998.

Jason was head track coach and assistant football coach at Fowler High School for three years before moving to Norton. He was a teacher and assistant football and track coach in Norton for four years before becoming head track and field coach.

"We're excited to get back to it!" said coach Jones. "This year, we have 55 total athletes and return 11 female and 11 male letter winners. We have a nice core group of experienced leaders returning.

"We are off to a good start at practice. We will look to the early season to provide us with some baselines and those early meets will offer our athletes a chance to compete and have some fun.

"We cannot wait to open the competitive season!"

GIRLS

The 11 returning girls letter winners are: Bailey Ambrosier, Darcy Bainter, Katelyn Engelbert, Cristine Nelson, seniors; Kenzie Esslinger, Sierra Griffith, juniors; Casey Ambrosier, Hanna Brooks, Molly Maddy, Peyton Renner, Lexi Voss, sophomores.

Other squad members are: Abbie Smith, senior; Burgundy Sorter, junior; Raenee Patterson, Dakota Rose, sophomores; Shania Burns, Caitlyn Cox, Macayla Kent, Miah Melvin, Baylee Miller, Josie Otter, Kira Robertson, Starla Tishhauser, freshmen.

Highlights for the Norton girls last season were a second place in the Norton Invitational, third in the Redmen Relays, fourth in the Plainville Invitational, fourth in the Phillipsburg Invitational, third in the Goldsmith Relays, second in the Oberlin Invitational, second in the Mid-Continent League Meet, fifth in the Regional Meet.

The top four finishers in the regional meet qualified for the

State Meet in Wichita. Seven Norton girls qualified.

Bailey Ambrosier won her second consecutive gold medal in the pole vault and broke the school record in the process with a vault of 10'8".

Norton's 4 x 800 meter relay team placed seventh. Returning from that team are Bailey Ambrosier, Casey Ambrosier and Katelyn Engelbert. Darcy Bainter placed 14th in the 3200 meter run and Kenzie Esslinger placed ninth in the pole vault. Molly Maddy was an alternate but did not compete at state.

The Norton girls placed 14th out of 57 teams in the State Meet.

BOYS

The 11 returning boys lettermen are: Tanner Furbush, Austin Hager, Trever Lewis, Marc Miller, seniors; Christian Boser, Derick Campbell, Conor Cox, Jordan Karnopp, Kobie Unterseher, juniors; Brendon Frack, Ryan Thrailkill, sophomores.

Other squad members are: Travis Cressler, Kai Kawaha-

ra, seniors; Mickey Hahn, Gin Lee, Deon Lyle, David Smith, Breven Sondergaard, Stewart Whitney, juniors; Tevin Brown, Trei Burns, Jordan Dole, Cameron Heikes, Gavin Lively, sophomores; Maverick Engel, Jacob Green, Nate Hartwell, Tyus Henson, Cruz Leon, Koby McEwen, Harrison Woodyard, Trenton Wright, freshmen.

The Norton boys highlights from a year ago were third in the Norton Invitational, fourth in the Redmen Relays, fourth in the Plainville Invitational, fourth in the Phillipsburg Invitational, second in the Oberlin Invitational and sixth in the Regional meet.

Three Norton boys qualified for the State Meet in Wichita.

Austin Hager placed third in the pole vault with a clearance of 13'. He had set a school record of 14'6" in the regional meet. Marc Miller set a personal record in the 800 meter run with a time of 2:04.84 to place ninth.

The Norton boys finished 30th out of 56 teams competing in the State Meet.

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Norton Track and Field Schedule

Mon, April 7 - Smith Center JV Meet, Smith Center, 4:30 p.m.
Fri., April 11 - Norton Invitational, Norton, 3:30 p.m.
Tues., April 15 - Redmen Relays, Smith Center, 3 p.m.
Mon., April 21 - Trego JV Meet, WaKeeney, 4 p.m.
Tues., April 22 - Plainville Invitational, Plainville, 3 p.m.
Fri., April 25 - Phillipsburg Meet, Phillipsburg, 3 p.m.
Mon., April 28 - Hill City JV Meet, Hill City, 4 p.m.
Fri., May 2 - Goldsmith Relays, WaKeeney, 3:30 p.m.
Tues., May 6 - Oberlin Invitational, Oberlin, 3 p.m.
Fri., May 9 - Russell Relays, Russell, 3 p.m.
Mon., May 12 - Hill City Meet, Hill City, 4 p.m.
Thurs., May 15 - MCL Track Meet, Phillipsburg, 3 p.m.
Fri., May 23 - Regional Meet, TBD
Fri., May 30 - State Track Meet, Wichita, TBD
Sat., May 31 - State Track Meet, Wichita, TBD

Go Big Blue!!!

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