

# Eagle winter sports ready for first weekend

## Five Colby wrestlers are ranked

By JAY KELLEY  
Colby Free Press

Colby wrestling fans will get a chance to see some state-ranked competitors when the Eagles open their season against WaKeeney at the Colby High School gym Friday night.

Three juniors and two seniors from Colby High School wrestling made the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association poll, released Friday.

Danny Mainus is ranked second at 112 pounds this year.

The junior took sixth last year at 119 pounds in the state tournament after suffering a first-round loss that left his eye blackened and swollen shut.

Eric Luedke is ranked second at 130 pounds.

Luedke was second at the state tournament at 112 as a sophomore.

Drue Herl also earned a trip to state by taking fourth at the regional tournament.

Although Herl did not place last year, the 140-pound junior returns at the same weight with state experience.

215-pounder Adam Smith was a sleeper last season. He entered regionals with a 5-2 record and earned



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Doug Hurtt and Josh Cersovsky worked on individual drills for the Colby High School wrestling team. Colby wrestling opens by hosting WaKeeney in the high school gym on Friday night at 6:30 p.m.

in a trip to state, where he came up the back side of the bracket to take sixth.

Smith, however, will be out at least until Christmas with a torn muscle in his leg. Head Coach Mitch Beims said it was a "freak accident."

"He just sat down, and the muscle tore," said Beims, who added he hopes to have Smith healthy by January.

Eric Seemann suffered an injury at 215 and was replaced by Smith just before regionals last season. Seemann is ranked sixth at 275 this season.

At 220 pounds, he will be a small heavyweight, but he is very strong and agile.

Beims said this year's team is less

experienced than the one that took the state tournament last season, but very tough in their own right.

"We actually have more upperclassmen than last year's team," he said, "but a lot of them don't have varsity experience."

Their experience includes pushing the varsity wrestlers in the practice room all last year, Beims said.

"I'm excited."

The varsity Eagles will also face some tough competition Saturday when they go to St. Francis for a tournament.

The jayvee will be in Goodland for a tournament at the same time.

## Basketball on the road in Russell

By JAY KELLEY  
Colby Free Press

The rubber meets the road Thursday night when the Colby High School Eagle basketball team opens their season in Russell at 6 p.m.

Both boys and girls teams are young. The girls have only one returning senior and the boys have two, but the make up of last years teams makes the experience level a little different.

Both groups have Mid-America Youth Basketball and summer league experience.

Girls coach Tom Beckman said some of his players have already played 65 or more games together this year.

In addition, the girls team was young last year. Most of the varsity line-up, including sophomores, have varsity experience from last season.

Senior Megan Blatt returns from last year's team that fell to Goodland in the finals of the Class 4A Sub-State Tournament.

"These girls are used to playing together," said Beckman, "and that puts them way ahead."

Although the boys have a relative lack of high school varsity experience, they have also played together in both junior varsity and summer league games.

"We had a senior-dominated team last year," said head coach Derek Bissitt. The team lost seven starters, leaving only a few players, even among returning seniors, with varsity



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

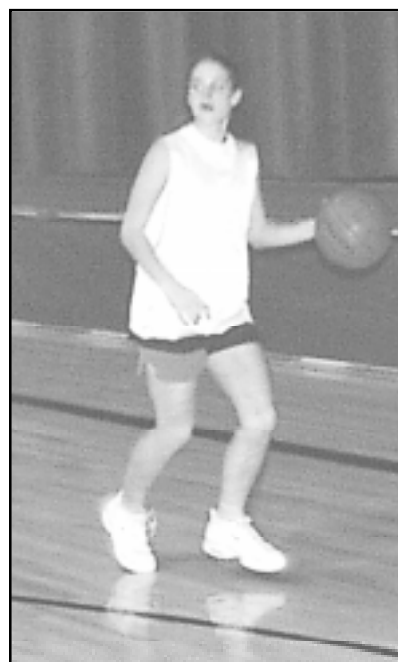
The Colby High School basketball teams are getting ready for their season opener in Russell on Thursday at 6 p.m.. ABOVE: The boys team worked through offense and defense drills, while RIGHT: Lori Ziegelmeier looked for an open player in girls practice.

minutes.

In addition to two returning seniors, Tucker Stover and Clay Kaiser, some of the juniors have a few varsity minutes.

The boys team lost in the first round of the Class 4A State Tournament last season.

Both teams face daunting schedules, with Thomas More Prep and Hays next week and Ulysses and Garden City later in the season, but both coaches believe tough competition will help them at tournament time.



## Trojans in Coffeyville for Jayhawk Shootout

This weekend we are playing in Coffeyville at the annual Jayhawk Shootout. Each of the past two seasons we went 1-



Brian Ostermann

### ●Power Sports

1 in the West-East challenge. My first year we defeated Independence and lost to Cowley. Last season we defeated Neosho and lost to Highland.

This weekend we face a 6-1 Johnson County team that won the Division II National Championship (they finished third in the Jayhawk East). Johnson County returned four starters from that team and were picked in the top three again in the East.

On Saturday we play a Labette team that has won two in a row and are gaining confidence. They will be a great challenge for our young ball club. Not only will our opponents be tough but we also get to play the 9 a.m. game both Friday and Saturday.

Our Thanksgiving trip to Casper, Wyo. was a mixed bag. We had a great meal and great fellowship with other teams, but we dropped our first game of the season. Ricks, Idaho (7-2) beat us the first night 81-77.

We had several opportunities in the last few minutes to take the lead but were unable to convert. We did bounce back to beat Trinidad, Colo. and Casper the next two evenings. The weekend saw the first action of the season for '6'8" power forward Detric Spooner. He averaged 16.7 points and 12 rebounds for the three games. Our team is adjusting to playing with a tough inside player. The challenge for each team member is to adjust to his new roles. Anytime you add a player during the season there is an adjustment period. I think we are still working out the kinks.

I know we are 8-1 but I still believe we have a very long way to go as a team to reach our goal of placing in the top four in the Jayhawk West. We have had some nice wins and we have shown an ability to persevere. We must become more consistent and we must improve defensively.

Also, our half-court offensive execution must improve a great deal. Everyone must (including myself) realize this is a very young ball club. Brent Brooks is the only sophomore that plays substantially. Each player has ups and downs during a 30-game season. Freshmen sometimes have more inconsistency. Our freshman must mature quickly if we are to be a

challenger in the West.

Your next chance to see the Trojans will be Dec. 5 at the Community Building as we take on McCook. Game time is 8 p.m. and our game sponsor is Taco John's. Bring your loudest cheers!

### Jottings

- We have won three road games already this season. Last season we won just 2 all year! We have one remaining true road game prior to the Jayhawk Conference season. We take on Kansas Wesleyan jayvee on Dec. 8.

- This is the sixth season for Colby Community College basketball history in the Jayhawk Conference. We call it the "new" era of Trojan basketball. The record for non-conference wins for a season in the new era is 10. We are 8-1 with 5 games to play.

- The second season (Jayhawk Conference play) begins at home Jan. 9 vs. Pratt. It will be \$1 night so don't miss out!

- Jayhawk West teams are a combined 57-16 at this time. WOW!

- We have invited all area high school teams to be our guests at a Trojan home game of their choice. We continue to try and promote our basketball program and the great game of basketball to everyone in northwest Kansas.

- The Lady Trojans have a 5-4 record and they also play this week at the Shootout.

- It's getting close to the holidays and I want to thank Gambino's, Taco John's, Subway, and Thomas County Feeders for donating food to feed the guys! We appreciate their support and want everyone to know how important these people are to our program.

- Our final two home games before Christmas break are Wednesday, Dec. 5 vs. McCook, Neb. and Wednesday Dec. 12 vs. Mid-Plains, Neb. I encourage you to come out this weekend. I know this group has a passion for playing the game and it's fun to watch. Everyone is invited!

- Jayhawk Western Division men's basketball standings as of Monday: 1. #6 Barton County, 9-0; 2. #27 Seward County, 8-1; 3. Colby, 8-1; 4. Garden City, 8-2; 5. Dodge City, 6-2; 6. Butler County, 5-1; 7. Hutchinson, 6-2; 8. Cloud County, 3-3; 9. Pratt, 4-4.

## Local Schedule

### Thursday, Nov. 29

Colby High School varsity and junior varsity girls and boys basketball at Russell at 6 p.m.

7/8th grade boys basketball at Scott City at 4:30 p.m.

### Friday, Nov. 30

Colby High School varsity and junior varsity wrestling hosts WaKeeney at the high school gym at 6:30 p.m.

There will be a ceremony to raise the 2001 State Championship Banner between junior varsity and varsity matches.

## Area Briefs

### Mid-America basketball

Mid-America youth basketball is hosting girls' and boys' basketball tournaments for grades 3-8 on Dec. 8-9 in McPherson, Independence, Lawrence and Riley County. There is a 3-game guarantee for each. Call 316-284-0354 or e-mail

busy@southwind.net for more information.

### Newton basketball tournament

The Mid-America Youth Basketball Winter Kickoff will be in Newton on Dec. 15-16 for boys and girls 3-8th grades. There is a 3-game guarantee and A and B divisions in all age groups.

Call 316-284-0354 or e-mail busy@southwind.net.

### Christmas tournaments

Mid-America Youth Basketball is sponsoring tournaments for girls and boys grades 3-8 in Topeka, El Dorado and Shawnee on Dec. 22-23. Call 316-284-0354

Alltell 646LF  
100% GDN ad ran  
CFP on  
11/26 100% GDN  
4X10

you're on the right track in the CLASSIFIEDS!