

Saluting two of Colby's outstanding sports figures

Two of our Colby Eagles were recognized in a big way right after the volleyball season ended in December of 2002.

Today's On The Ball column is devoted to these accomplishments. Tiffany Focke, a senior at Colby High School, was named to the Salina Journal's 2002 All-Area volleyball team. Here is the capsule that appeared in the Journal in December, reprinted by permission:

The 5-foot-7 senior was a major reason why the Colby Eagles ended a 19-year absence from the state tournament this year. Focke helped the Eagles build a 31-5 record this season, averaging 8.6 assists per game and finishing with a 95.9 service percentage.

What was the highlight of your high school volleyball career? "The highlight of my high school career would have to be my senior year. We had a great team and a great record. We got the chance to go to state. It was a goal of ours that we achieved and are very proud of."

Is there an athlete or non-athlete you use as a role model? "There are two people that I see as role models. The first person is Coach (Brandi) Jones. As a young girl I watched her play college volleyball and wanted to be like her. When I got to high school she became my coach and taught me a lot of what I know. Also Sarah Noriega because she made the Olympic team and is from a small town in Kansas. It goes to show that if you want something bad enough you can achieve anything."

What are your plans after graduation? "Next year, I plan on staying in Colby and attending Colby Community College. My major is undecided at this time. I will be playing on the CCC volleyball team for Coach Gina Chvatal."

Do you have any hobbies outside of volleyball? "In my free time I enjoy hanging out with friends, taking road trips, shopping, sleeping and chatting on MSN. I always find something to do to keep me busy in Colby because there really isn't anything exciting to do here."

Coach's comment (from Lesley Wagoner) "She loves the game. She has phenomenal setting skills, and by being a great server and a good hitter makes her a triple threat."

Speaking of Coach Wagoner, she was named Volleyball Coach of the Year by the Salina Journal. The following also appeared in the Journal in December, and is reprinted here, with permission:

Four years ago, Lesley Wagoner took a look at her volleyball team and knew she was about to embark on something special.

The only task Wagoner faced was convincing the young members of her Colby volleyball team that it was no longer a question of if the Eagles would end its state-tournament drought but more a matter of how soon it would end.

This year, Wagoner's belief in the freshman class from four years ago finally came to full fruition as she guided that group, now in their senior campaigns, to the Class 4A state tournament — Colby's first state tournament appearance in 19 years.

"We started when they were freshman and told them that this was something that they could achieve," said Wagoner, the 2002 Salina Journal Volleyball Coach of the Year. "It may not happen in the next couple of years, but it probably will happen when you are juniors or seniors because you have all of the talent in the world."

"Getting them to believe in you and to believe in the program — that was just huge." Undoubtedly, the Eagles did buy into Wagoner and her program, and this year they reaped all of the rewards. After going 17-11 last year, the Eagles came out strong from the onset of the 2002 season and built a 31-5 record and finished the year with a trip to Salina for the 4A state tournament.

"Every goal that we ever set, we achieved this year," said Wagoner, who just completed her fifth season at Colby. "We had seven seniors on this year's team, and I think the success of our team goes to the girls."



Darrel Pattillo
•On the Ball

They are the ones that worked the hardest, they are the ones that put in the time and did the job that they needed to do."

While it was the girls that accomplished things on the court, it was a move Wagoner made after the first match of the season that may have finally added final touch for this year's squad.

For years Wagoner has coached Colby to play a triple-blocking defense. But with no players taller than 5-foot-11 on the roster, Wagoner realized that defense probably was not suited for this year's squad and made the switch to a double-blocking defense from the outside.

"Even though we were quick, we weren't big enough to get that big block in the middle," Wagoner said. "Once we (made the change), that was after our first match when we got beat by Oberlin, that was the biggest difference that we made all year."

After switching to the outside block, the Eagles lost just twice more during the regular season. They rolled through the sub-state tournament before moving on to state where they finished with a 1-2 record.

"It was all just a matter of getting the girls to believe that they could make it to state in volleyball too," Wagoner said. "Our girls, a lot of them had been to state in track and a lot of them had been to state in basketball so they know what it takes."

Now, the test for Wagoner will be coming back next year and picking up the pieces after losing seven of her players to graduation.

But she is banking on the hope that this year's group of seniors have left a mark that will stay with the program for several years to come.

"When you come into a program, you have to work hard at getting it to where you want it to," Wagoner said. "These girls have laid down some good groundwork."

Lesley and Tiffany, this newspaper and this community are very proud of your accomplishments, and I know that you'll both have great success for many years. Congratulations!

Darrel Pattillo is the sports editor for the Colby Free Press. His column appears on Wednesdays.



PAMAUGUSTINE/Colby Free Press

Carson McKee, 11, passed the ball to #43 Landon Stover Tuesday night against the Garden City Buffaloes. Jared Cranston was trying to get open as well. The Eagles dropped their last non-league game of the regular season 71-48 Tuesday night in Garden City.

Eagles lose to Garden City

By **DARREL PATTILLO**
Colby Free Press

The Garden City Buffaloes made a 20-point half-time lead stand up Tuesday night in Garden City as they beat the Colby Eagles 71-48. The Eagles shot just 38 percent from the floor (19-50) and allowed Garden City to shoot 58.7 percent (27-46).

Garden City jumped out to a 20-8 lead after the first quarter, then out-scored Colby 17-9 in the second to go up 37-17 at the half. Colby tried to dig out of the hole by winning the third period 13-10, but Garden scored 24 points in the fourth to seal it. The Buffs' big guy, Kurt Bangle, scored 29 points against the Eagles. Their other big guy, Chris Nelson, had 21 points and four dunks.

Landon Stover led the Eagles

with 18 points, Shane Stover had 10, Jared Cranston scored 8, Jordan Harris was held to just 7, and Matt Augustine had 5. Carson McKee got off just one shot, which didn't fall. Jeff Reavis and Brian Sulzman also saw playing time.

The Eagles are now 11-4 and will host Oberlin Friday night at the Community Building.

Colby JV 56, Garden City 65

The Buffalo JV squad pulled away late against the Eagles to win 65-56. Bruce Arnberger scored 29 in the contest. Jared Dinkel had 13, Brian Sulzman had 11, Jordan Cranston had 2, and Deke Elliott had a point. Sean Mengel and Josh Cox played but didn't get on the scoreboard.

The Eagle JV is 10-2 now and will play Oberlin Friday night at the high school.

Oklahoma State coach reaches 1,000 games

STILLWATER, Okla. (AP) — The first time Eddie Sutton stepped on a basketball court as a Division I head coach, Richard Nixon was in his first year as president.

The year was 1969 and Sutton was at Creighton. That was 999 games ago. On Wednesday night, he will coach his 1,000th game when his 11th-ranked Oklahoma State Cowboys play Kansas State.

"It doesn't seem possible, but I

guess I've been around a long time," Sutton said.

That he has. Sutton, who turns 67 in March, is in his 33rd season as a Division I coach. He spent five years at Creighton, then moved on to Arkansas, where during his 11 seasons he turned the Razorbacks into a force in the Southwest Conference.

From there it was on to Kentucky.

Lady Eagles defense too much for Garden City

By **RALPH WOLF**
Colby Free Press

The Colby Lady Eagles basketball team improved its record to 14-1 on the season by soundly defeating the Garden City Lady Buffaloes Tuesday night in Garden City by the score of 78-40. Colby took control early in the game and led 24-9 by the end of the first period of play and at the break held an impressive 45-14 advantage.

Summar Stephens had a hot hand connecting on 75 percent of her shots from the field to finish the game with 27 points. Stephens also led the team with 8 steals, grabbed 5 rebounds and had 4 assists. Emily Sloan scored in double figures with 18 points, had 2 rebounds and 1 blocked shot.

Brianna Swafford recorded 9 points, 1 rebound, 3 steals and had a team high 7 assists. Amanda Seemann contributed 6 points, 4 boards, 2 steals and 5 assists.

Ivy Ramsey and Bethanie Linden each scored 5 points apiece. Linden hauled down 6 rebounds, recorded 5 steals, had 3 assists, and blocked 1 shot. Ramsey recorded 1 rebound and 1 assist.

Samantha Wolf tossed in 4 points, grabbed a rebound, and dished out 3 assists. Desiree Sharp and Breann Hart both added 2 points each. Sharp was also credited with a rebound and an assist, while Hart had an assist. Marcia Kaus was credited with 1 board.

As a team the Lady Eagles connected on 53 percent from the field, 28 percent from 3-point land, and 63 percent from the line.

In JV action, the Lady Eagles

came out on top by the final score of 54-49. The Eagles trailed 9-1 early in the game but rallied late in the first period to close the gap to 12-7 heading into the second period of play.

The Eagles pulled to within just two points by half-time with a score of 27-25.

Leading the way was Jessica Stephens with 18 points, 3 rebounds, 2 steals and 4 assists. Shea McKee and Marcia Kaus each contributed 11 points in the contest. Kaus was credited with 6 boards, 2 steals, and 1 blocked shot. McKee added 4 boards, 5 steals, and 5 assists. Shawna Cox tossed in 6 points, grabbed 2 rebounds, had 1 take away, and dished out 3 assists. Zanae Baird added 5 points, 2 rebounds and 1 steal. Crystal Mannebach and Clarissa Unger each recorded 2 points apiece, with Unger receiving credit for 5 rebounds, 1 steal and 1 blocked shot. Mannebach had 1 rebound, 2 steals and 1 assist.

As a team, the JV shot a mere 28 percent from the field, but an impressive 62 percent from beyond the arc, and they were also 62 percent from the charity stripe. The JV upped their record to 9-3.

In C-team action, the young Lady Eagles lost to Garden City by the final score 74-26. Clarissa Unger led the way with 7 points, followed by Morgan Stephens with 6, Crystal Mannebach with 5, Andrea Barker with 4, Nikole Schroeder with 3 and Jacquie Fry with 1.

Next action for the Lady Eagles will be on Friday night as they host the Red Devils of Oberlin.

**Tomorrow-
All four
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won Tuesday,
and we'll have
the results!**

CCC Baseball Try-Athlon.
A little bit of try, and a whole lot of fun!!
Saturday, February 15 • 10:30
Get a team together to compete in three grueling events—Bowling, Pool & Darts!

2003 Trojan
9 Ball Pool
301 Darts

Baseball Try-Athlon

Bowling
Sunday, February 16
Enjoy a Chili Feed and Memorabilia Auction at City Limits Convention Center.
The number of teams is limited, so sign up today!!

For questions or to sign your team up, contact Ryan Carter, CCC Head Baseball Coach at (785) 462-3984 ext.238

.....Please Detach and Return.....
2003 Trojan Baseball Try-athlon
Saturday, February 15 and Sunday, February 16

Team Members (\$160 per Team)
Captain: _____ Phone# _____
Member: _____ Phone# _____
Member: _____ Phone# _____
Member: _____ Phone# _____

Bullpen (Optional)
1st Reliever (\$15): _____
2nd Reliever (\$15): _____

Please Return by Feb. 14 to:
Colby Community College Baseball
Head Coach Ryan Carter
1255 S. Range
Colby, KS 67701

Make Checks Payable to: Colby CC Baseball

Our team will pay when we register Total Entry Fee Enclosed \$ _____ (\$160 per team + relievers)

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