

# New Eagle wrestling coach motivated by program's history

By John Van Nostrand  
Colby Free Press

The names have changed for Colby High School wrestling, but that does not mean the tradition has to change.

Gone are head coach Mitch Beims and wrestlers Taylor Finley, Cole Garcia and Kyle Withington. Coaching Colby wrestling since 2000, Beims left earlier this year for an administrative position at Holton High.

Garcia and Finley, who placed at the state tournament last year, are now at Colby Community College. Garcia won 140 pounds at state two years in a row. He was at state three years. Finley placed second at state last year, third as a junior and sixth as a sophomore. Colby placed fifth at state last year.

Welcome to the Matt Sims era of Colby High wrestling.

An assistant under Beims for three years, Sims, 26, is now in control. He knows what Colby High wrestling is all about.

"Nervous," he said, "maybe that's not the word. I'm motivated to keep the tradition going. I'm excited for this opportunity. We have had lots of good kids and good tradition the last few years."

Sims first meet as head coach is 6:30 p.m. Friday against Burlington, Colo., at Colby High School.

Thirty-seven are out for wrestling this year. Sims said of the 37, 10 are returning varsity. In addition to losing Garcia, Finley and Withington, Daniel Gonzalez moved to Garden City.

"We will probably never replace those three (Garcia, Finley, Withington) with one guy," Sims said. "They are all going to have to help."

Sims said he and probably many other Eagle wrestling fans got used to those three excelling at meets.

## Free throws sink Trojans

The Colby Community College men's basketball team lost 74-65 to Lamar Community College Tuesday in Lamar, Colo.

The Trojans led by one at half-time, and head coach John Woods said the game was close throughout. Woods said the Trojans trailed by four with a minute left in the game and were forced to foul. Lamar was able to connect on their free-throw attempts and the lead ballooned to nine.

"Lamar went to a zone defense in the second half, and we couldn't score effectively against it," Woods said.

Sophomore center Jorge Canedo led the Trojans with 27 points and sophomore John Ortiz contributed 13 points and 11 rebounds.

Colby (3-7) plays Coffeyville 9 a.m. Saturday in the Jayhawk Shootout in Coffeyville. Colby plays Allen County 1 p.m. Sunday in Coffeyville.

## Wrestling moved to high school

The Colby Community College wrestling duals with Neosho on Friday and with Labette on Sunday have been moved from the Community Building to the Colby High School gymnasium.

The dual with Neosho starts at 5 p.m. and the dual with Labette is 2 p.m.

The Trojan wrestling team will compete Saturday at the Fort Hays State Open in Hays.

The event will begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday and will likely run most of the day.

## Jayhawks win

LAWRENCE (AP) — Taking advantage of a big edge in size, quickness, talent and depth, the No. 5 Kansas Jayhawks rolled to an 83-32 rout, handing Dartmouth one of its most lopsided losses ever.

"I think they are very good. Very, very good," Dartmouth coach Terry Dunn said.

"Last year, we could have a bad day and still have Garcia and Finley place," he said.

Sims is trying to find the lineup to have that kind of strength continue for Colby wrestling. Leading the way is senior Trenton Powell, who placed fifth at the state tournament. Sims said Powell will continue at 119 this year.

"We will lean on him a little bit," Sims said.

Other Eagle wrestlers Sims has been impressed with include 103-pound freshman Nathan Reed and 112-pound junior Cody Wark. Sims said, in the past Wark has matched up well against others who went to state.

But there are still questions to be



Sims

answered by Sims and the team. For starters, he has not decided who will be at 140 pounds. Besides the lineup, Sims said the team must adapt to his coaching style and routines.

"It has been smoother than I thought," he said about the transition from Beims. "I have changed some things to my style of coaching."

Sims said he knows these things don't happen overnight.

"I would have liked to have it all done in two weeks, but I know that is not realistic. I just want to make sure we peak at the right time."

It's tough to find a coach who does not want his team wrestling at their best going into the state tournament.

Sims expects another battle for 4A state supremacy. He said Goodland, Abilene, Clay Center and defending state champion Andale should be strong.



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Colby High wrestling fans watch the annual Orange and Black tryouts Monday. The Eagle wrestling team's new coach is Matt Sims. Their season starts 6:30 p.m. Friday against Burlington, Colo., in Colby.

"Andale lost a couple from last year, but got a lot back," he said.

Sims said he also expects another great year of wrestling in Northwest Kansas. Oberlin battled with Colby

at the league meet and he said Saint Francis should have another strong team. Sims said Rawlins County (Atwood) has grown to 18 on their team this year.

Sims knows his team is growing other than on the wrestling mat.

"We have good kids, not just good wrestlers. That is the best part."

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