

# Eagles use 541 rushing yards to pound Hugoton 41-7

By Joey Falkoff

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Don't look now, but the Colby Eagles are suddenly one of the hottest football teams in northwest Kansas.

Colby (3-4) won for the third time in four games and have now outscored their last two opponents by a combined score of 82-7, after a 41-7 shellacking of the Hugoton Eagles (1-6) in the first week of district play Friday in Hugoton.

The win leaves the Eagles just one win away from their first playoff birth since 1997.

"It feels good," said Eagle head coach Chris Gardner. "This was one of those weeks where you stay up all night nervous about the game, and I'm real proud of the way the guys stepped up."

As it turned out, Gardner and his staff had little to be nervous about, especially offensively, where Colby racked up an astounding 547 yards of offense with over half of those coming in the first half.

After coming out flat the week before against Oberlin, the Eagles played probably their best half of football in several years Friday in the first half. Colby never let Hugoton catch their breath, as they outscored them 28-0 and rushed for an amazing 372 yards.

Colby running back Mitchell Tuma eclipsed the 100 yard mark in just two quarters of football and fellow backfield mate Tanner Kriss and quarterback Heath Stephens nearly did so as well.

Defensively, the Eagles stopped Hugoton from scoring twice in the red zone, allowed only three first downs and 37 rushing yards and intercepted a pass from Hugoton quarterback Black Trujillo.

It was picture-perfect 24 minutes of football for Colby and their head coach couldn't have been more pleased.

"That first half was the best half of football we've played all year," said Gardner. "It's a tribute to these kids and our coaches getting them ready. I couldn't be happier with the way these guys came off the bus ready to play."

The Eagles scored their 28 first half points on four touchdown runs and four Stephen Dinkel extra points. Tuma, who hadn't scored a touchdown since week four against Atwood, had two of those rushing touchdowns.

His first was from 1-yard out to

## Box Score

	1	2	3	4
Colby (3-4)	14	14	6	7-41
Hugoton (1-6)	0	0	0	7-7

### 1st Quarter:

Colby: Mitchell Tuma 1 run (7:35) (Stephen Dinkel PAT) 7-0  
Colby: Heath Stephens 61 run (0:11) (Dinkel PAT) 14-0

### 2nd Quarter:

Colby: Mitchell Tuma 96 run (7:51) (Dinkel PAT) 21-0  
Colby: Scott McCoy 19 run (4:19) (Dinkel PAT) 28-0

### 3rd Quarter:

Colby: Tanner Kriss 2 run (7:23) (PAT no good) 34-0

### 4th Quarter:

Colby: Tanner Kriss 61 run (11:27) (Dinkel PAT) 41-0  
Hugoton: Caleb Gifford 1 run (4:19) (PAT good) 41-7

### Statistics:

**First Downs:** Colby 16 Hugoton 7

**Penalties:** Colby 8-60 Hugoton 5-21

**Turnovers:** Colby 3 Hugoton 3

**Total Yards:** Colby 547 Hugoton 233

**Rushing Yards:** Colby 541 Hugoton 138

**Passing Yards:** Colby 6 Hugoton 95

**Individual Rushing:** Colby- Kriss 13-174; Tuma 16-169; Stephens 9-126; McCoy 6-29; Dinkel 1- (minus 6); Weber 4-12; Stichel 6-37.

**Individual Passing:** Hugoton- Trujillo 4-11 95 yards 2 INT

Colby- Stephens 2-3 6 yards

Dinkel 0-1 0 yards,

**Individual Receiving:** Colby- Kriss 1-6; Tuma 1-0



cap a masterful 10 play 61 yard drive the Eagle offense had on their first possession of the game.

Tuma would need to go a little farther for his second score of 96 yards a little less than five minutes into the second quarter. His second touchdown was the longest play from scrimmage by any Eagle player this year and gave Colby a 21-0 lead.

After being limited due to injury for most of the year, Tuma showed in his 169 yard two touchdown first half performance why he was considered to be one of the top running backs in the league heading into this season.

"Mitchell's a great player, and he's done everything right for us this year," said Gardner. "He got his hand banged up and shook it off. It was nice to see him finally be able to get to the edge and show off that speed on his long run."

Tuma's 96-yard touchdown capped a two play 98 yard drive, which barely topped the 96-yard scoring drive Colby had at the end

of the first quarter.

Instead of two plays, it was a six play drive capped off by a 61-yard Heath Stephens touchdown run. It was his fourth touchdown in the last two weeks, and his 126 yard rushing performance on nine carries marked the second time in four weeks he has reached triple digits in rushing yards.

Neither Tuma or Stephens may have had the huge nights on the ground they wound up with, were it not for Hugoton's inability to score in the red zone. Hugoton twice had the ball inside Colby's 10-yard line in the first half, but was unable to get any points out of it.

Their first opportunity occurred in the first quarter after they recovered a Kriss fumble at Colby's 25-yard line. Hugoton moved the ball to the Colby 4-yard line, but could get no points as Trujillo's fourth down pass fell incomplete. Stephens made them pay for that missed opportunity. On their next offensive possession, Hugoton moved the ball down the field one

of the only times all night.

A 55 yard third-and-seven completion from Trujillo to Hyatt Sutton gave Hugoton a first-and-goal from Colby's 5-yard line. Hugoton could get no closer, and although Trujillo completed his fourth down pass to Keithan Martin, he was stopped two yards short of a touchdown by the Eagle defense.

Two plays later, Tuma completely swung the momentum Colby's way with his 96-yard touchdown jaunt that made it a three score game.

"Our defense had to come up big, because that could have changed the complexion of the game had they scored both times," said Gardner. "Those stops got us pumped up."

Although Hugoton moved the ball better late in the second half, the game was well in hand for Colby by that point, as they just kept pouring it on.

After drives of 61, 96 and 98 yards, Colby added a 71-yard scoring drive just over half way through the second quarter. A 29 yard run by Kriss and a 20 yard scamper from

Stephens, helped set up Scott McCoy's 19-yard touchdown run with 4:19 remaining in the half.

McCoy's score and Dinkel's extra point made it 28-0. After going the first five games without a touchdown, McCoy now has three touchdowns in his last two games.

Colby cornerback Thomas Wieland grabbed his third interception of the year at the end of the first half to ensure the Eagle's 28-0 lead at the break.

The 15 minute intermission didn't cool Colby off, as they came out in the second half and forced a turnover on Hugoton's first possession. Trujillo fumbled a pitch, which was recovered by Kriss.

It was also Kriss who made Hugoton pay on the offensive end, capping a 7 play 40 yard scoring drive with a 2-yard touchdown run—his first of the game. Dinkel missed his only extra point following the touchdown, but Colby still led 34-0.

Kriss added his second touchdown of the game two plays into the fourth quarter on a play in which he not only needed to beat the Hugoton defenders but the referee's, as well.

Kriss broke past the Hugoton secondary, and before he could reach the end zone, had to leap over one of the referee's who fell down during the play.

Fortunately for the fallen ref, Kriss was able to dodge him and proceed on his way to a 61-yard touchdown run. His score, along with Dinkel's extra point, made it 41-0 only 33 seconds into the final quarter. Kriss finished with a team-high 174 yards rushing on 13 carries.

After Kriss's second score, all that was left to accomplish for Colby was to maintain the shut out.

Colby looked like they were on their way to doing so after they once again stopped Hugoton from scoring in the red zone with five minutes left to play.

Colby took over after a turnover on downs at their own 13-yard line, but on their first offensive play, the ball was snapped over the head of Dinkel, who was in the game at quarterback, and recovered by Hugoton at the 1-yard line. On the next play, the shut out was gone, as Hugoton running back Caleb Gifford scored on a 1-yard plunge.

It would have been the Eagles third shut out of the season and their second in a row, but it was about the only thing that didn't go according

to plan for Colby Friday during their 41-7 win.

"We told the kids earlier in the week that after a game against us, we want the other team to say they played the best team in our district," said Gardner. "Whether that means winning a hard-fought 7-6 game or winning by 40, we want to be the best team in this district. It's so nice to see the way the kids competed tonight. They wanted the shut out, and every player competed for every quarter."

After a nearly flawless first half, Colby came back to earth a bit in the second half as evidenced by their two turnovers, 50 yards in penalties and their 111 rushing yards given up. It goes to show that while Colby has been doing a lot of things right lately, there are still things that can be improved.

"We got pretty sloppy in the second half," said Gardner. "There's a lot we need to work on, and we have to be better than we were in the second half."

It's certainly a nit-picky thing for Colby after a game that was all but decided at half time, but things figure to get much tougher for the Eagles when they host a 6-1 Ulysses team coming off a 42-14 win over Goodland.

Ulysses throttled the Eagles 47-0 last year, and while Gardner knows beating the Tigers will be a tough task once again this season, he is ready for the challenge.

"Any time you play Ulysses, you're going up against one of the best teams in the state," said Gardner. "We can't worry about Ulysses. We have to concentrate on playing at a high level. We're excited to be playing these last two games at home. We'll need a full house."

A win over Ulysses at Dennen Field would give the Eagles their fifth playoff appearance in the history of the program. Making the playoffs was a goal Gardner set for his team before the season started, and now he is just one victory away with two games remaining. It's a re-assuring feeling for Gardner and his team, but the head coach knows nothing has been accomplished, yet.

"Looking ahead to the season back in August, this is where I'd hoped we would be—one win away from the playoffs," said Gardner.

"This kids will enjoy this win on the long ride home, but when Monday comes, we're done celebrating and it's time to get ready for next week."

# Brewster finishes fourth at league tourney

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BREWSTER- Everything was going so smoothly for the host Brewster Bulldog volleyball team Saturday at the Western Kansas Liberty League tournament

After a 3-1 finish in pool play, the Bulldogs held a 23-19 advantage in the first game of their semifinal match with the favored Weskan Coyotes.

The Bulldogs appeared to be in good shape for a finals re-match with Wheatland-Grinnell, who they had lost to earlier in the day, but any hope Brewster had of advancing fell apart in a matter of minutes as the Coyotes rallied to win that first game 26-24 and came back again in the second game for another 26-24 win and a 2-0 match victory.

Brewster ended up taking fourth at the tournament after losing to Sharon Springs (22-25, 25-19, 20-25) in the consolation match, but it was the first game collapse in the match with Weskan that turned their day sour.

"Yea it was disappointing," said Brewster head coach Lynda McKee of the loss to Weskan. "Any time you have a lead, you want to keep it. I thought we really gave that first game away and the second game just didn't go our way."

"We were so ready to play them, and it was disappointing to lose two close games like that," said Brewster junior Britt Kammer.

Just two points away from victory in that first game, the Bulldogs surrendered eight of the last nine points to the Coyotes, and just three of them were earned.

Ahead 23-20, all six Bulldog players allowed an easy ball to land in between them.

Kills by Raney Okoson and Payton Walker tied the match at 23-23.

The two teams split the next two points. With the match evened at 24-24, the Bulldogs leading hitter, Nichelle Erskine, who was visibly



JOEY FALKOFF/Colby Free Press

Brewster junior Britt Kammer, right, attempted a kill in the Bulldogs semifinal match against Weskan at the Western Kansas Liberty League Tournament Saturday in Brewster. Brewster lost a close match to the Coyotes (24-26, 24-26) and finished fourth in the tournament.

exhausted at point after playing every second of nearly five matches, committed her second hitting error in the three points. On match point, Abbie Allen had a hitting error of her own, and the Coyotes escaped with the first game.

In the second game, Brewster led 16-11, after a lift was called on Walker, and maintained a 21-18 lead later in the match.

Two consecutive errors by Melissa Crumrine and Kammer, followed by an ace from Okoson tied the game at 21-21.

The Bulldogs wouldn't regain the lead. Trailing 22-24, Brewster managed to stave off two match points after kills from Kammer and Erskine, but a Walker kill gave Weskan the lead back. On match point, a wayward set from Crumrine allowed Okoson an easy put away at the net, which she didn't miss.

Against the Coyotes, the leading hitters for Brewster were Erskine (seven kills), Kammer (four

kills), Melissa Baird (three kills) and Baylee Westover (two kills). Crumrine led in assists with 10. She was followed by Kammer with six. Kammer and Erskine each had two blocks, and Erskine also had two aces.

Instead of playing for the championship, the Bulldogs had to settle for the third place match against Sharon Springs, which they lost in three games (22-25, 25-19, 20-25).

McKee had a tough time explaining how her girls lost to a Wildcat team that didn't appear to have near the offensive capabilities.

"You tell me," said McKee. "I thought we had better hitters, but we just couldn't put anything away. They played well. Sometimes when you play teams with off-speed hitters, it's hard to defend. You try to cover every spot, but there's a hole somewhere."

With just seven players on the roster, and six who played 95 percent of the minutes, McKee said

fatigue was a factor in those last two losses.

"We were really tired at the end," she said. "I told the girls during timeouts to stay on top mentally and physically. We let down a little bit, but the girls gave it their all."

Brewster's 3-1 pool play finish included wins over Triplains (25-18, 25-21), Golden Plains (25-11, 26-24) and Cheylin (25-13, 25-13) and a loss to Wheatland/Grinnell (16-25, 16-25).

After a 3-3 finish at the league tournament, Brewster heads into Tuesday's regional tournament in Rexford with a 22-14 record. The top two teams at the regional qualify for the 1A state tournament Oct. 26-27 in Hays.

Brewster is seeded third at the regional and will face #6 seed Quinter (5-24) in their first round match. Should they win, the Bulldogs would take on the winner of Hoxie/Golden Plains for the right to go to state.

# Titans overwhelmed by Sharon Springs 58-12

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SHARON SPRINGS- The Wallace County Wildcats are considered the best team in Kansas 8-man Division II High School football for a reason, as the Triplains-Brewster Titans found out Friday night as they came up on the short end of a 58-12 drubbing in Sharon Springs.

The first quarter had the makings of a close game. Wallace County's Taylor Elder ran the opening kick back for a touchdown, but was called back on a clip and the Wildcats started on their five.

Two plays later, Jeff Hennick ran 64 yards for a touchdown which would stand, along with the two point conversion and the Wildcats led 8-0 with 11:06 left.

Triplains-Brewster responded with a six play, 50-yard drive culminating in the Seth Carpenter to Taylor Barrett combination that has been so successful all year. The conversion failed, but the Titans trailed only 8-6 with 8:47 left in the first quarter.

Wallace County scored on their next drive as well, using 11 plays and more than three minutes before Hennick found Elder on fourth and five at the Triplains-Brewster 21. The conversion failed and the Wildcats had a 14-6 lead with 5:12 left in the quarter.

The Titans scored again with 1:02 left in the period when Carpenter found T.J. Preston from the two-yard line. The conversion failed, but the quarter ended with the Titans down by only two.

The second quarter would not be so kind. Wallace County scored on all four of their possession while the Titans were intercepted, failed to convert or

forced to punt.

Half-time came with Wallace County firmly in the lead, 46-12.

The Wildcats, final two scores came on a 6-yard run by Elder six minutes into the third quarter and an interception by Alex Howard on the next Titan possession.

The game was finished with the jayvee teams and a running clock.

The Titans had 109 yards passing, with Carpenter going 9-for-19 with two touchdowns, Tad Sheets going 3-for-3 and Barrett going 1-for-1.

Sheets had three receptions for 45 yards. Barrett had five for 43 yards and a touchdown. Brett Gfeller had two for 12 yards. Preston had three for nine yards and a score.

Triplains-Brewster rushed for 48 yards in the first quarter, but only 20 in the rest of the game. Bryant Plummer had 10 carries for 83 yards. Carpenter had six carries for 16. Chance Cranston had one for eight. Tate Preston had one for minus four. Austin Klemm had one for minus 8. Barrett had four for minus 9. Sheets had one for minus 16.

Defensively, Sam Smith led the defense with three tackles and 17 assists. Plummer had one tackle and 11 assists. Barrett had a tackle and seven assists while Doug Margheim had eight assists.

Corey Siruta had a tackle and six assists. Clint Rogge and Ethan Kammer each had one tackle and four assists. Carpenter had two tackles and two assists. Sheets had two tackles and an assist. Clay Rogge and Seth Ackerman each had three assists. Gfeller and Klemm had one assist each.

Next action for the Titans is against Northern Valley. Game time is 7:30 p.m. in Brewster.