

2008 Jayhawk Conference Pre-Season Women's Basketball Poll

- KJCCC East
1. Coffeyville (30-4)
 2. Independence (18-13)
 3. Cowley County (20-12)
 4. Johnson County (24-9)
 5. Allen County (14-16)
 5. Labette (17-14)
 7. Fort Scott (22-10)
 8. Kansas City, Kansas (14-17)
 9. Highland (10-22)
 10. Neosho County (4-27)

- KJCCC West
1. Seward County (36-2)
 2. Barton County (27-3)
 3. Cloud County (26-5)
 4. Hutchinson (21-11)
 5. Colby (10-21)
 6. Butler (23-10)
 7. Pratt (5-26)
 8. Garden City (11-28)
 9. Dodge City (11-20)

Teams Ranked in National Pre-Season Poll: #1 Seward County, #22 Coffeyville, #25 Barton County. Others Receiving Votes: Cloud County

TV

Fresh faces abound for
Lady Trojan basketball team

By Joey Falkoff

Free Press Reporter
jfalcoff@nwkansas.com

Heading into their season opener 7 p.m. tonight against Midland (TX) Junior College at the South Plains Tournament in Levelland, TX, nobody is sure of what to make of this edition of the Colby College Lady Trojan basketball team.

With 12 of the 14 girls on the roster new to the program, not even head coach Tom Stephens knows what to expect.

"We have no identity, yet," said Stephens. "I don't know who the most productive player will be. Our biggest strength right now is they're all hard workers, and they will continue to get better. That would be it."

About the only thing Stephens is sure of is that his team will be among the smallest in junior college basketball. Aleksandra Miletic, the Lady Trojans 6-3 center, injured her knee in practice and is out for the year. Their tallest player is now 6-0 forward Sandra Sormaz, a sophomore from Belgrade, Serbia.

"We've got a whole bunch of two's and three's," said Stephens. "We're very undersized. The first team we play (Midland) has a 6-5 and two 6-3 players who start and two 6-3 girls coming off the bench. It will be that way almost every night."

The Lady Trojans enter this season with an abundance of perimeter players, who Stephens says can all shoot the basketball.

Stephens doesn't believe in shooting mid-range jumpers and says not to be surprised if it's raining three balls at the community building all year.

"We shoot everything either in the lane or behind the three-point line," said Stephens. "I told them not to take the mid-range shot, because it's usually contested. I'd rather have a three-point shot, because it stretches the defense. We might shoot 50 three's one night and some nights not any."

Besides now being their tallest player, Sormaz is also one of the Lady Trojans best perimeter threats and is their only proven scorer. Last year, Sormaz was second on the team in scoring (14.4 PPG) and led the team in three-pointers made with 73. With the loss of leading scorer and rebounder Jamie Schroeder, who is now playing at the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley, it would appear Sormaz would be counted on for more production, but Stephens says that isn't necessarily the case.

"I tell our kids the team scores the points. It's not about who scores them," said Stephens. "They'll be able to shut Sandra down if they want, but they can't shut down our whole team. All of our girls will have the opportunity to score."

Sormaz, along with 5'11 sophomore Erin Goodhue, are the only two returning players this year.

Goodhue started last year, but Stephens says she will come off the bench this season.


Joining Sormaz in the front court will be a pair of local girls, 5'10 freshman Whitney Archer from Goodland and 5'11 freshman Nikki Welsh from Sharon Springs.

"Whitney's a good shooter, can play multiple positions and will be a tough matchup for our opponents," said Stephens. "Nikki has speed and will be expected to play multiple positions. She can score inside, shoot the open three, handle the ball and has good court vision."

In the back court, the Lady Trojans will have to replace point guard Jacci Tinkel, who averaged 10.3 points per game and led the team assists per game with 2.97.

Stephens said he would start off the year 5'11 sophomore transfer Angel Curry at the point and 5-8 freshman Katie Spresser at shoot-

2007-2008 Colby Community College
Lady Trojans



Head Coach: Tom Stephens (11th year)
Last Season: 10-21 (6-8 conf.)
Key Losses: 5-9 G Jamie Schroeder (14.4 PPG, 8.4 RPG); 5-3 G Jacci Tinkel (10.3 PPG, 2.97 APG)
Returners: 5-11 SO Erin Goodhue (6.5 PPG, 3.6 RPG); 6-0 SO Sandra Sormaz (14.4 PPG, 4.6 RPG)
Projected Starters: 5-1 SO Angel Curry (Baton Rouge, LA), 5'8 FR Katie Spresser (Dresden), 5-10 FR, Whitney Archer (Goodland), 5-11 Nikki Welsh (Sharon Springs), 6-0 C Sandra Sormaz (Kovn, Serbia)
Others to watch: 5-6 FR G Molly Phelan (Holyrood), 5-10 FR F Lucia Puchelova (Ruzomberok, Slovakia), 5-6 FR G Jessi Hilliard (Peabody), 5-7 FR G Lauren Fortin (Oberlin), 5-8 FR F Jamie Alexander (Hill City), 5'11 FR C Samantha Ciani (Glenwood Springs, Colo.), 5-7 FR F Jazmine Murray (Denver, Colo.)
Season Opener: 7 p.m. tonight vs. Midland Junior College at South Plains Tournament
Home Opener: Nov. 8 Iowa Western 6:30 p.m. at community building
League Opener: Jan. 2 Garden City 6:00 p.m. at community building

ing guard.

"Angel has a year of college ball under her belt and is well prepared to handle the college game," said Stephens. "Katie is a hard-nosed competitor and can score from anywhere."

Besides Goodhue, other players off the bench who are expected to see significant action are 5-6 freshman Molly Phelan (Holyrood), 5-10 freshman Lucia Puchelova (Ruzomberok, Slovakia) and 5-6 freshman Lauren Fortin (Oberlin).

This year's team features seven players from the state of Kansas, including three starters, and Stephens says he needs all of them to contribute.

"They're all pretty good," said Stephens. "They have to be good, for us to be good. But they're untested, so we'll see how they do."

With four of five starters also being freshman, the Lady Trojans as a whole are unproven, but Stephens hopes his younger girls can adjust these first two months.

"You're always learning in November and December," said Stephens.

"It's the same adjustment every year. For high school kids, this is a long-season. Some players wear down by the end of the year. Others get better. We hope ours our better."

With the schedule they're playing early on, one would assume the Lady Trojans can only get better.

Beginning tonight with #3 Midland Junior College, the Lady Trojans first six opponents are either ranked in the National Junior College Athletic Association top 30 pre-season poll or received votes.

Western Nebraska, who the Lady Trojans host at the Ambassador Classic Nov. 9, is also ranked in the pre-season top 10.

"Our first six games gives us

probably the toughest early season schedule in the country, so we are going to have to be ready to compete," said Stephens. "All six teams could be in the national tournament. I always want the toughest schedule we can find, because if we can handle this, we'll be fine in our league."

The Jayhawk Conference is stacked again this year, especially in the western division where the Lady Trojans are projected to finish fifth in the west behind Seward, Barton County, Cloud County and Hutchinson.

Seward County enters the season as the #1 ranked team in the country. Seward was 36-2 a year ago and features first-team All-American Tegan Cunningham.

Other ranked teams or those receiving votes in the division were Barton County (#25) and Cloud County, who was 26-5 last year.

In addition, Stephens also says the bottom teams in the division have improved this year.

The early season slate will be important for the development of the younger girls, and if they can improve throughout the year, Stephens hopes his team will be a factor by the end of the year.

"Our goal is always to finish in the top four of the league and get a first-round home playoff game," said Stephens. "Our biggest challenges will be taking care of the ball, rebounding and defending inside. It all depends on the attitude of the players and team chemistry. I think we'll be exciting to watch and it will be fun to see how all of these local girls play together. I always think we'll win every year. It's always tough, so we'll see how it plays out."

The Lady Trojans home opener is Nov. 8 against Iowa Western at the community building.



HUNTERS STAG

Friday, November 2nd 6:00PM

RAFFLE DRAWINGS

Bull Fries/Chicken Fried Steak, Potatoes & Salad

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Wednesdays-\$2.00 Bottles Fridays- Mexican Night
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