



JOEY FALKOFF/Colby Free Press

Stephen Dinkel, right, is averaging 12.1 points per game for the Colby Eagle basketball team, which opens 4A State Tournament action 4:45 p.m. Thursday against Hesston at the BiCentennial Center in Salina.

Eagles play with nothing to lose

By Joey Falkoff

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In winning the Substate championship Saturday against Nickerson, the Colby Eagle boys basketball team accomplished two things.

The first is the obvious; a birth of the 4A State Tournament in Salina.

The other is not quite as apparent, but something head coach Beau Sheets and his team relish just as much—the opportunity to play with little expected of them.

The 18-5 Eagles have been favored to win nearly every night this year and especially as the #1 seed at Substate.

That all changes now as the #6 seeded Eagles head into their first round State Tournament game 4:45 p.m. Thursday at BiCentennial Center against #3 seed Hesston (21-2).

Even though the Eagles will be in action in Salina, the mood the team is under has changed.

"This time the pressure is off," said Sheets. "We won Substate like we were supposed to. No one expects us to win, but us."

"We don't feel like we have to win, because we're the underdog," added senior Ethan Stover.

The pressure to win has been there all year may have vanished, but other forms of pressure are sure to surface.

Besides playing on the state's biggest stage, in front of what figures to be the largest crowd they've seen all year, the Eagles don't have one player on their roster that's ever played in a state tournament game.

This is the team's first appearance at the state tournament since 2003-2004. All of the current players were still in elementary school or middle school.

It's a quandary that leaves Sheets in the blue about his team will perform.

"It's tough to tell how they'll react," said Sheets. "I wish I knew. The pressure is off to a certain extent, but the pressure remains of playing in a big gym against a good team."

That's where Sheets should come in quite handy this week.

Though the atmosphere of a state tournament game may be foreign to his players, it will be old hat for Sheets, who was the starting point guard for the 1998 Colby team that made it to Salina.

"This time of year, the farther you get into March, the more nerves you have," said Sheets. "That extra adrenaline can either work for you or against you. It depends on our attitude."

Sheets said he would share his experience with the team, but only on a limited basis.

"I'll talk a little bit about it, but I don't want to psyche the guys out," said Sheets. "The emotion and intensity will be there. I just want them to enjoy it."

"He knows from experience, so that should help a lot," said Stover.

Stover also has three older brothers that played on Colby state tournament teams, including the youngest, Shane, who is currently playing at Sterling College.

"I've pretty much always wanted to play in Salina," said Stover. "They haven't talked to me about it yet, but I'm sure they will."

4A State Tournament First Round Schedule (All games played at the BiCentennial Center in Salina)

**Girls
Wednesday**
3 p.m. #8 Andale vs. #1 Colby
4:45 p.m. #5 Holton vs. #1 Basheor-Linwood
6:30 p.m. #7 Fort Scott vs. #2 Andover Central
8:15 p.m. #6 Labette County vs. #3 Abilene

**Boys
Thursday**
3 p.m. #7 Wamego vs. #2 Topeka-Hayden
4:45 p.m. #6 Colby vs. #3 Hesston
6:30 p.m. #8 Bishop Ward vs. #1 Andover
8:15 p.m. #5 Ottawa vs. #4 Girard

All that talk will be an afterthought, though, when the ball gets thrown in the air Thursday.

The Eagles are facing a Hesston team that just moved up to 4A this year, but have made their presence felt.

Hesston is currently ranked third and advanced to Salina by beating the previous #3 ranked 4A team, Cheney, 53-51 in their Substate final.

They are making their first state tournament appearance since 2005 and their first ever at the BiCentennial Center.

"I know it sounds overly simplistic, but I just think we have kids that try hard," said Hesston head coach Ty Rhodes, who is in his seventh year at the school. "We were pretty good last year, and we have a lot of kids back from that team. They had high expectations."

The Swathers two losses this year have come by a combined three points to Republic County and Wichita Collegiate, the top two teams in 3A.

The Eagles and Swathers have one common opponent in Nickerson. Hesston beat Nickerson 60-56, while the Eagles knocked them off Saturday 50-40.

"I talked to five coaches today who all said they're very athletic," said Sheets. "They've got 10 guys that can score. They're very physical. A lot of their guys are built like football players and they use it to their advantage."

The Swathers have just one player averaging double-figure scoring, but several more at over six points a game.

"There's no one guy that's really our main guy," said Rhodes. "We try to spread the scoring out amongst a lot of kids. That's how we play, so it's not on one guy's shoulders."

The same can't be said of the Eagles who usually don't go more than seven or eight deep.

Colby also relies heavily on scoring from Stover (15.8 ppg),

Levi Schlick (16.3 ppg) and Stephen Dinkel (12.1 ppg).

The Eagles were able to get through their Substate despite a 2-12 shooting effort from Stover against Pratt in the first round and only seven points from him against Nickerson.

But Sheets maintains they don't necessarily need a big scoring night from him to be successful.

"Pratt played a box-and-one against him," said Sheets. "You only do that against someone you can't guard. Russell tried to take him away and Nickerson as well. If you've got five good players on the court, it opens it up for the other guys if he doesn't have a big game."

The Eagles are still uncertain about the status of point guard Cade Carter, who has been out since Feb. 4 with a knee injury.

"He'll practice this week and see how he feels," said Sheets. "It will be he and his family's decision as the game gets closer."

A first round win could set up a matchup with #2 seed Topeka-Hayden in the second round. Hayden features former Brewster standout Jeff Reed, who transferred to Topeka this year. Sheets coached Reed in football in 2006.

"It would be fun to play against Jeff," said Sheets. "He's a good kid."

But first thing's first. The Eagles have to win Thursday to keep their season alive.

If they can do that, it's anyone's ball game.

"The goal is to win the first one and go from there," said Sheets. "If we can get by that first one it puts real pressure on the #1 or #2 seeds. Until we do that it's hard to look past that first one."

Finally, the pressure is on someone else for a change.

Note: The Colby Lady Eagles began state tournament play 3 p.m. today against Andale. Full game coverage can be found in Thursday's Free Press.

TV LISTINGS

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WEEKDAYS		MARCH 4 - MARCH 10											
	6 AM	6:30	7 AM	7:30	8 AM	8:30	9 AM	9:30	10 AM	10:30	11 AM	11:30	
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	Good Morning Kansas	Good Morning America				The Martha Stewart Show		The View		Millionaire	News		
KSNK/NBC (3) (8)	News Cont'd	Today				Live With Regis and Kelly		Today					
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News Cont'd	The Early Show				The 700 Club		The Price Is Right		The Young and the Restless			
K15CG (2)	Business	Body Electric	Curious George	Clifford-Red	Super Why!	Dragon Tales	Big Big World	Word World	Sesame Street	Caillou	Barney-Friends		
ESPN (28)	SportsCenter	SportsCenter		SportsCenter	Varied	SportsCenter		SportsCenter		Varied			
USA (37)	JAG	JAG		Monk		Walker, Texas Ranger		Texas Ranger		Varied Programs			
TBS (38)	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince	Movie		Home Improve.		Home Improve.		
WGN (39)	Changing	Believer Voice	Hillbilly	Hillbilly	Matlock		Nash Bridges		Nash Bridges		Homicide: Life on the Street		
TNT (40)	Angel	Charmed		Charmed		ER		ER		Las Vegas			
DSC (42)	Paid Program	Life Today	Joyce Meyer	Paid Program	How It's Made	How It's Made	Cash Cab	Cash Cab	MythBusters		How It's Made	How It's Made	
A&E (47)	Third Watch	Crossing Jordan		Crossing Jordan		American Justice		American Justice		Cold Case Files			
HIST (48)	Liberty's Kids	History's Lost	Varied Programs										
NICK (55)	OddParents	OddParents	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Backyardigans	Go Diego	Wonder Pets	Dora the Explorer	Ni Hao, Kai-lan	Yo Gabba	Dora the Explorer	Go Diego	
DISN (56)	The Wiggles	Higglytown	Tigger & Pooh	Mickey Mouse	Einsteins	Handy Manny	Doodle-bops	Koala Brothers	Higglytown	Charlie & Lola	Lilo & Stitch	Little Mermaid	
FAM (58)	Sister, Sister	Sister, Sister	Sabrina-Witch	Sabrina-Witch	Step by Step	Living the Life	The 700 Club		Gilmore Girls		Full House	Full House	
HALL (60)	Paid Program	Paid Program	The Waltons		The Waltons		Little House on the Prairie		Little House on the Prairie		Touched by an Angel		

WEEKDAYS		MARCH 4 - MARCH 10											
	12 PM	12:30	1 PM	1:30	2 PM	2:30	3 PM	3:30	4 PM	4:30	5 PM	5:30	
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	All My Children	One Life to Live		General Hospital		Millionaire	Judge Judy	News	Judge Judy	News	ABC Wid News		
KSNK/NBC (3) (8)	News	Days of our Lives		The Ellen DeGeneres Show		The Insider	Extra	Jeopardy!	Jeopardy!	News	NBC News		
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News	Bold, Beautiful	As the World Turns		Guiding Light		Dr. Phil	Oprah Winfrey		News	Evening News		
K15CG (2)	Reading Rainbow	Teletubbies	Varied Programs		Lions		Cyber-chase	Arthur	Maya & Miguel	Fetch! With	Cliff Pup	Business	
ESPN (28)	MLB Baseball	Varied Programs											
USA (37)	Movie Cont'd	Varied Programs											
TBS (38)	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Just Shoot	Just Shoot	Yes, Dear	Yes, Dear	King of Queens	King of Queens	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Friends	Raymond	
WGN (39)	WGN News at Noon	Matlock		America's Funniest Home Videos		Cosby Show	Cosby Show	Sister, Sister	Sister, Sister	Funniest Pets	Funniest Pets		
TNT (40)	Without a Trace	Law & Order		Law & Order		Charmed		Charmed		Law & Order			
DSC (42)	Varied Programs	A Haunting		A Haunting		I Shouldn't Be Alive		It Takes a Thief		Cash Cab	Cash Cab		
A&E (47)	CSI: Miami	Crossing Jordan		Crossing Jordan		American Justice		American Justice		Cold Case Files			
HIST (48)	Modern Marvels	Varied Programs											
NICK (55)	Backyardigans	Max & Ruby	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Jimmy Neutron	Wayside	OddParents	OddParents	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Drake & Josh	Drake & Josh	
DISN (56)	American Drgn	Kim Possible	Emperor New	Replacements	Varied Programs								
FAM (58)	Sister, Sister	Sister, Sister	Step by Step	Step by Step	Full House	Full House	What I Like	What I Like	Gilmore Girls		8 Simple Rules	8 Simple Rules	
HALL (60)	7th Heaven	7th Heaven		Little House on the Prairie		Little House on the Prairie		M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H		

THURSDAY		MARCH 6											
	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	News (N) (CC)	Entertainment	Lost The Constant (CC)		Lost The Other Woman (N) (CC)		Eli Stone Something to Save (N) (CC)		News (N) (CC)		Nightline (N) (CC)	Jimmy Kimmel Live "Ax Men." (N) (CC)	
KSNK/NBC (3) (8)	News (N) (CC)	Wheel of Fortune	The Office Money (CC)		The Celebrity Apprentice (N) (CC)		Lipstick Jungle (N) (CC)		News (N) (CC)		The Tonight Show With Jay Leno (CC)	Late Night	
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News (N) (CC)	Inside Edition	Survivor: Fans vs. Favorites		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		Without a Trace Absalom (CC)		News (N) (CC)		Late Show With David Letterman	Late Late	
K15CG (2)	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer (N)	My Music: Doo Wop		Love Songs		Johnny Cash: A Man and His Vision		BBC World		Keeping Up	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		
ESPN (28)	College Basketball: Connecticut at Providence (Live) (CC)	College Basketball: Connecticut at Providence (Live) (CC)		College Basketball: Xavier at St. Joseph's (Live) (CC)		College Basketball: Xavier at St. Joseph's (Live) (CC)		SportsCenter (Live) (CC)		Game-night	Fast-break		
USA (37)	Law & Order: Criminal Intent	Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: SVU			
TBS (38)	Raymond	Raymond	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Movie: Secondhand Lions (2003) A teen hears fantastic tales from his great-uncles.		Lions (2003) A teen hears fantastic tales from his great-uncles.		Sex and the City		Sex and the City	Movie: Scary Movie 2 * 1/2 (2001) (CC)	
WGN (39)	Home Videos	Movie: Twister *** (1996) Storm chasers race to test a new tornado-monitoring device. Helen Hunt.		WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Scrubs (CC)		Scrubs (CC)	Corner Gas	Becker (CC)	
TNT (40)	NBA Basketball: Cleveland Cavaliers at Chicago Bulls. Detectors. (Live) (CC)	NBA Basketball: Cleveland Cavaliers at Chicago Bulls. Detectors. (Live) (CC)		NBA Basketball: Houston Rockets at Dallas Mavericks. American Airlines Center. (Live) (CC)		NBA Basketball: Houston Rockets at Dallas Mavericks. American Airlines Center. (Live) (CC)		Inside the NBA (Live) (CC)		Inside the NBA (Live) (CC)			
DSC (42)	Bone Detectives (N)	How It's Made	How It's Made	Dirty Jobs	Dirty Jobs	Dirty Jobs	Dirty Jobs	Bone Detectives	Bone Detectives	How It's Made	How It's Made		
A&E (47)	The First 48 Point Blank: Shoot Out	The First 48 Memphis (CC)	The First 48 Memphis (CC)	Crime 360	Crime 360	Crime 360	Crime 360	The First 48 (CC)	The First 48 (CC)	The First 48 Memphis (CC)	The First 48 Memphis (CC)		
HIST (48)	Modern Marvels The World's Fastest	Modern Marvels World's Strongest III	Modern Marvels World's Strongest III	Gangland Basic Training (CC)	Ancient Discoveries (CC)		Ancient Discoveries (CC)		History's Mysteries (CC)		Modern Marvels World's Strongest III		
NICK (55)	Zoey 101 (CC)	Ned's School	SpongeBob	Drake & Josh	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	George Lopez	George Lopez	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	
DISN (56)	Hannah Montana	Zack & Cody	Movie: Cadet Kelly * 1/2 (2002, Comedy-Drama) Hilary Duff. (CC)	That's Raven	That's Raven	Life With Derek	Life With Derek	Zack & Cody	Hannah Montana	Replacements	Kim Possible		
FAM (58)	Grounded-Life	Movie: Big *** (1988) A wishing machine turns boy into a man with a job and girlfriend. Tom Hanks. (CC)	America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)		America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)		America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)		The 700 Club (CC)		Whose Line? Whose Line?	Whose Line? Whose Line?	
HALL (60)	Walker, Texas Ranger Full Contact	Walker, Texas Ranger	Walker, Texas Ranger	Walker, Texas Ranger	Movie: The Good Witch Catherine Bell, Chris Potter. (CC)	Movie: The Good Witch Catherine Bell, Chris Potter. (CC)	Movie: The Good Witch Catherine Bell, Chris Potter. (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)		

FRIDAY		MARCH 7											
	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	News (N) (CC)	Entertainment	Grey's Anatomy Crash Into Me (CC)		Billy Graham Special (CC)		20/20 (CC)		News (N) (CC)		Nightline (N) (CC)	Jimmy Kimmel Live Camilla Belle. (CC)	
KSNK/NBC (3) (8)	News (N) (CC)	Wheel of Fortune	Amnesia (N) (CC)		Dateline NBC (CC)		Dateline NBC (CC)		News (N) (CC)		The Tonight Show With Jay Leno (CC)	Late Night	
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News (N) (CC)	Inside Edition	Price Is Right Spectacular		Ghost Whisperer Bad Blood (CC)		NUMB3RS Tabu (CC)		News (N) (CC)		Late Show With David Letterman	Late Late	
K15CG (2)	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer (N)	Wash. Week	Kansas Week	Market	Market	My Music: Country Pop Legends (CC)	My Music: Country Pop Legends (CC)		New Red Green		Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		
ESPN (28)	SportsCenter	NBA	NBA Basketball: Chicago Bulls at Boston Celtics. TD Banknorth Garden. (Live) (CC)		NBA Basketball: Chicago Bulls at Boston Celtics. TD Banknorth Garden. (Live) (CC)		NBA Basketball: San Antonio Spurs at Denver Nuggets. Pepsi Center. (Live) (CC)		NBA Basketball: San Antonio Spurs at Denver Nuggets. Pepsi Center. (Live) (CC)		Movie: John Grisham		
USA (37)	Monk	Monk	Law & Order: SVU		Monk A rap star is accused of murder.		Law & Order: SVU		House of Cards		Movie: John Grisham		
TBS (38)	Raymond	Raymond	Movie: Kicking & Screaming * 1/2 (2005, Comedy) Will Ferrell, Robert Duvall. (CC)		Funnest Commercials: 2007		Funnest Commercials: 2007		Friends (CC)		Friends (CC)	Sex and the City	
WGN (39)	Home Videos	Movie: Twister *** (1996) Storm chasers race to test a new tornado-monitoring device. Helen Hunt.		WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Scrubs (CC)		Scrubs (CC)	Chappelle's	Chappelle's	
TNT (40)	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Movie: Hitch *** (2005) A smooth-talker helps a shy accountant woo an heiress. Will Smith. (CC)		Movie: The Perfect Man * * (2005) A teen invents a secret admirer for her mother.		Movie: The Perfect Man * * (2005) A teen invents a secret admirer for her mother.		Dogfights Death of the Luftwaffe (CC)		Modern Marvels Saws (CC)		
DSC (42)	How It's Made	How It's Made	Man vs. Wild Mexico (CC)	Man vs. Wild Arctic	Man vs. Wild Arctic	Fight Quest China	Fight Quest China	Fight Quest USA	Fight Quest USA	Man vs. Wild Mexico (CC)	Man vs. Wild Mexico (CC)		
A&E (47)	CSI: Miami The Best Defense (CC)	CSI: Miami Deviant (CC)	CSI: Miami Collision (CC)	CSI: Miami Collision (CC)	CSI: Miami Double Jeopardy (CC)	CSI: Miami Double Jeopardy (CC)	CSI: Miami Double Jeopardy (CC)	CSI: Miami Kill Switch (CC)	CSI: Miami Kill Switch (CC)	CSI: Miami Deviant (CC)	CSI: Miami Deviant (CC)		
HIST (48)	Modern Marvels NASCAR Tech (CC)	Modern Marvels Saws (CC)	Modern Marvels Saws (CC)	Battle 360 Call to Duty (CC)	Battle 360 (N) (CC)		Battle 360 (N) (CC)		Dogfights Death of the Luftwaffe (CC)		Modern Marvels Saws (CC)		
NICK (55)	Zoey 101 (CC)	Ned's School	Barnyard	Avatar-Last Air	Tigre: Rivera	Tak and Power	George Lopez	George Lopez	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince	
DISN (56)	Hannah Montana	Zack & Cody	Movie: Lilo & Stitch * * * (2002, Comedy) (CC)	That's Raven	That's Raven	Life With Derek	Life With Derek	Zack & Cody	Hannah Montana	Replacements	Kim Possible		
FAM (58)	Grounded-Life	Grounded-Life	Movie: Bring It On (2000) High-school cheerleaders vie for a coveted national title.		America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)		America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)		The 700 Club (CC)		Whose Line? Whose Line?	Whose Line? Whose Line?	
HALL (60)	(4:00) Movie: M*A*S*H Farewell	Walker, Texas Ranger	Walker, Texas Ranger	Walker, Texas Ranger	Movie: Mystery Woman: Redemption (2005, Mystery) Kellie Martin. (CC)	Movie: Mystery Woman: Redemption (2005, Mystery) Kellie Martin. (CC)	Movie: Mystery Woman: Redemption (2005, Mystery) Kellie Martin. (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)	Murder, She Wrote (CC)		

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Eagle Boys: Thur. 4:45
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