



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press
Sophomore Katherine “Kat” Nickel got ready to throw the ball to first after fielding a ground ball during the Lady Trojans’ game against Central Community College of Nebraska on Sunday afternoon at Carl Adams Field. Colby lost to the Lady Raiders 7-5.

College softball team goes 3-2 at home tourney

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The Colby Community College softball team went 3-2 over the weekend at the Colby Classic at Carl Adams Field. The Lady Trojans went 3-0 on Saturday, defeating Central Community College of Nebraska 5-1, Lamar Community College of Colorado 3-1 and Cloud County of Concordia 4-3. Freshmen Logan Wark and Jamie Main led the team with two hits each in the Lady Trojan’s victory over Central. Sophomore Marissa Elsberry picked up the win, giving up five hits and one earned run while striking out 11 in seven innings. Main was the winning pitcher against the Lady Antelopes, striking out two and only walking one

in seven innings. Freshmen Main and Peggy Nichols led the team with two hits each. Freshman Brittany Berndt had 3 hits to help lead the Lady Trojans to a victory over Cloud County. Starting pitcher Jaylen Reed, a freshman, picked up the win. She struck out 6 in seven innings. “Our pitchers pitched very well on Saturday,” said Coach Ryan Sturdy. Central paid Colby back for Saturday’s game by handing the Lady Trojans a 7-5 loss on Sunday. Sophomore Katherine Nickel and freshman Tiffany Allen each had three hits each in the game. Colby lost to Cloud County 6-4 on Sunday. Allen and freshmen Kali Brester and Charley Staab led the team with two hits each. “We needed to have a little better team intensity on Sunday,” said Sturdy, adding that he was

pleased with the way the weekend had gone overall. “We had good weather and good fan support for it being spring break,” He said. The Lady Trojans record now stands at 6-5. The team will take on Butler County Community College in a doubleheader at 3 p.m. on Sunday in El Dorado.

Kansas State’s weak schedule keeps them out of tournament

MANHATTAN (AP) — Their nonconference schedule was weak. They had a mediocre RPI rating, didn’t have enough marquee wins. For all the reasons Kansas State was bypassed by the NCAA’s selection committee, none stands out more than the simplest: The Wildcats didn’t win enough games. Not during a tough three-game stretch in nonconference, not at the start of the Big 12 season, not at last week’s conference tournament. Win a few more of those games and Kansas State would be headed to somewhere like Boise or Minneapolis for the NCAA tournament instead of hosting Illinois State in the first round of the NIT on Wednesday. The Wildcats did win 21 games, finished tied for fourth in the Big 12 at 9-7. They hoped it would be enough to get into the NCAA tournament for the second straight year. Instead, Kansas State is headed to the NIT for the second time in three years. No doubt, the schedule was a factor. Kansas State’s schedule, despite playing in the tough Big 12, was rated 113th in the country. It would have, as Martin has mentioned repeatedly over the past couple of weeks, been rated higher had teams like Oakland, Wagner and Gardner-Webb — teams picked to

win their conferences — played as well as everyone thought. They didn’t and the Wildcats took a hit for it. Kansas State’s RPI rating wasn’t much help, either. The complicated formula that combines Division I winning percentage, schedule strength and opponent’s schedule strength was a middling 75, which meant the Wildcats were fighting uphill to convince the selection committee they were good enough to get in. Even with the scheduling and RPI issues, Kansas State had its chances. Midway through the nonconference season, the Wildcats lost to Kentucky, Iowa and Oregon in consecutive games — games that could have boosted their profile to the selection committee. Four straight losses to open the Big 12 season, which included blowouts to non-NCAA tournament teams Nebraska and Baylor, was tough to take, too. The biggest hit was losing to Texas in the Big 12 tournament. So instead of making consecutive trips to the NCAA tournament for the first time in 20 years, Kansas State is in the NIT while Big 12 teams with similar records — Oklahoma State, Texas, Texas A&M — are in the 65-team field. “It’s tough to see those teams you beat get in and you get left out, but we knew a couple of weeks

ago that we needed a couple more quality wins,” senior forward Darren Kent said. There is something good to take away from getting into the NIT, though: Kansas State has reached the postseason in three straight seasons for the first time in 15 years. A small consolation, but it’s something to build on, a way to give the current players more experience and keep the program at least near the spotlight to potential recruits around the country. And, as Martin pointed out, there are 348 teams in Division I basketball and Kansas State is one of 97 that gets to keep playing. That’s not too bad, really. “As a program, it’s an opportunity to continue to compete, continue to practice and better prepare our basketball team for the future,” Martin said. “It’s always about the future. You want to win today, but you’re always preparing for tomorrow. Anytime you can be in the postseason three years in a row, I think you’re doing more things right than you’re doing wrong.”

Jayhawks take on Bison

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota State made the NCAA tournament in its first year of eligibility, just like it planned. Of course, now the Bison have to play defending national champion Kansas. The Bison received the No. 14 seed in the Midwest Regional and drew the No. 3-seeded Kansas Jayhawks, the defending national champions. “I know that Kansas travels pretty well, but we’ll have a head start on them,” NDSU head coach Saul Phillips said Sunday, after a selection show party at the Bison Sports Arena. “Wow, they’re a great team,” Bison center Lucas Moorman said. Hundreds of fans flocked to

the arena to watch the show on a big screen TV built into the scoreboard above the basketball floor. Phillips warmed up the crowd by calling it the biggest party in Fargo history. “Let’s get this done,” Phillips said. “This is as spectacular as it gets.” Playing the defending champions.

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