

# Eagles finish second at state tourney

## Colby High School baseball team loses to Hayden 4-0 in championship

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press  
aheintz@nwkansas.com

SALINA — The Colby High baseball team ended an incredible season with a 4-0 loss to Topeka Hayden in the Class 4A state championship game Saturday at Dean Evans Field in Salina in a game that could have gone either way.

The game was close — 1-0 until the sixth inning — but the Eagles made enough little mistakes and missed enough opportunities to allow the Wildcats to come away with the win. The Eagles' starter, junior Preston Krzycki, went six innings before being replaced by senior Stephen Dinkel.

Krzycki got into a little bit of trouble in the top of the first, as the Wildcats had runners on first and second with two outs. He managed to make the next batter hit a ground ball to senior Levi Schlick, who beat the runner to the third-base bag for the final out.

The game remained scoreless until the top of the fourth, when

Hayden had runners on first and second and no outs. The next batter hit a sacrifice bunt that advanced the runners to second and third. Hayden's next batter hit a sacrifice grounder to senior Cade Carter at shortstop, allowing the runner on third to score to give the Wildcats a 1-0 lead.

In the bottom of the fourth, Krzycki belted a line-drive single up the middle with one out. Senior Eric Blanton followed by hitting a hard grounder to the Wildcat's shortstop, who was unable to field the ball cleanly. Unfortunately for Colby, senior Stephen Dinkel hit a ground ball to the pitcher, who threw it to the Wildcats' second baseman. He fired it to first base for a double play.

The Wildcats got on the scoreboard again in the top of the sixth. Hayden's first batter hit a grounder down the third-base line. Schlick made a terrific diving stop, but he was in no position to throw out the runner at first.

Dinkel replaced Krzycki on the mound. He got the first batter he faced to hit a weak ground ball

that he was able to field and toss to first for an easy out. The next batter cracked a single between first and second that allowed the runner to score from second, giving Hayden a 2-0 lead.

Schlick came in to pitch the top of the seventh, but ran into trouble early in the inning. The first batter he faced walked, but Schlick was able to pick him off at first. The next Wildcat, however, hammered a line-drive single to right field. The next batter hit a ground ball that took a huge hop and went over the head of Carter at short.

The trouble continued for the Eagles, as the Wildcats next hitter smoked a grounder past the outstretched glove of Krzycki, now playing second. It rolled out to the outfield, where it was misplayed by right fielder junior Chaz Winger. One runner scored on the play and another runner advanced to third. The Wildcats scored another run to increase their lead to 4-0.

The Eagles ended the season with a 24-2 record.



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press  
Junior Brandon Rasmussen swung at a pitch during the Colby High Eagles' game against Hayden High in the Class 4A State Championship game Saturday evening in Salina.

## Clutch plays help team defeat Ottawa Cyclones

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press  
aheintz@nwkansas.com

SALINA — The Colby High Eagles strung together a tremendous game to defeat Ottawa High 3-2 in the state Class 4A baseball semifinals Saturday at Dean Evans Field.

Senior Levi Schlick turned in a tremendous effort on the mound, giving up two runs in seven innings.

Ottawa jumped out in front 1-0 in the second when a Cyclone batter singled to drive in a run. The score remained there until the bottom of the fourth, when Colby got things going on offense.

Senior Eric Blanton jump started the inning with a line drive single to left field with Schlick on first. Senior Stephen Dinkel followed, slamming another liner to left to load the bases. Junior Brandon Rasmussen came through with a clutch single over the head of the Cyclones' shortstop, driving in Schlick and Blanton to give Colby a 2-1 lead.

"I knew I had to get a hit, because it might be our team's only

chance," said Rasmussen.

Later in the inning, Dinkel scored on a passed ball while senior Cade Carter was at bat to increase the lead to 3-1.

The Cyclones threatened in the top of the sixth. The first batter pounded a double off the center-field fence. The next Cyclone hit a sacrifice bunt to advance him to third. Schlick stayed clutch under the pressure, getting a huge strikeout on the next hitter. After walking a batter, he managed to get the next hitter to slap a ground ball to Rasmussen at third. He fielded it cleanly and fired a throw to senior Brent Arnberger at first that bounced before it got to the bag. Arnberger scooped the ball out of the dirt seconds before the runner reached base to end the inning.

The top of the seventh was not without drama, with the Eagles clinging to a 2-run lead. After walking the first batter, Schlick managed to get the next Cyclone to hit a ground ball to Krzycki. He tossed it to Carter on second for the first out of the inning, and Carter fired the ball to first base to almost pull off a double play. Moments later, a Wildcats batter

hit a grounder to the Schlick, who whipped the ball to Carter for one out and Carter fired it to Arnberger in another attempted double play. The umpire ruled the runner was safe again, however.

Ottawa was not ready to wave the white flag, though, as their next batter cracked a double to right center field, allowing the runner to score all the way from first. That cut Colby's lead to 3-2. With the tying run on second, Schlick managed to get the next hitter to punch a ground ball to third that was backhanded by Rasmussen. He fired a throw to Arnberger to give the Eagles the victory.

Colby defeated Towanda-Circle High 6-2 in the first round of the tournament. With the Eagles leading 3-2 in bottom of the fifth, Arnberger lifted a sacrifice fly to the outfield, allowing a run to score from third and extending Colby's lead to 4-2. Krzycki followed Arnberger by nailing a double over the right fielders' head, driving in two runs and increasing the lead to 6-2. Dinkel started the game for the Eagles. He pitched an outstanding game, lasting all seven innings.

## Rockies fail to sweep Padres, lose final game of series 5-2

DENVER (AP) — Adrian Gonzalez may be on a torrid home run pace, but even he isn't that impressed with his totals.

"I'll see where the numbers are at the end of the year because May means nothing," he said.

Gonzalez hit his major-league leading 20th home run, Chad Gaudin struck out a season-high nine and the San Diego Padres beat the Colorado Rockies 5-2 on Sunday.

Brad Hawpe and Yorvit Torrealba had two hits each for Colorado, which lost for the first time under interim manager Jim Tracy, who replaced the fired Clint Hurdle on Friday.

Gonzalez's 20 home runs by June 1 are the most in franchise history. The previous record was 17 by Greg Vaughn in 1988 and Nate Colbert in 1970.

"What he does at the plate is very impressive. It doesn't surprise me," San Diego manager Bud Black said. "I've seen it too often."

Scott Hairston also homered and Heath Bell recorded his 15th save in 16 chances for the Padres, who salvaged the final game of the three-game series.

Gonzalez and Hairston backed up a strong pitching performance from their starter. Gaudin (2-3) struck out eight through four in-

nings before running into trouble in the fifth. He allowed consecutive one-out singles to Troy Tulowitzki and Torrealba, but pinch-hitter Seth Smith looked at strike three and Tulowitzki was caught stealing at third to end the inning.

Black and Gaudin agreed that was a turning point in the game.

"At that time it's 4-0," Black said. "In this park, 4-0 is like 1-0."

Gaudin allowed two runs on seven hits and didn't walk a batter in 6 2-3 innings.

"I was locating my fastball and getting ahead of hitters," said Gaudin, whose career high in strikeouts is 11. "When you do that it allows you to expand the zone and get guys to chase."

Gaudin didn't walk a batter for the first time in seven starts this year.

"You could tell right from the first two batters the fastball had some life to it," Black said. "A lot of times when you have life you might not have the command, but he had the command and the life."

Colorado starter Jorge De La Rosa (0-6) gave up four runs on six hits in five innings. He struck out five and walked three.

"He elevated fastballs," Tracy said.

The game was scoreless until the third. With one out, Tony Gwynn Jr. singled to left and David Eckstein doubled down the right-field line to put runners on second and third. Gonzalez then drove De La Rosa's 0-2 fastball over the 390-foot sign in left to give the Padres a 3-0.

"He was trying to throw a fastball up," Gonzalez said. "I was able to get on top of it. I was able to stay behind it and hit a home run."

They made it 4-0 in the fifth when Kevin Kouzmanoff's two-out double off the left-field wall scored Hairston, but the Rockies escaped further damage when Gonzalez was thrown out at home trying to score from first.

Hairston led off the seventh with his seventh homer to make it 5-0.

The Rockies broke through in the bottom of the inning. Garrett Atkins and Hawpe led off with singles, and Atkins moved to third on Ian Stewart's fly out to right. Hairston dropped Tulowitzki's routine fly to center, allowing Atkins to score from third, and Yorvit Torrealba singled to drive in Hawpe and make it 5-2.

Greg Burke relieved Gaudin and got the last two outs to end the rally.



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