



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Colby High junior running back Andrew Flanagin (right) picked himself up from a pile that included sophomore Justin Slavens as senior fullback Adam Weber watched during the Eagles' game against Concordia on Friday at Dennen Field.

Eagles give coach present on quarterback's birthday

By Andy Heintz

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Minutes after the Colby High varsity football team had defeated Concordia 22-12 on Friday at Dennen Field, Coach Chris Gardner told his fans and players that he was relieved to "finally get the monkey off his back."

The monkey he was referring to was actually no monkey at all, but a gang of Panthers that had whipped his teams the last two seasons. Last year, Concordia beat the Eagles 22-14.

But on Friday, it was the Eagles who got the last laugh against a pesky, upset-minded Concordia team.

Junior quarterback and birthday boy Kale Amberger played a prominent role in the victory. The Eagles' quarterback celebrated his 17th birthday by running for two touchdowns.

The game didn't start well for the Eagles. The Panthers were the first to get on the scoreboard when fullback John Bird ran the ball 57 yards for a touchdown to give Concordia an early 6-0 lead. Their two-point conversion attempt failed, and the score remained unchanged for the rest of the quarter.

The Panthers went for it on fourth down early in the second and were stopped by the Eagles' defense. Amberger scrambled for nine yards to kick-start Colby's offense. Moments later, running back Andrew Flanagin took a handoff and creased through a hole before taking it up the right sideline for a 29-yard touchdown.

Unfortunately for the Eagles, the play would be called back due to a holding penalty. Penalties were a recurring theme in the game. The field was filled with yellow flags being tossed in the air as if they were hot potatoes, preventing both teams from getting into any sort of rhythm.

The Eagles finally got on the scoreboard in the second period when senior running back Ethan Stickle bolted up the middle for a 12-yard touchdown to tie the game at 6 with a little over 6 minutes left in the half.

Amberger handed the ball off to senior fullback Adam Weber, who plowed his way into the end zone for a successful two-point conversion. That gave the Eagles their first lead of the night. The half ended with Colby leading 8-6.

Neither team could put any points on the board at the start of the third. The first big play of the quarter was made by Flanagin, who burst through the Panthers' defense and blocked a punt. He recovered it on Concordia's 37-yard line with a few minutes remaining in the period. The quarter ended with the Eagles still leading 8-6.

Colby scored first in the fourth when Amberger, on a keeper, rushed for a nine-yard touchdown. Colby's two-point conversion attempt fell short.

Later in the fourth, Amberger would run for another touchdown. His 14-yard scamper gave his team a 20-6 lead. Amberger faked a handoff to Weber and gave it to Stickle who hustled to the left sideline and managed to get the ball over the goal line while being driven out of bounds by a Pan-

thers' defender to make it 22-6.

Concordia was still wasn't ready to concede, however. On their next offensive possession, Panthers quarterback Casey Zimmerman connected with one of his receivers on a long touchdown pass to cut Colby's lead to 22-12. Concordia's two-point conversion attempt was no good, as the right side of Colby's defensive line stopped the Panthers' running back for no gain.

Neither team scored any more points in the game and the Eagles picked up the victory.

The boys' record improved to 5-2.

Their next game will be at 7 p.m. Friday at Smoky Valley in Lindsborg, with the game at the Bethany College field.

Directions to the college: Take Interstate 70 east toward Salina. Stay on I-70 for 196 miles to Exit 250A, just west of Salina. Go south on I-135 for 17.7 miles before taking Exit 78 for Business U.S. 81, the Lindsborg exit. Drive southwest on U.S. 81/K-4 for 3.9 miles before turning right at E. Swenson Ave. Turn right at North Kansas Street and you should see the stadium.

Colby junior tennis sensation overwhelms her competition

By Andy Heintz

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When it comes to popularity as a spectator sport, Colby High's tennis teams take a back seat to baseball, basketball, football, wrestling and possibly softball and volleyball.

It is all too easy to forget about the Eagles' tennis teams, which compete in the fall and spring.

But those who have let tennis slip under the radar have missed out on junior Caitlyn Wark's incredible season this fall. The Lady Eagles' singles player won the state championship by going 4-0 in Topeka and finished her season with perfect 36-0 record. But that is only half the story.

The most amazing aspect of Wark's season is that she hasn't even come close to losing. In fact, she hasn't even lost a set this year. Not a set! She doesn't just beat her opponents; she dominates them.

One of the reasons behind Wark's success may be her competitiveness.

"I hate to lose," she says.

Coach Jennifer Rall agreed that her star player does not like losing. But Wark has several other areas of strength that have helped her win 36 straight matches.

Rall said Wark is good at placing the ball where she wants it to go on the court and she has good quickness. Wark also is a good baseline hitter and she hits the ball harder than most people, the coach said.

Wark has made a smooth transition to singles play this year. She played on a doubles team last season with senior Lindsey Wilson. The duo dominated their competition throughout the season, compiling a 39-2 record and becoming the first Colby athletes to win a state tennis championship since 1981. Wilson graduating last spring has allowed Wark to test her mettle in singles competition.

Wark said making the transition wasn't too tough, because she had played singles up until her freshman year. She also competed in singles in four United States Tennis Association tournaments last summer. Even though Wark had an extraordinary degree of success as a doubles player, she said she prefers singles competition.

"I like that you don't have to depend on another person," she said.

Wark said playing in tournaments and summer camps helped her get ready for the fall season. She also learned a new serve last summer. Wark said she now uses a kick serve that puts spin on the ball and makes it bounce higher than normal. She said serving is one of her strengths when she is doing it well.

It certainly was one of her strengths at state. Rall said Wark only had four double faults during the whole tournament.

Wark said she doesn't focus on whether she is blowing out an opponent or playing close; she just concentrates on her game. She said she is definitely interested in playing tennis in college in a couple of years.



Caitlyn Wark

Lady Eagle takes first at state

Colby High junior Caitlyn Wark ended her dominating tennis season with a perfect day, going 4-0 and winning the Class 4A state singles championship at the Koss-over Tennis Center in Topeka this weekend.

The four victories capped off a perfect year, for Wark who finished undefeated with a 36-0 record.

She also managed to keep another streak going at the tourney: Wark had not lost a set all season. She kept maintained her streak this weekend, finishing her season without losing a single set.

Wark pounded Kelsey Sanborn of Abilene (6-3, 6-1) and crushed

Hesston's Ali Anderson (6-1, 6-0). She hammered Katie Porter of Independence (6-3, 6-1) and she swept Topeka-Hayden's Lexi Herling (6-2, 6-4) in the championship.

The doubles team of senior Barbara Bickner and junior Kayla Hockersmith went 3-1 to take fifth. Their only loss came to Stephanie Shogren and Madelyn Weaver of Hesston in the quarterfinals. Shogren and Weaver went on to win the tourney.

The duo defeated Kiralyn Mosier and Adrienne Kutz of Parsons (4-6, 6-1, 11-9) and lost to Shogren and Weaver (5-2, 7-5) in the quarterfinals. This put them in

the losers bracket, where matches only lasted one set.

The girls beat Jasmine Jones and Julie Frenz of Maize South (9-4) and slipped by Smoky Valley's Becky Johnson and Chelsea Aeschliman (9-8) in a match to determine fifth place. They beat the Smoky Valley duo in a 9-7 tie-breaker game to win the set.

Hockersmith and Bickner had a tremendous season, finishing 30-3 overall.

Wildcats destroy Aggies

MANHATTAN (AP) — Embarrassed and beaten, Kansas State's players stood on the sideline watching as Texas Tech high-fived and yucked it across the field last week.

The Wildcats didn't have to wait long to see how it feels.

Thomas ran for four touchdowns in the first half and Brandon Banks returned the second-

half kickoff 97 yards for another score, leading Kansas State to an improbable 62-14 rout over Texas A&M Saturday night.

A week after allowing 66 points yards in that disheartening loss to Texas Tech, Kansas State steam-rolled Texas A&M on both sides of the ball for its most lopsided conference win since beating Iowa State 58-7.

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