

The boys are back in town



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

The Golden Plains 1985 class 1A state championship basketball team reunited during a home game between the Bulldog boy's team and Dighton. Every player from the old team showed up for the 25 year reunion.

Trojan men suffer 66-62 loss

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The Trojans' mens basketball team is still searching for its first win of the season after losing a close game to Pratt Community College on Monday.

As has been the case in several of its games this season, Colby was only one or two plays away from getting the win. But they were unable to get over the hump and the Beavers picked up a 66-62 win at the Community Building.

Freshman Jose Peña-Benjamin scored on a tough drive to the basket to give the Trojans a 5-2 lead. Pratt scored the next five points of the game to go up 7-5. Sophomore Aireus Stephenson drilled a three-pointer to recapture the lead for Colby. The game stayed tight early in the first half with two teams tied at 13 with a little over 13 minutes left in the half.

The Beavers went on a 7-0 run that was capped off with a three-pointer by Pratt's Marcus Smith. Stephenson, returning from a one game suspension after getting two technical fouls at Hutchinson on Jan. 23, hit a short jump shot to cut the Beavers' lead to 20-15. Moments later, freshman Corey Woolfer nailed a shot from the left baseline to narrow the gap to 20-17. Later in the half, Brewer buried a three-pointer to make it 21-20 Pratt.

Freshman Zach Danner scored on a drive down the left baseline to tie the game at 24 a few minutes later. Stephenson scored on a drive to the basket to give Colby a 32-20 lead with only a few seconds remaining in the half.

The two teams went back and forth at the start of the second half with neither team able to take control of the game. Stephenson hit a jumper to give Colby a 43-42 lead. The Beavers' Tyrone Gordon took a shot while being fouled by Danner. He made both his free throws to put his team up 44-43. Then Michelson drew contact while trying to score inside. He hit both free throws. Stephenson's shot rimmed in and out, but Michelson grabbed the rebound and got fouled while trying to stick it back in. He made both his foul shots to give Colby

a 47-44 lead. Michelson nailed a midrange jumper and tipped in a Woolfer miss to extend the Trojans' lead to 51-44.

The Beavers went on a 6-0 run to narrow the gap to 51-50. Baldwin scored inside off a rebound while being fouled to tie the game at 52 later in the half. He sank his free throw to give his team a one-point lead.

With Colby trailing 55-53, Stephenson stripped the ball from his opponent at halfcourt and sped down the court where he was fouled trying to make a layup. He hit both his free throws to tie the game at 55. Later in the half, the Beavers' Smith nailed a three to give Pratt a 60-56 lead. Moments later, Stephenson hit a shot from the left baseline to narrow the gap to 60-58. Then Brewer found a cutting Michelson who laid it in to tie the game at 60. The Beavers' Gordon got fouled and hit both his free throws to give Pratt a 62-60 lead. Freshman Regis Schafer buried a midrange jumper to tie the game.

Baldwin scored on a tip-in to make it 64-62 Beavers. Coach Dustin Pfeifer called a timeout with 37.2 seconds left in the game.

Schafer tried to dribble through a double-team and had the ball taken from him forcing him to foul Gordon to stop the clock. Gordon hit 1 of 2 free throws give Pratt a 66-62.

Stephenson had a team-high 18 and Michelson had 15, 11 in the second half. Michelson and Morris both had 9 rebounds. Pfeifer said he was pleased with the way Michelson has been playing lately.

"He has done a really good job picking up the intensity," said the coach.

Pfeifer said the team was getting better, but they were having trouble getting over the hump.

"We're getting better looks on offense, we just need to knock down our shots," he said.

With the loss Colby dropped to 6-17 and 0-9 in the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference. They play Cloud County at 8 p.m. tonight in Concordia.

Lady Eagles' junior varsity team on a roll

The Lady Eagles junior varsity basketball team continues to dominate their opponents.

The girls won their last two games in convincing fashion.

They dominated Wallace County in Sharon Springs 45-20 in the first round of the Colby junior varsity basketball tournament on Monday at Colby High School.

The Lady Eagles shut out Wallace County 10-0 in the first quarter. Colby continued to overpower the Lady Wildcats in the second quarter outscoring them 11-4 to take a 21-4 halftime lead.

The Lady Eagles only allowed Wallace County to score three

points in the third. They went into the fourth with a comfortable 39-7 lead. The girls went on to pick up an easy 45-20 win.

Colby's scoring output in the game was evenly distributed.

Freshman Bailey Terrell led the team in scoring with 8 and senior Rhett Martin added 7. Sophomore Skylar Barrett finished with 6, sophomore Rachel Juenemann and freshman Karly Kriss both had 5, freshman Kenzie Curry and sophomore Alyse Dumler each scored 4, and sophomores Paige Roopchan, Emilea Finley and freshman Jenessa Williams all had 2.

The Lady Eagles hammered

Thomas More Prep-Marian 55-27 on Jan. 28 in Hays.

The two teams battled to a 10-10 tie at the end of the first quarter. The Lady Eagles' defense held the Lady Monarchs to only two points in the second quarter and Colby led 20-12 at the half.

The third quarter was closely-contested, with the Lady Eagles outscoring Thomas More Prep-Marian 13-11. Colby turned up the heat defensively in the fourth holding the Lady Monarchs to four points and cruising to a 55-27 victory.

Colby did a good job at spreading the points around. Freshman

Shelby Gardner had a team-high 10 and Martin and sophomore Brenna McKee both had 7. Finley and Freshmen Alexa Haas, Karly Kriss and Lauren Bell all had 6 and Juenemann added 5.

With the wins the Lady Eagles improved to 9-1.

The girls will face Garden City in the second round of the junior varsity tournament at 6 p.m. at the Community Building. The Lady Buffaloes handed Colby their only loss of the season when they defeated the Lady Eagles 36-29 in a junior varsity tournament in Goodland on Dec. 17.

Kansas Jayhawks reclaim No. 1 spot in rankings

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Just a week ago, the Big 12 appeared muddled, not a front-runner in the bunch.

Texas was bumped out of its No. 1 ranking with consecutive losses, Kansas lost to Tennessee's walk-ons and Kansas State fell at home to Oklahoma state after knocking off the Longhorns.

Well, look who's in control now: the five-time defending champion Jayhawks.

Coming off an impressive week of wins over its two biggest rivals, Kansas is back atop the rankings and in control of the Big 12 race. Playing better than they have all season, the Jayhawks lead the conference by two games at 6-0 and are 20-1 overall, the same record they had on the way to the 2008 national championship — and still not satisfied.

"We'd rather be two games up in the Big 12 than be No. 1 right now," said Kansas senior Sherron Collins, who fought off cramps to hit the go-ahead basket against Kansas State. "No. 1 doesn't mean anything because at the end of the year there's only going to be one No. 1."

Kansas spent the first eight weeks of the season atop the polls and were back there again on Monday. Now, the Jayhawks hope to avoid

letdown the previous two poll sitters experienced.

Texas was undefeated when it rose to No. 1 on Jan. 11 and lost to Kansas State on the road a week later. The Longhorns added a loss to Connecticut and were done at No. 1 after two weeks. Undefeated Kentucky took over last week and was promptly knocked from its perch, losing to South Carolina.

Kansas' second stint at No. 1 starts with games at Colorado and at home against Nebraska this week before heading to Austin for a huge game against the Longhorns that will feature a dozen or so potential NBA players on the same court.

The Jayhawks have been there before and don't care all that much about the rankings, so expect them to be ready for being No. 1 and everything that goes with it.

"My goal for this team is to play to that ranking as opposed to being there," Kansas coach Bill Self said.

Kansas sputtered at times even as it opened the season 14-0, then lost on Jan. 10 to a Tennessee team missing four players.

Since then, the Jayhawks have played arguably their best basketball of the season.

Kansas opened conference play with a couple of easy wins, then outlasted Baylor, ranked No. 25 at the time. The Jayhawks won easily at Iowa State and followed with an 84-65 dismantling of rival Missouri at Allen Fieldhouse that could have been a 40-point victory had they not let up.

Kansas capped its run off with perhaps its most impressive win of the season, a gut-check overtime victory at Kansas State's "Octagon of Doom" on Saturday that gave the Jayhawks 20 wins for the 21st straight season, the longest streak in the nation.

"I feel like we've improved in a lot of areas since the start of the season," Self said.

The biggest difference has come inside. Kansas likes to play inside out, but wasn't able to early in the season because Cole Aldrich and Marcus Morris weren't consistent enough.

Playing more aggressively than he ever has, Morris has shaken loose from his underachieving reputation during the conference season, leading the Jayhawks with 18 points per game. He had 13 points and 10 rebounds against Kansas State.

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