

Eagles split with Russell

By Andy Heintz

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The Colby High Eagles' split a doubleheader with Russell on a windswept Tuesday at Young Memorial Field, losing game one 6-4 but coming back to take the second game 11-6.

The wind roared unmercifully through both games, blowing dust clouds across the infield and pushing fly balls all over the place, much to the chagrin of both team's outfielders.

"You didn't know what was going to happen once the ball went up in the air," said assistant coach Jeff Krzycki. "It was a mentally draining game for the team. They had to focus on every play."

Senior Preston Krzycki took the loss in the first game. He gave up six runs in seven innings.

Senior center fielder Chaz Winger made a diving catch in shallow center to start the top of the first. Krzycki started the game by pitching a scoreless first, but the Eagles were unable to score in the bottom of the inning.

Sophomore Braden Sager got Colby's first hit of the day in the bottom of the second when he pounded a single past the Broncos' third baseman. The boys were unable to get him around the bases, however, and the score remained scoreless going into the third.

Russell picked up two runs in the top of the third to go up 2-0. Senior Brandon Rasmussen belted a line-drive single to right in the bottom of the fourth. Sager eventually drove him home with a grounder that went under the legs of the Broncos' third baseman, cutting the lead to 2-1.

The Broncos got runners on second and third with no outs in the top of the sixth. Brennan Walter of Russell stroked a line drive to center, scoring Michael Vonfeldt and extending the Russell lead to 3-1. The Broncos went on to score two more runs to make it 5-1.

Colby finally got out of the inning when sophomore Caleb Carter fielded a bunt by the Broncos' Craig Farmer and tagged out Walter as he tried to score from third.

Krzycki walked to start the bottom of the sixth and eventually scored from third on a wild pitch, narrowing the gap to 5-2. The Broncos' Vonfeldt blasted a single to center, scoring Danny Oste and extending Russell's lead to 6-2, in the top of the seventh.

The boys gave the Broncos a scare in the bottom of the seventh. After the Eagles loaded the bases with no outs, senior Ethan Stichel scored off a sacrifice fly by Brandon Rasmussen, cutting the lead to 6-3. Then Sager smacked a single that got past Russell's left fielder, scoring sophomore second baseman Jordan Rasmussen and cutting the Broncos' lead to 6-4. Unfortunately, Colby was unable to get anyone else home and the



Colby High senior Preston Krzycki prepared to fire a pitch during the first half of a doubleheader between the Eagles and Russell High School on Tuesday at Young Memorial Field.

Russell walked away with a 6-4 win.

Sager started the second game, and threw as if he couldn't tell the wind was roaring. His calm demeanor on the mound seemed out of place in a game characterized by constant stops, dust clouds rolling through the infield, nightmarish pop flies blowing every which way and players chasing their hats and helmets across the field.

After giving up three runs in the first, Sager pitched five straight shut-out innings before being replaced by Brandon Rasmussen in the middle of the seventh.

"He played really well," coach Krzycki said. "He stayed really focused."

Preston Krzycki pounded a line drive single to right in the bottom of the first, scoring Jordan Rasmussen and cutting the Broncos' lead to 3-1.

The Eagles overtook Russell in the bottom of the third. They narrowed the gap to 3-2 when Winger scored off a sacrifice grounder to second by Krzycki. Then Sager drove home Jordan Rasmussen with a single to center field, tying the game at 3. Brandon Rasmussen scored off an infield hit by senior Garrett Rogers, giving Colby a 4-3 lead.

"We knew we were going to have a big inning," said Jeff Krzycki. "We just didn't know when."

The Eagles scored two more runs in the inning and led 6-3 going into the fourth.

Rogers showed off his defensive skills in the top of the fourth, making a nice dig on a low through from Krzycki at short. Sager pitched a scoreless fourth, but he ran into a bit of trouble in the top of the fifth. The sophomore was able to get out of the inning unscathed

when he got a grounder with two outs and the bases loaded.

The boys picked up three more runs in the bottom of the fifth, stretching their lead to 9-3. Russell got a runners on base in the top of the sixth, but Sager was once again able to extricate himself without giving up a run.

Senior Sam Kendrick ripped a ground ball that went under the legs of the Broncos' second baseman, scoring Sager and extending Colby's lead to 10-3. Then Russell's left fielder dropped a shallow pop fly by Carter, allowing Kendrick to score to make it 11-3.

"We made more plays in the second game," said coach Krzycki.

The Eagles' record now stands at 6-2. They play again in a doubleheader at Holcomb starting at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

Area senior players selected for Classic

By Andy Heintz

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Three Colby High senior basketball players and three from smaller county schools will be playing in the 17th annual Northwest Kansas All-Star Basketball Classic on Sunday at the Colby Community Building.

The classic consists of girls and a boys games played by seniors from around northwest Kansas. The girls game starts at 5 p.m. and the boys at 7.

The Eagles who made the roster are Chaz Winger, Ryley Haas and Braden McKee. Other Thomas County boys chosen were Daniel Grace, Heartland Christian High; Dylan Moss, Golden Plains; and Seth Ackerman, Brewster.

Nichelle Erskine from Brewster will play in the girls game. Others from nearby schools include Bailey Hemmert and Lex Parsons, Oakley, and Clay Rogge and Kara Gfeller, Triplains.

The game is put together by the Colby Community College basketball teams. Trojans' men's basketball coach Dustin Pfeifer said he and his coaching staff selected the players for the men's team. Two of his assistant coaches - Shane Stover and Rusty Grafel - will be coaching the two mens teams.

Women's coach Brady Jasper said the players in the women's game were selected by him, high school basketball coaches and people who watch a lot of games in the leagues the players compete in.

He said one team will be coached by Hill City High School girls coaches Lindan Nighswonger and Greg Deines and the other by Weskan girl's coach Troy Okeson and Wallace County coach Landon Steele. Hill City's team went 23-3 last season and went deep into the

class 2A state championship tourney. Okeson coached his team to a 23-3 season in his first year as head coach and Steele's team went 15-7.

Jasper said players from as far south as Scott City and Tribune and east almost all the way to Smith Center are eligible for the game. He said the game is sponsored by the Colby Bowl and Fun Center, the Sports Shoppe and several smaller contributors.

Players participating in the event include:

Women's Team No. 1: Emily Chessmore, Rawlins County High; Gfeller; Jade Glunz and Justine Woofert, Scott City; Kenzi Knobbe and Gabrielle Kuhlman, Wallace County; Bethany Polifka, Ellis; Kisha O'Meara, Lucas-Luray; Payton Walker, Weskan; and Carman Hill, Hoxie.

Women's Team No. 2: Christina Anderson and Alison Cole, Northern Valley; Eastin Casey, Natoma; Kelli Crittenden, Greeley County; Nichelle Erskine, Brewster; Kinley Kee, St. John's Catholic-Beloit; Audrey Mote, Wallace County; Amanda Ray and Kaitlyn Wolf, Norton; and Hemmert.

Men's Team No. 1: Ackerman; Garrett Dreiling, Victoria; Daniel Moritz, Bryant Bombardier and Tyler Rathke, Hays; McKee; Moss; Parsons; Trent and Matt Raile, St. Francis; Calvin Schmitt, Wallace County; Julimar Silva, Healy; and Michael Yoxall, Thunder Ridge.

Men's Team No. 2: Tate Andrews, Wallace County; Grace; Casey Heim and Taylor Rall, Hoxie; Jordan Niernberger, Hays; Sage Penner, Stockton Rogge; Dal Schultz, Wheatland; Marty Wendel, Ingalls; Winger and Haas; and Dexter Pfeifer, Hays.

For information, call college Athletic Director Ryan Sturdy at (785) 460-5548.

Chicago Bulls squad clinches remaining spot

The Chicago Bulls are headed to the playoffs. The San Antonio Spurs are headed right back to Dallas.

The last night of the NBA season gave Kevin Durant his first scoring title, and finally sorted out the Western Conference postseason race.

The Bulls secured the remaining playoff spot, beating Charlotte 98-89 Wednesday to set up a first-round series against LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers. Chi-

cago finished a game ahead of Toronto would have advanced if the Bulls lost.

Phoenix earned the No. 3 spot in the west with a 100-86 victory in Utah. That gave the No. 4 seed and the Northwest Division title to Denver, with the Jazz fifth.

The Utah-Denver series begins Saturday. It was slated to open Sunday, but the NHL's Colorado Avalanche has a home game that night, so the Phoenix-Portland series took the Sunday night slot.

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