

Girls team will have experience

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The Colby High girls volleyball team will head into this season with a little more experience on the court.

Last year's varsity team had its share of ups and downs, finishing with losses than wins. The Lady Eagles junior varsity had an impressive season, however, finishing with 48 wins and 18 losses.

Coach Lesley Wagoner said she thinks her team will be competitive this season.

"We have some girls with good varsity experience," she said, "and all the girls have been working hard to get better."

Sophomore Shelby Gardner said she thought her team would be more mature this year.

"All the work we did over the summer has paid off," she said. "We are a really strong team."

The Lady Eagles start their season with matches against Norton and Osborne at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 31, at Norton.

The players on this year's team include Shelly Binder, Tera Raymond, Anna Taylor, Ashley Standage, Shelby Terrell, Kelsey Voss, Kylie Reitcheck, Morgan Bell, Brenna McKee, Skylar Barrett, Haley Stickle, Leah Jennings, Katie Zerr, Rachel Juenemann, Kayla Weber, Lauren Bell, Kenzie Curry, Shelby Gardner, Bailey Terrell, Mishaela, Benson, Kaitlyn Flanagan, McKenna Ortner, Jacie Blackhart, Kianna Griffin, Karly Shull, Abby Friesen, Haley Mengel, Morgan Mengel, Victoria Rall, Katie Elias, Madison Rogers, Haileigh Shull, Maura Hansen and Andrea Barton.

Big name only plays four downs

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Brett Favre completed one pass and also got clobbered on a sack that lost Minnesota 10 yards.

Favre's highly anticipated first game back with the Vikings lasted all of four unspectacular plays and one series in a 15-10 loss to the 49ers in a nationally televised pre-season game Sunday at Candlestick Park, the only NFL show of the night.

Favre completed a 13-yard pass to Adrian Peterson on his first play from scrimmage but was sacked by Pro Bowl linebacker Patrick Willis two plays later and the Vikings wound up punting. The 40-year-old quarterback took the field just four days after his first training camp practice of the year. He decided to return for a 20th season and make yet another run at a Super Bowl title.

Alex Smith, Favre's 49ers counterpart, went 9 of 13 for 88 yards in a solid first half. Willis had four tackles playing only nine snaps.

After that single series, Favre headed to the bench and gave way to backup Tarvaris Jackson - who had been in line to be the starter before Jared Allen, Ryan Longwell and Steve Hutchinson flew to Mississippi early last week to recruit Favre back to the Twin Cities.

Swinging for the fences



Chris Schritter slammed a pitch during the "Duck Soup" tournament Sunday at the Colby Recreation Fields. The event, which drew 10 teams, helped raise money for the Colby Community College softball team.

ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Veteran baseball coach retires

By Jim Litke
AP Sports Columnist

Lou Piniella is one of those guys you hate to see go. Sadder still is the way he went out.

An ailing mother back home in Tampa tugged at his heartstrings, changing the date of his previously announced retirement from the end of the season to Sunday. But that was only one reason Piniella looked so worn out.

Last week, a local television station ran footage from the day he arrived in Chicago four years ago, then cut to a shot of Piniella in the dugout that day. It was like one of those before-and-after comparisons we see every time a president leaves office - paler, grayer, with more furrows in the forehead and bags under the eyes - and Piniella had served the equivalent of only one term. But the Cubs have that effect on a lot of people.

"It's a good day to remember," he said after they got clobbered 16-5 by the Atlanta Braves, continuing their NL Central nosedive, "and also it's a good day to forget."

It wasn't the losing that got to Piniella in the end, so much as the how. Don't forget - he was 316-293 during his stay in Chicago, including consecutive division titles in 2007-08, and he came over soon after a stint managing in Tampa Bay, when the Rays were still a running joke.

But he was touted as the last piece of the Cubs' puzzle, an old hand used to winning with enough vinegar left to nudge a veteran squad across a line the franchise hadn't crossed in almost a century. He tried being mellow and wound up almost coming to blows with a few of those vets. He tried exploding, but the only guy Piniella seemed capable of rousing was himself.

One of the last things he said

before leaving Wrigley Field for good made clear how much Piniella felt he was leaving a job unfinished.

"I cried a little bit after the game," he said. "You get emotional. I'm sorry, I'm not trying to be."

Piniella was struggling to hold back tears, and soon enough he lost that fight, too.

"This will be the last time I put on my uniform," he said.

If so, there's already enough material from the four teams Piniella played for and the five he managed for more than one highlight reel. Most people could assemble a Top 10 of his equipment-busting, base-throwing, umpire-baiting tantrums from memory. Those who saw him play could make up another using only clutch hits from his postseason performances with the Yankees.

But while those reels reflect how motivated and competitive Piniella was as both player and manager, what rarely came through was how much joy he squeezed out of just hanging around the game.

Piniella could seem mad, but was more often funny, maybe because he had few regrets. At the end of a 23-year managerial career, he could say he had wrung every ounce of success from his modest gifts. The late George Steinbrenner loved Piniella's fire and his clutch-hitting, but it was probably a self-deprecating humor that kept him employed in New York for so long - as coach, field manager, general manager, field manager (again) special adviser and broadcaster - after his playing days were done.

On the eve of his 1990 World

Series win in Cincinnati, reporters were poking through Piniella's background looking for a different angle.

"Is it true you spoke Spanish growing up?" one asked.

"Until I was 6 years old," Piniella replied. "The nuns in elementary school taught me to speak English."

Hoping to shift the conversation to Piniella's deft handling of perpetually grumpy Reds owner Marge Schott, another cut in, "Is that where you learned the word 'yardstick,' like the one you get your knuckles rapped with?"

"That," Piniella answered without missing a beat, "is where I first learned the word 'second-guess.'"

Over the past four years, neither the charm nor the temper made a big enough dent in the culture of a franchise whose unofficial motto is "Wait 'til next year!" Piniella was exasperated, then outraged and dispirited by turns. By the time this season headed inexorably for the tank, he was mostly mailing it in, increasingly burdened by the feeling that he was no longer in the one place he could still make a difference - back home.

"I've enjoyed it here," Piniella said. "In four wonderful years, I've made a lot of friends and had some success here, this year has been a little bit of a struggle. But, look. Family is important; it comes first."

What he said a few moments later, though, was less convincing.

"It's a tough job. But, look. I mean. They're going to win here."

New race in Colby to benefit family

The Colby Recreation Department, MC Auto and Uptown Style Style Salon & Day Spa are sponsoring Cheyenne Cramer's 5K Run/Walk starting at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25.

Cheyenne is the 5-year old niece of C.W. and Melinda Cheney, who has been diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Money from the race will be used to pay for her medical expenses and for raising awareness about her illness. She has been receiving treatment at a hospital in Denver, said Tiffany Mader, co-owner of Uptown Style with Cheyenne's aunt, Melinda Cheney.

The event will start with a youth dash for boys and girls 9 and under. That will be followed by a youth run between girls and boys 10 to 14.

The 5k run and walk will take place after the second race is done. The outcome will be based on predicted time. This means the winner is the person who comes closest to the predicted time they

write down before the race. The top three runners will get prizes.

Participation in the youth dash costs \$10; the youth run, \$15; and the 5K, \$25. Checks should be made payable to Cheyenne's parents, Ben and Cara Cramer. Register by Thursday, Sept. 9, if you want to receive a T-shirt.

Recreation Director Stacy Lee said information about what courses participants will be running or walking in will be available at the Community Building on Tuesday.

Earlier this month, another event helped raise money for Cheyenne. Mader said Uptown Style held a "cutathon" for Cheyenne on July 12. All the money earned from haircuts, mini-pedicures, mini-manicures and massages that day went to pay for Cheyenne's medical expenses, she said. Mader's children and other families also did a bake sale that day to help raise money for Cheyenne, she said, with both event raising close to \$1,500.

Women's golfer reclaims No. 1 spot

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Ai Miyazato was in uncharacteristic territory to start the final round of the LPGA Safeway Classic.

She was nervous.

While Miyazato normally appears composed, the jitters were evident when the Japanese star bogeyed the par-4 second hole on the Ghost Creek Course at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club. Then she bogeyed the par-4 seventh.

It wasn't until a birdie on the par-5 ninth hole that she steadied herself - and cruised to her fifth victory of the year. Miyazato, who also led after the first two rounds, closed with an even-par 72 to finish at 11 under.

"Today was a really tough day," she said. "I was really nervous on the front nine. But after nine holes, I made a birdie and it gave me a good kick."

With the win, Miyazato reclaimed the top spot in the world rankings. Kerr chased Miyazato

throughout the final round until hitting into the water on the par-4 18th. The American finished with a 70, while Choi shot a 71.

Miyazato, ranked No. 1 for a week in June and again for a week in July.

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