

Lady Eagles crush Holcomb in opener

By Kevin Bottrell

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Hot bats and a 12-strikeout game from sophomore pitcher Kenzie Curry helped the Colby High softball team get off to a good start this season.

The Lady Eagles dominated the Holcomb Lady Longhorns 11-1 and 13-0 in a doubleheader Friday at the city recreation fields. Senior Skyler Mengel pitched a complete game in the home opener, allowing only one run in five innings.

"We played pretty well for our first games," said coach Jack Elliot. "Pitches were a little erratic as far as location of the pitches, but they battled all day."

Colby's first run came in the bottom of the first. Senior Caitlyn Wark hit a single to left field. She then stole second base, the first of many steals in the doubleheader. She moved to third on a ground out by Mengel and scored on a sacrifice fly by Kenzie Curry.

With two outs, senior Bailey Koerperich got a base hit and scored on a standup double by senior Brittany Bange. Bange scored on a single to right by junior Madison Gawith to make the score 3-0. Gawith motored on to second when the first baseman missed the throw. Sophomore Karly Kriss hit a pop fly to end the inning.

The Lady Eagles allowed a runner to get to third on an error in the top of the second, but the Lady Longhorns weren't able to bring her home. A strikeout by Mengel ended the inning.

Junior Lacy O'Neal was hit by a pitch to start off Colby's half of the second. The Lady Eagles loaded up the bases and then brought

O'Neal home with a hit by Mengel. Curry popped up for the inning's first out, but a base hit by Koerperich brought two more runners home, making the score 6-0. Mengel was tagged out at second but ran into the second baseman, allowing the runs to score. Gawith hit a grounder to end the inning.

The Lady Longhorns went down in order in the top of the third. Colby added another run in the bottom half when a single by Wark brought Kriss home. O'Neal was thrown out at third. Pop flies by Mengel and Curry prevented any more runs.

The Colby infielders continued to shut down the Longhorns' offense. Three straight infield grounders made for a short top half of the fourth.

The Lady Eagles started off the bottom of the fourth with two ground outs of their own. Gawith walked and Kriss hit a single that bounced off the Holcomb shortstop's glove, putting two runners on. O'Neal hit a long shot to left that went under the fence, making it a ground rule double. Gawith scored and Kriss moved to third. Senior Tera Raymond grounded out to end the inning.

Holcomb's only run came in the top of the fifth. With runners at first and second, a base hit brought one home, making the score 8-1. On a grounder to second, one runner was called out for interference and another was thrown out at first to end the inning.

Colby ran up the score in the bottom of the fifth. Wark scored on a sacrifice fly by Curry. Mengel scored on a base hit by Koerperich. With the score at 10-1, one more run would end the game for Colby on the 10-run rule. Koer-



Kenzie Curry



Colby High junior Lacy O'Neal just missed beating a throw to third base in the third inning the first game against Holcomb on Friday. O'Neal would later hit a ground-rule double to score Colby's 11th and final run of the game.

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press



Sophomore Kenzie Curry attempted to tag out a Holcomb runner at second in the first game of a doubleheader on Friday.

perich stole second and Bange hit a single. Koerperich was waved home and beat the throw to win the game 11-1.

"We played pretty well for our

first games," said coach Jack Elliot. "Pitchers were a little erratic as far as location of the pitches, but they battled all day."

Curry put in an impressive pitching performance in the second game, allowing no runs with 12 strikeouts in five innings. She struck out two batters to open the first, but a hit batter, a walk and a base hit loaded up the bases. A pop fly got Colby out of the inning with no damage done.

Wark walked to open the bottom half of the first. She stole second and got to third on a wild pitch. Curry walked and stole second to put two runners on. Wark scored on a single to the second baseman by Koerperich. Curry moved to third on the play.

Koerperich and Curry scored on a double by Bange to make the score 3-0. Gawith hit a single that bounced off the Holcomb pitcher's foot. She and Bange scored on a hit by Kriss to make it 5-0. O'Neal popped out, but Raymond hit a single to left field, scoring

Kriss. On her second at bat of the inning, Wark hit a single, scoring Raymond.

With the score at 7-0, Mengel, who flew out in her first at bat, hit a triple that brought Wark home. Koerperich hit a pop fly for the last out.

Curry retired the Lady Longhorns in order with three straight strikeouts in the top of the second. Colby continued its scoring run in the bottom of the second. With two runners on and two outs, a base hit by Raymond brought sophomore Janessa Williams home to make the score 9-0. Wark hit a ball to the shortstop, but Raymond was thrown out at second to end the inning.

Curry picked up two more strikeouts in the top of the third. A grounder to second got the third out. Mengel and Curry opened Colby's half of the third with base hits. Mengel scored on a missed

fly ball for Colby's 10th run. Williams batted in two runners to make it 12-0. She would cross home plate for Colby's final run on the next play on a triple to left field by O'Neal.

Holcomb got a base hit in the top of the fourth, but two strikeouts and a pop fly left her on base. Colby had a subdued fourth inning, with a ground out and two pop flies ending it quickly.

Holcomb had one more chance to keep the game going as Colby already had more than 10 runs on them going into the fifth, but Curry's 10th, 11th and 12th strikeouts quickly ended all hope for the Lady Longhorns. Colby won 13-0.

"Defensively we were very solid after we got over our nerves," Elliot said. "Offensively we hit the ball well all day and executed bunts and base running pretty well. It was a good day all around."

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