

Area teams make big strides in 2011



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College baseball players stormed the field after winning the final game of the Sub-Regional Tournament in

May at the college ball field. The Trojans would go on to play in the championship game at the National tournament.

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The beginning of a new year usually symbolizes being able to make a fresh start. However, there are several sports teams in Thomas County that probably want to hold off on a fresh start and instead, revel in the accomplishments they made this year.

The *Colby Free Press'* choices as the top 10 sporting events in 2011 follow.

1 The Colby High School girls track team tied for first place in Class 4A of the Kansas State Track and Field Championships.

The team got 41 points, tying with Baldwin High School. Emilea Finley led the Lady Eagles, winning the 1,600-meter and 800-meter runs and placing second in the 3,200-meter run. She set school records in the 1,600 meters with a time of 5 minutes, 5 seconds and in the 3,200 meters with 11:20.8. Finley narrowly missed setting another school record in the 800.

Other runners that helped with the win were Brenna McKee, Paige Roopchan, Morgan Bell, Logan Middleton, Katrina Kaus and Kayla Hockersmith.

2 The Colby Community College baseball team lost in the championship game of the National Junior College Athletic Association Region VI Tournament and finished its season with a 42-20 record.

The Trojans had their most successful regular season since joining the Jayhawk Conference in 1996 and finished in second place in the Jayhawk West with a 23-9

record. Many players received honors for the outstanding season.

First baseman Brandon Wilson was named the Most Valuable Player and head coach Ryan Carter was named the Coach of the Year. Sophomore pitcher Matt Stevens was named All-Conference first team, outfielder Austin Russell, shortstop Jon Cotter and catcher Nathan Wilson earned second-team All-Conference honors and pitcher Drew Posegate and third baseman Scott Jones were named to the All-Conference third team.

3 Trojan cross country runner Edward Limo took second place at the National Junior College Athletic Association Cross Country Championships and won the individual title in the Region VI Championships in November.

Limo, a sophomore this season, finished with a time of 26:00.47 at nationals and with a time of 25:38.20 at regionals.

The men as a whole came in third place at the regional meet and then finished in ninth at nationals, which is their best finish as a team in the school's Division I history. Also, Limo earned first team All-American at the national meet.

4 The Colby High girls basketball team made it to the first round of the Class 4A Kansas State Basketball Tournament in March. The No. 3 seeded Lady Eagles lost to Basehor-Linwood High School, the No. 6 seed.

The Lady Eagles went 21-3 for the season.

5 The Colby High wrestling team went to the Class 4A state championships and for the

second time in three years, two Eagles wrestlers took first in their weight classes.

Sophomore Dustin Reed and junior Konnor Kriss finished first in their weight classes and the Eagles finished seventh as a team. Five Eagle wrestlers had qualified for state at the regional tournament.

6 Colby High School cross country runner Emilea Finley finished in 20th place at the Kansas State Cross Country Championships for Class 1A-2A-4A schools with a time of 16:14.96.

Finley, a senior this year, was the only Colby runner competing at state this season and she was also a big part of the girls track team that won the state tournament.

7 The Colby High School volleyball team was the Great West Activities Conference league champions after going 5-0 at the meet. The Lady Eagles also made it to the semi-finals of the sub-state tournament and earlier in the season, they took first place at the Liberal Invitational and Oakley Invitational tournaments.

The Lady Eagles were 30-9 on the season.

8 The Colby Community College Lady Trojans' volleyball team competed in the Jayhawk Conference Region VI Championships. The women lost to Seward County Community College and Hutchinson Community College to end their season.

The Lady Trojans finished the season 11-3 in the Jayhawk Conference and 28-15 overall.

9 The Golden Plains High School boys basketball team made it to the Class 1A Division

II state basketball tournament in March where it lost to the No. 4-seeded Kiowa-South Barber Chieftains.

The boys entered the tournament as the Palco sub-state champions and seeded No. 5. This was the fourth time in Golden Plains school history for a boys' team to make the state tournament. The Bulldogs had also placed third in the league tournament earlier in the season and finished their season with a 14-9 record.

10 The Golden Plains High School boys track team had three members qualify for the state meet in four events in May.

Cole Christensen qualified in the high jump and triple jump, Rilee Spresser qualified in shot put and Kalyn Weber qualified in the 100-meter dash.

Spresser placed seventh at the state track meet with a throw of 44 feet, 8.5 inches. His best throw of the season was 48 feet. Weber ran the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.75 in the preliminaries and Christensen jumped 41 feet, 7 inches, in the triple jump, finishing in eighth place, and jumped 6 feet in the high jump. His best jumps this season were 45 feet, 5.25 inches, in the triple jump and 6 feet, 4 inches, in the high jump.



DICK BOYD/The Norton Telegram

Colby High School senior Emilea Finley ran down the home stretch in the 800-meter run at the State Track Championships in Wichita. Finley won the race with a time of 2:18.33.

Our office will be closing Monday, January 2nd for New Years.

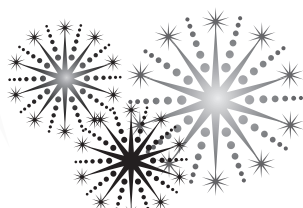
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