

Girls basketball team starts season tonight

By Kayla Cornett

Colby Free Press
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The Colby High girls basketball team is coming off a successful season and Coach Parker McKee said the Lady Eagles could continue their success this winter.

“We have the ability to compete,” he said. “A lot of our success will be determined by our ability to work hard and keep consistent.”

The girls started practice on Nov. 14 with 24 out for the team, he said. There are five seniors, four juniors, seven sophomores and eight freshmen playing for Colby.

The Lady Eagles lost a couple of last year’s key players to graduation, Morgan Bell, Brenna McKee

and Paige Roopchan.

Bell is continuing her basketball career at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, after signing a letter of intent in April.

Last season, Colby finished with a 13-7 record and had a couple of big wins highlighting its season.

At the Orange and Black Classic, the girls’ home tournament, they won in overtime against Holcomb in their last game to take third place.

The Lady Eagles then dominated the Great West Activities Conference league tourney, coming away as league champs.

The team’s first game was to be tonight against Hays High School in the Hays City Shoot Out.

The varsity girls’ first home game will be at 6:30 p.m. next Thursday against Hays at the Community Building.

Lady Trojans squad wins second game

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The Colby Community College women’s basketball team dominated Northwest Kansas Technical College in a home game Friday, defeating the Lady Mavericks 65-49 at the Community Building.

This was the second win for the women this season, and the team is now 2-6 in nonconference play.

Liene Liepina scored a team-

high 16 points for the Lady Trojans and added 3 rebounds and 1 steal.

Agnese Aramina followed with 11 points and an outstanding 16 rebounds. Kasey Hoyt had 10 points, 4 rebounds and 2 steals; Hailey Dinkel scored 8 points and grabbed 9 rebounds; Linda Pagrode 5 points, 8 rebounds and 1 steal; Shantydra Arnold 5 points, 4 rebounds and 1 steal; Kytiana Seals 4 points, 3 rebounds and 4 steals; Desiree Jones 4 points and

3 rebounds; and Ashlon Gaines, 2 points.

The women were 16 of 27 from the free-throw line, pulled down 51 rebounds and stole the ball 9 times.

Colby was to play on the road at 6 p.m. Monday at Trinidad (Colo.) State Junior College and will come back home for a game at 6 p.m. tonight against McCook (Neb.) Community College at the Community Building.

Chiefs line holding its own

By Dave Skretta

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Here’s a situation that would send shudders through any head coach: Starting a rookie left tackle next to a rookie guard next to a center playing out of position, all against the NFL’s best pass rush.

That’s exactly what the Chiefs did last Sunday against Denver.

With left tackle Branden Albert out with an injury, and veteran guard Ryan Lilja now at center because of another injury, Kansas City’s reshuffled line looked nothing like coach Romeo Crennel expected when he broke training camp a few months ago.

But lo and behold, with rookies Donald Stephenson and Jeff Allen starting alongside Lilja, the patchwork offensive line played well in a 17-9 loss to the Broncos, providing the shakiest of silver linings to the eighth straight loss in a season of misery.

“If they play with that kind of attitude and energy, like I tell them – that kind of energy and effort, that makes everything better for everybody,” Crennel said.

The offensive line is rarely a sexy topic. Even more rarely is it the one thing that coaches, players and fans can feel good about.

Usually, those anonymous big guys up front are only singled out when they give up a sack, or get called for a penalty. When a running back breaks a long run, he’s the one in the spotlight, not the guys prying open holes along the defensive line.

Or when a quarterback stands stoically in the pocket, surveying the field, and then delivers a per-

fect pass down the seam, the pass-catch combo gets all the love – certainly not the five guys up front who were sacrificing their bodies to give them enough time to make a play.

“Most of us are used to each other,” right guard Jon Asamoah said. “I’m used to Lilja and he’s used to me. We’re on the same tempo. I don’t know. We spend so much time together, we’ve developed that through games and practice, things most people don’t see.”

There are plenty of reasons why they’re 1-10 and barreling toward one of the worst seasons in franchise history, and the offensive line has been part of the problem.

They’ve given up plenty of sacks, allowed pressure to force several fumbles in the pocket, and rarely created much running room for Jamaal Charles and Co.

It hasn’t been entirely their fault, though.

Second-year center Rodney Hudson was poised to take over the position from veteran Casey Wiegmann, but he broke his leg in late September and landed on injured reserve. That forced Lilja, a career guard, to slide over to center.

Allen, the Chiefs’ second-round pick out of Illinois, moved into the void that created at left guard. He got off to a rough start in the NFL, routinely blown back by bigger, quicker defensive tackles, but has started to hold his own over the past few weeks.

Stephenson, the franchise’s third-round pick out of Oklahoma, got his when Albert hurt his back a couple of weeks ago. It was trial-by-fire against Cincinnati, but he performed well last week against

Denver, holding its fearsome pass rush at bay most of the game.

The Broncos came into the game with a league-leading 35 sacks, but the only ones allowed by the Chiefs were to Von Miller and Wesley Woodyard, and only Woodyard’s was for a significant loss.



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

Colby High senior Shelby Gardner hugged her former volleyball coach Lesley Wagoner Wednesday at the high school after signing a letter of intent to play volleyball at Chadron State College in Nebraska. The scholarship Gardner received covers tuition, room and board and \$500 for books.

Colby senior signs with college

Colby High senior Shelby Gardner signed a letter of intent Wednesday at the high school to play volleyball at Chadron State College in Nebraska.

She received a scholarship to the four-year college which covers tuition, room and board and \$500 for books.

“I am proud of Shelby, and extremely grateful for all the help she had athletically from all the people that were in that room today,” said her father, Chris Gardner. “They all played a key role in achieving her goals.”

“I am grateful to the teachers and administration from both Colby Middle School and Colby High School for preparing Shelby academically for her college years.”

Present for the signing were Gardner’s parents, Chris and Renae Gardner; Volleyball Coach Jerry McKee; teacher and former Volleyball Coach Lesley Wagoner; senior volleyball player Lauren Bell; Coach Ed Schmitt; and Northwest Kansas Juniors Coach Dustine Bedore, who has been Gardner’s club coach for the past four years.

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