

Colby girls third in Orange and Black

By Kayla Cornett

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The Colby High varsity girls took third place in the Orange and Black Classic this weekend after taking down Liberal on Saturday 45-23 at the high school gym.

The Lady Eagles won their first game of the tournament Thursday, sending them to play McCook (Neb.) Friday to see who would play in the championship.

Colby got off to a quick start, with seniors Kenzie Curry and Lauren Bell and junior Haleigh Shull making shots and the girls led 10-2 at the end of the first quarter.

McCook picked up its offense in the second, however, sinking a three-point basket and layup in the first minute to close the gap to 10-7. After Shull made a basket, McCook landed 2 free throws and another basket to put the score at 12-11 with 5:20 left in the half.

The teams battled back and forth, but the Lady Eagles built their lead back up after a basket by Shull and a three-pointer by Curry to put them up 19-13 with 3:03 on the clock. McCook landed one last basket to leave the score at 19-15 at the half.

The Lady Bison came out of the locker room with determination and kept the Lady Eagles from scoring for most of the third period. McCook made a layup, a jumper and another basket to take the lead, 21-19, with about five minutes on the board. Meanwhile, Colby missed four shot attempts and turned the ball over twice.

The Lady Bison got another shot to fall to go up 23-19 with 4:25 left and Colby missed a few more shots. Finally, with 2:10 on the clock, Bell got the first Colby points of the quarter, but McCook followed that up with a three-pointer, leaving the score at 26-21 with 1:45 on the board.

The Lady Eagles got 2 more points on the board after Shull made a layup, but the girls had falling behind 26-23 at the end of the third.

Colby struggled on offense again in the fourth, its first points coming from a jumper by freshman Brenly Terrell with 4:40 left,



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press
Junior Haleigh Shull tried for a jump shot Friday during the Colby High varsity girls basketball game in the Orange and Black Classic at the Community Building.

but McCook had only made 1 free throw by this point. With another free throw, McCook led 28-25.

Shull fouled out with about four minutes left. After the foul, McCook was successful on a one-

and-one to go up 30-25.

Colby missed its next shot, but stole the ball back for another chance. However, a Lady Eagle was called for traveling and that led to a McCook three-pointer, putting the score at 33-25 with 3:43 to go.

Bell made a basket following a timeout to keep Colby in the game, but the girls made too many mistakes in the remaining minutes to make a comeback. McCook made another basket with 2:50 left and senior Karly Kriss fouled out a minute later.

McCook made two free throws, a layup and two more free throws before the game ended. Terrell made 1 of 2 free shots for Colby, putting the final score at 41-28 with McCook getting the win.

The loss sent the Lady Eagles to play for third place Saturday against Liberal. Colby's offense was back on track in this game, and the girls easily defeated Liberal.

The Lady Eagles had 7 points on the board at the end of the first quarter after a layup by senior McKenna Ortner, 2 free throws by Shull, another layup by Ortner and 1 of 2 free throws from Shull. The Colby defense held the Lady Redskins to just 1 three-point basket to post a 7-3 lead at the end of the quarter.

The Colby girls laid it on in the second, outscoring Liberal 15-6, including 3 three-pointers from Curry, Ortner and Bell. Freshman Lara Stephens made a basket and Bell made two more herself to give the Lady Eagles a 22-9 lead at halftime.

To start the third, Shull made a basket and Bell sank another three-point shot to put Colby up 27-9 with 6:43 on the clock. Ortner, Shull and Curry contributed points for the Lady Eagles in the third, putting Colby up 36-15 at the end of the quarter.

Liberal picked up its game somewhat in the fourth, holding Colby to 9 points and scoring 8 of its own, but it wasn't enough as the Lady Eagles claimed third place with a 45-23 win.

Shull and Bell scored 12 points, Ortner 11, Curry 6 and Stephens and Terrell had 2 each.



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press
The Colby High varsity girls got ready to pose with their third-place plaque Saturday after winning their last game of the Orange and Black Classic at the high school gym.

Lady Bulldogs dominate tourney

By Hailee Spresser

Golden Plains High School

Golden Plains came into the Western Kansas Liberty League tournament with a 5-2 record and the No. 5 seed.

The Lady Bulldog's first game was against the Wheatland-Grinnell Lady Thunderhawks Jan. 8. Golden Plains had lost to this team in the Castle Rock tournament, and the Lady Bulldogs were ready for revenge.

"Going into the tournament, we knew it was going to be a tough one," said senior Angela Ritter. "After seeing Wheatland-Grinnell at Castle Rock, we were ready to buckle down for a win against them. This game was a big test to our strength, and it was only the beginning of our success in the tournament."

Golden Plains began with a rocky start in the first quarter. Too many unforced turnovers led to a close low-scoring quarter. The Lady Bulldogs put up 8 points, half of them from free throws, while Wheatland-Grinnell scored 7 points.

In the second quarter, the Lady Thunderhawks picked up their offense. Golden Plains' defense was slow to react, and Wheatland-

Grinnell outscored Golden Plains 13-8. The Lady Thunderhawks had the biggest lead of the game at halftime, 20-16.

The Lady Bulldogs came out of halftime with a different attitude and kicked their game into gear. Golden Plains took its largest lead of the game and began to pull away from Wheatland-Grinnell. The Lady 'Dogs outscored Wheatland-Grinnell 14-6 to pull ahead 30-26.

By the fourth quarter, Golden Plains picked up the offensive flow, giving several girls the opportunity to score. The Lady Bulldogs really found their pace, blowing Wheatland-Grinnell away. The girls punched their ticket to the semifinals with a huge win over the Lady Thunderhawks, 47-31.

"We picked up each other's slack and that is what teams do," junior Kylie Jones said. "Also, we have pride in what we do and execute it."

Ritter and Jordan Christensen led the Lady Bulldogs with 12 points each, followed by Kylie Jones 10, Hailee Spresser 8, Kami Miller 3 and MiKayla Lobato 2.

The Lady Bulldogs' semifinal game was against the No. 1-seeded Palco Lady Roosters on Jan. 11. This was the first time Golden

Plains had seen Palco. "With the mindset on getting to the championship game," Ritter said, "we stepped on the floor with full confidence and really put it to them."

"Our teamwork was really the key to this game," added freshman Kami Miller.

Golden Plains started off with a 6-point run. The defense on the Lady 'Dogs' side held Palco to 5 points in the first quarter. Golden Plains ended the quarter up 7, 12-5. Golden Plains and Palco traded the ball in the second quarter. Not many shots would fall on either side, but the Lady Bulldogs managed to put up 8 points and allowed Palco 6 to finish the half 20-11.

The third quarter is where the Lady Bulldogs began to take control. Palco couldn't stop them, and

they scored 16 points. Steady defense held Palco to 7 points, and the girls went into the fourth quarter leading 36-18.

The Lady Bulldogs went on an 8-point streak to begin the fourth. Golden Plains put in a whopping 23 points to end the game, limiting Palco to 10. The final score was 59-28.

Leading the Lady Bulldogs was Christensen with 14 points. Miller followed her with 13, Ritter 8, Lobato 6, Kynndra Rush, Jones and Leea Juenemann 4 each and Spresser, Paulita Ramirez and Macayla Easton 2 each. Golden Plains pulled down 47 rebounds as a team, nearly doubling Palco's 24.

These games sent the Lady Bulldogs soaring to the championship game, ready to face the Weskan Lady Coyotes.

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