

Eagles play tough 'D', but Oakley still wins

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The "O" didn't stand for sustained offensive drives on either side Friday night at Dennen Field. Yet opportunistic definitely described the Oakley Plainsmen, who turned three Colby miscues into quick touchdowns while scoring a 26-0 season-opening victory. Class 2-1A's No. 3-ranked team scored almost immediately after a Colby fumble, a failed on-side kickoff after halftime and a line-drive punt returned inside the Eagles' five-yard line.

In other words, only one Oakley scoring drive started beyond the 50-yard line. "I thought the guys played hard the whole four quarters. And that 12-0 score at halftime were two breakdowns that are easily fixable," said Colby head coach Chris Gardner. "We shut them out in the third quarter (after one quick score), and we played real tough defense in the fourth quarter as well."

Yet it's painfully tempting to say the Plainsmen's defense played tough like an Oak.

They posted a shutout despite two bungled snaps that eluded their punter and set up Colby scoring opportunities.

The Eagles (0-1) only enjoyed moments of success with their new no-huddle, quick-tempo offense.

New starting quarterback Josh Matchell completed his first pass



of the season to senior Chase Hartwell, but Colby lost a fumble on its next play, which set up Oakley for its first touchdown (on a 20-yard pass).

Matchell dashed around left end 12 yards for Colby's initial first down. He later delivered one perfectly placed pass into sophomore Ben Matchell's hands covering 23 yards.

However, the Eagles' best scoring chance came after a second

Oakley botched punt snap.

Sophomore Matt Pieper tackled the scrambling kicker before he had any chance to unleash a hurried punt.

Moments later, senior Andrew Taylor ran over another Oakley player while rumbling inside the 20-yard line.

A pass interference penalty set up Colby's first-and-goal.

Josh Matchell then eluded more Plainsmen, cut upfield and appeared destined to score the first six Eagle points — until a final lunging defender knocked that football loose.

Oakley recovered the fumble deep inside its own end zone and never allowed Colby to get that close to scoring again.

"Offensively, we had our shots. It just didn't work out," Gardner observed. "The second half was a

little rough, maybe a little rougher than I thought it would be. But I thought it ran well at times. I thought at times we moved it well that they (Oakley) were on their heels."

Josh Matchell's 39 yards paced the Colby ground attack; he also passed for 55.

Meanwhile, Colby defenders clearly knocked a few Plainsmen back on their heels.

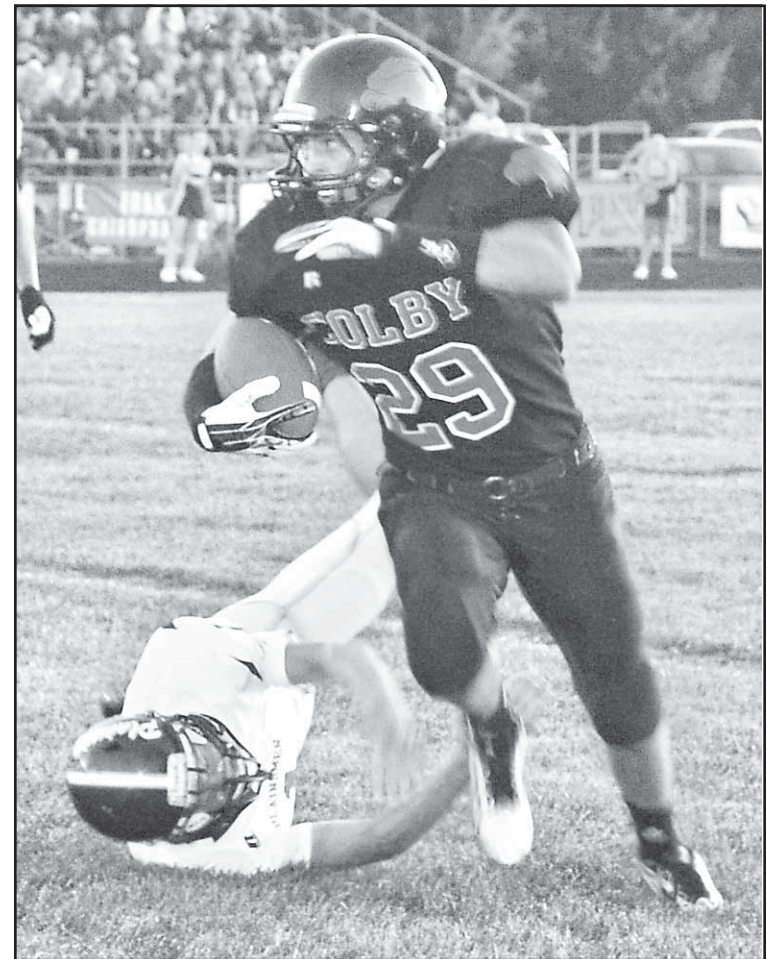
The Eagles delivered seven tackles for losses.

Ben Matchell and fellow linebacker Eric Schuette both sliced into Oakley's backfield more than once, along with senior Austin Boehme.

Colby caused three turnovers, including two interceptions from sophomore Brady Holzmeister.

Holzmeister's first pick stopped a Plainsmen scoring drive deep

Senior Andrew Taylor (29, below) ran right over an Oakley defender while helping set up a Colby Colby touchdown opportunity in the first half Friday evening. However, as quarterback Ben Matchell dove for the goal line (left), a well-placed Oakley hit knocked the football loose. The Plainsmen recovered this fumble in their own end zone help preserve a 26-0 win at Dennen Field.



into Colby territory just before half time.

The Eagles tried to build on this momentum with an onside-kick to start the second half.

However, Oakley was not fooled and scored on a 47-yard touchdown gallop just seconds later.

A successful two-point conversion run put the Plainsmen ahead 20-0.

Colby still contained Oakley as

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sophomore Brady Slinger forced a Plainsmen fumble and junior Jay Ziegelmeier recovered.

Senior Adam Giersch later broke up a long pass that could have led to more points.

Yet penalties and miscues kept Colby's offense contained throughout the second half.

The Eagles will aim for improvement entering game 2 against a tough Scott City squad on the road at 7:30 p.m. Friday.



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Colby sophomore Ben Matchell (35) became one bad habit for the Oakley Plainsmen as he often slammed into ballcarriers before they got started Friday evening. He dislodged the football on this play while junior teammate Keegan Morgan (73) closed in.

Colby forces three turnovers in opener

Sophomore Ben Matchell made eight solo tackles and classmate Brady Holzmeister intercepted two Oakley passes to highlight Colby High's varsity football season opener Friday evening.

Though the Class 2A No. 3 Plainsmen prevailed 26-0 over 4A Colby, there were plenty of good Eagle performances at Dennen Field.

Here are Colby leaders on offense, defense and special teams:

Offense

Rushing: Josh Matchell, 9 carries for 39 yards.

Passing: Matchell 5 completions in 17 attempts for 55 yards.

Receiving: Ben Matchell 3 catches for 36 yards, Holzmeister 1 for 13, Chase Hartwell 1 for 6.

Total yards: Josh Matchell 94,

Ben Matchell 33, Andrew Taylor 10.

Defense

Solo tackles: Ben Matchell 8, Matt Pieper 7, Taylor 7, Adam Giersch 5, Eric Schuette 5, Garrett Rose 5, Austin Boehme 4, Jay Ziegelmeier 4, Josh Matchell 4, Brady Holzmeister 4, Bryce Amberger 3, Keegan Morgan 1, Zachary Young 1, Brady Slinger 1, Donte Whitfield 1.

Tackles for loss: Ben Matchell 3, Boehme 2, Young 1, Schuette 1.

Takeaways: Holzmeister 2 interceptions, Ziegelmeier 1 fumble recovery.

Special teams

Punting: Taylor 5 punts for 129 yards, Ben Matchell 1 for 38.

Kickoff and punt returns: Ben Matchell 2 for 50 yards, Matt Pieper 1 for 16.

Heat helps Bears fight off Crusaders

Facing triple-digit temperatures along with nearly triple the number of players didn't stop the Heartland Christian football team from putting up one terrific fight Saturday at Salina.

The Crusaders powered ahead of St. Mary's, 8-0, on Blaine Wertz's seven-yard touchdown run, followed by Cory Wertz's two-point pass to Brook Ziegelmeier.

Falling behind 20-8 didn't faze Heartland Christian for long, as Wertz delivered a 20-yard scoring strike into Brennan Ziegelmeier. Ziegelmeier then ran for two to close the Colby-based school within 20-16.

A 29-10 St. Mary's advantage in players finally caught up with Heartland Christian.

"We ran out of gas," coach Steve Ziegelmeier said about the 28-16 loss. "It was 105 degrees, and that was a killer. Not to make excuses, but it was a factor."

A few big plays also doomed the Crusaders' victory hopes. Focusing on details like "playing to the whistle" should help them in upcoming contests, the coach said.

"Plus game-time temp (Friday) is supposed to be 78," he added.

The Crusaders play their next contest at Wheatland-Grinnell Friday evening. Opening kickoff is set for 7 p.m. in Grainfield.

Titans trounce first foe of season, 44-0

Total domination best describes the Brewster-Triplains Titans' 44-0 season-opening victory over Healy-Western Plains Friday evening.

The Titans (1-0 record) rushed for 313 yards with quarterback Ryan Gfeller gaining 170 on only 14 carries (12.14 yards per carry).

Meanwhile, Seth Smith's 19 total tackles powered the shutout defensive effort.

Smith made 16 solo stops while Nathan Jorgensen and Jace Jorgen equally divided another 14 stops (seven solos each).

Both Jorgensens were also part of that devastating ground attack. Nathan averaged almost nine yards per rush (10 for 89) and matched Gfeller's two ground

touchdowns.

Jace Jorgensen added another 29 yards, though the Titans' other rushing TD came from Justin Schmidt (three carries, 10 yards).

Brewster-Triplains rarely needed to pass. However, exactly half of Gfeller's completions also sent for TDs.

Nathan Jorgensen caught one among his three receptions covering 54 yards.

Justin Culwell also caught a 21-yard scoring strike.

Jace Jorgensen added two fumble recoveries to keep visiting Healy-Western Plains from ever reaching the Titans' end zone.

Other Brewster-Triplains leaders Friday night included:

Rushing — Culwell 1 carry, 15

yards.

Total tackles: Jace Jorgensen 10, Nathan Jorgensen 8, Schmidt 6, C.J. Felzein 4, Culwell 4, Taylor Stramel 4, Fred Schertz 4, Tony Aguilar 3, Rook Shaw 2.

Sacks: Hansen, Shaw.

A glance at upcoming area events this week:

Today's Games

JV football: Colby at Oakley, 5:30 p.m.

JV football: Brewster at Ransom, TBA

Tuesday's Games

Golf: Colby at Goodland, 1 p.m.

Volleyball: Colby at St. Francis Triangular in Oberlin, 4 p.m.

Volleyball: Brewster at Golden Plains Quadrangular, TBA

Volleyball: Heartland at West-

ern Plains Double Dual, 4 p.m.

Wednesday's Games

College volleyball: Colby College at Seward County, 6:30 p.m. (Liberal)

Thursday's Games

Tennis: Colby at Ulysses, 3 p.m.

JV tennis: Colby at WaKeeney, 1 p.m.

Cross country: Colby at Quinter Invitational, 4:30 p.m.

Cross country - Brewster at Quinter Invitational, TBA

Junior high football: Colby at Oakley, 5:30 p.m. (7th grade)

Junior high volleyball: Colby at Oakley, 4:30 p.m.

Junior high football/volleyball - Golden Plains at Brewster, TBA

Junior high volleyball: Heartland at Damar/Logan, 4 p.m.

Colby earns three places at home meet

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ed strong as they beat Scott City 6-4.

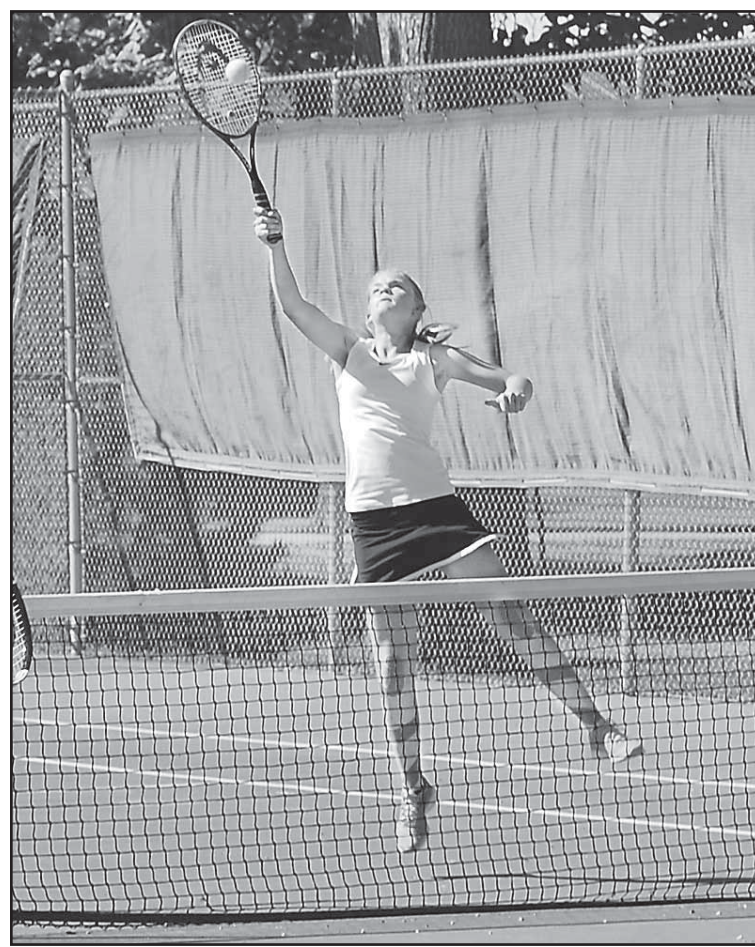
Other top doubles teams proved to be tough. Norton got past the Colby combination, 6-2, and then Tribune earned a 6-3 victory.

Colby's No. 2 doubles team of Trestra Urban and Rachel Browne delivered one more fifth-place finish for the Eagles.

They conquered another very close opener, getting past Tribune 7-6 (7-4). Norton had earned a first-round bye, and the rested Bluejays were able to outlast Colby 6-1 in that next match.

Urban and Browne — two more first-year varsity players — pushed Osborne through a 6-4 match in their tourney finale on another warm Saturday.

The eventual champions in these three divisions were Osborne (No. 1 singles), Ulysses (No. 1 doubles) and Norton (No. 2 doubles). Colby's next tennis competition will be at Ulysses on Thursday (3 p.m. start).



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Colby's Samantha Lindberg jumped to make a return during the home tennis tournament on Saturday at Fike Park.

Chiefs tear through weak Jaguars, 28-2

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — It was Kansas City's most lopsided season-opening victory in 50 years, a perfect start to the Andy Reid era.

Alex Smith threw two early touchdown passes, Kansas City's defense dominated all day and the

Chiefs handled the Jacksonville Jaguars 28-2 on Sunday.

Jamaal Charles ran for 77 yards and a touchdown before leaving with a quadriceps injury, but that was about the only negative for guys in red.

"You want to win every game

you possibly can in the National Football League, that's what you strive for. You work so stinking hard for every week, then you cherish it," said Reid, who spent the previous 14 years in Philadelphia.

The last time Kansas City won

its opener by such a wide margin was 1963, a 59-7 victory against Denver.

This one looked like it was headed in that direction after Smith threw two TD passes in the first quarter, both with short fields as the Chiefs cruised.