

Cowboys upset Monarchs

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News
Maybe it was the fact the game was played early or that when it comes to the playoffs, anything can happen, but the Cowboys went to Hays Monday and upset the Thomas More Prep Monarchs, 56-50, in the first round of the sub-state tournament.

The win ensures that the Cowboys (9-11) will get to play at least one sub-state game on their home floor. They will take on the Scott City Beavers (13-6) at 6:30 p.m. Mountain Time on Thursday at Max Jones Fieldhouse in the sub-state semi-finals. The other semi-final Thursday at Max Jones begins at 5 p.m. Mountain Time, pitting the Colby Eagles (14-5) against the Ulysses Tigers (12-8).

"It was a great game and I am so proud of our kids," said Cowboy Coach John McClean said. "We were down 13 in the first quarter, but we hung tough and got back in it. It came down to the fourth quarter, and we made enough plays to win."

"This was a total team effort. Matt

Cowgirls game rescheduled

The weather caused a change, with all the games scheduled for tonight rescheduled for Wednesday. The Cowgirls (13-6) will host the Thomas More Prep Lady Monarchs (0-19) at 6 p.m. Mountain Time at Max Jones Fieldhouse.

Mentzer, Jordan Riebel and Nathan Thompson all had great games. Jeremy Stefan had two huge 3-point shots in the fourth quarter that really helped us."

"Aaron Gittinger and Luke Stone may not have scored a lot, but they had great defensive efforts and rebounded well."

The Cowboys fell behind 23-10 in the first quarter, but cut the lead to 7 by halftime, 33-26. In the third quarter, both teams were playing more defense. They traded baskets, each scoring 8

points, to keep margin at 7 heading into the final quater.

Sparked by the 3-point baskets from Stefan, the Cowboys really turned up the heat.

They outscored the Monarchs 22-9 to take the win, 56-50.

Mentzer was high scorer for the Cowboys with 20 points. He had six field goals and was 8 of 10 at the free throw line. Two other Cowboys were also in double figures: Riebel had 13 points and Thompson had 10. Riebel had three 3-point buckets, one field goal and was 2 for 2 in free throws. Thompson had one 3-point shot on his only attempt, one field goal and was 5 of 8 from the charity stripe.

Stefan had 8 points, with two being the 3-point baskets in the fourth quarter on the only two 3-point shots he attempted. He also was 2 of 6 at the free-throw line.

Stone had 3 points with one field goal and 1 of 2 free throws. Lee McCoy had 2 points on one field goal.

Mentzer and Thompson each had 6 rebounds while Gittinger had 5, Stone

and Stefan each had 4, Kris Rubio had 2 and McCoy had 1.

The 3-point plays were important, as the Cowboys hit 46 percent to 28 percent for the Monarchs. The Cowboys outshot the Monarchs with a 37 percent total shooting percentage to 35.6.

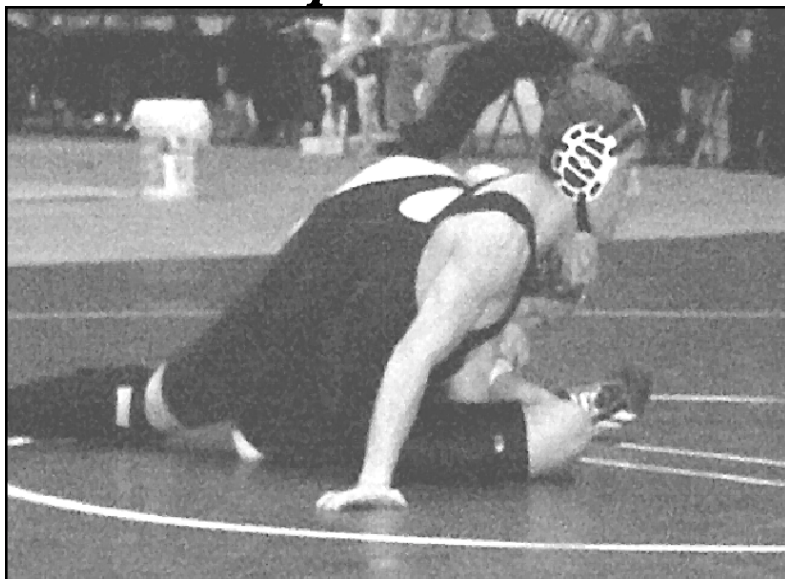
"We are looking forward to Scott City," McClean said. "We are really excited and it should be a great game which we have a chance to win if we play well.

"The win last night was great for the team and helps our confidence. I know our kids are excited to be coming home to play before the hometown crowd."

On the girls side of the sub-state, the weather has caused a change, with all the games that had been scheduled for tonight rescheduled for Wednesday. The Cowgirls (13-6) will host the Thomas More Prep Lady Monarchs (0-19) at 6 p.m. Mountain Time at Max Jones Fieldhouse.

If they win that game, they will then play at 5 p.m. Friday at Max Jones against the winner of the Scott City (10-8)-Larned (12-7) game.

State champion



On his way to winning the state championship, Bryce Abbey worked for an escape in his final match Saturday. Abbey won the championship at 125 pounds with a 2-1 decision over Derek Nordquist of Mulvane.
Photo by Jay Kelley / Colby Free Press

Funny-looking win takes Nuggets down

DENVER (AP) — Before the ball dropped through the net, Tracy McGrady began an easy jog backward, shaking his head in a display of self-confidence. An NBA star at 21, McGrady has found his comfort zone with the Orlando Magic.

McGrady's maturation continued Monday night with 36 points and 12 rebounds in Orlando's 93-86 win over the Denver Nuggets. He had identical numbers against the Nuggets on Dec. 8.

"It's nice having a star," Magic coach Doc Rivers said. "The reason we lost games last year was because we had nowhere to turn at the end of

games. Now we have Tracy."

McGrady was at his best in the second half, scoring 24 points — including 11 in the first four minutes.

"It was a funny looking win," McGrady said. "We knew we had to get ourselves going because this was definitely a winnable game. It was a matter of us defending. Everyone was playing aggressively on both ends."

Orlando's ability to wipe out an early 16-point deficit was the latest setback for the Nuggets, who have lost 11 of 14 to fall 4 1/2 games behind Minnesota for the eighth playoff spot in the West.

Denver (29-29) was two games behind first-place Utah on Jan. 28.

Chiefs are working against deadline with quarterback

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Racing against a Friday deadline, the Kansas City Chiefs must either rework Elvis Grbac's huge contract or find another quarterback.

On Monday, they were exploring both options.

The Chiefs have begun preliminary talks with the St. Louis Rams for quarterback Trent Green, agent Jim Steiner confirmed Monday. They are also working on restructuring the contract for Grbac, which calls for a cap-busting \$10 million bonus if he's on the roster by Friday, when all NFL teams need to be at the salary cap spending limit for 2001 of \$67.4 million.

Steiner, the agent for both Green and Grbac, said he expected the talks to heat up in the next three days.

The Chiefs ended the season almost \$30 million over the cap and have already released several veterans, including running backs Donnell Bennett and Kimble Anders, in an effort to reduce their salary total.

"The Rams are shopping Trent, no question about it," Steiner told The Associated Press.

"So I'm sure they've had discussions (with Kansas City) to some degree," he said. "I think the Chiefs are certainly going to be talking heavily in the next three days."

Steiner said his information was that the Chiefs had offered first- and second-round draft picks in exchange for Green and a second-round choice. A similar report appeared Monday on CBS Sportsline.com.

Relief pitcher has recovery setback

By John Mossman

AP Sports Writer
TUCSON (AP) — Colorado Rockies reliever Jerry Dipoto, who had surgery last May to relieve a bulging disc in his neck, felt stiffness in his neck during a 15-minute throwing session.

Dipoto called Sunday's episode a "setback" but didn't think it would sideline him for more than a few days.

"The doctors told me to expect another setback along the way," he said. "It's not going to be just smooth sailing. I guess this is a setback, just a bump in the road.

"I felt a little stiff when I got in this morning. Stiffness is going to be an issue always. Once I start getting loose, I'm fine for the rest of the day.

"Today it was a little more difficult and once I got on the mound in the bullpen to warm up for batting practice, I felt a little awkward. I was definitely laboring to get anything done. I was having problems throwing strikes. At least I got my 15 minutes of throwing in."

Dipoto said he has had similar setbacks, mostly recently last November that "lasted three or four days and went away. I haven't had any problems really until today. Hopefully, there is no reason why it shouldn't be cleared up very quickly."

He described the episode as "not debilitating in any way. It's just a little uncomfortable."

Dipoto, who saved 16 games for the

Rockies in 1997 and 19 the following year, was one of the NL's top setup men in 1999.

Last season he pitched only 13 2-3 innings, going on the disabled list twice after the neck injury surfaced in mid-March.

During the surgery, doctors removed bone from Dipoto's neck, took bone from his hip and transplanted it into his neck, and wrapped the area in a metal plate.

"My neck was immobilized for better than two months, and the scar tissue never did get a chance to break up," he said. "A lot of the setbacks... have been scar tissue breaking up. I don't think it's a huge issue.

"I don't intend to have this stop me

from throwing or doing anything that I need to keep up with the program and be where I want to be for opening day."

Notes: Right-handed reliever John Hudek HAS signed a minor-league contract with the Rockies.

Hudek, 34, had rotator cuff surgery seven months ago. He is expected to rehab through the course of the minor-league camp and be re-evaluated, with the likelihood of staying in extended spring training.

Hudek, an All-Star with Houston in 1994, pitched in 20 games for Toronto, Atlanta and Cincinnati in 1999, going 0-2 with an 8.44 ERA.

He was in camp with St. Louis last spring, but didn't pitch during the season.

Lightning hits Oklahoma team plane enroute

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Just a month after the Oklahoma State plane crash cast a pall over college basketball, lightning struck the plane carrying the Oklahoma team home from Maryland on Saturday night.

"Lightning hit our right wing," Oklahoma coach Kelvin Sampson said Monday.

Sampson described the incident as "frightful" and said the sudden jolt "shook everybody up."

"Needless to say, a lot of prayers were said," Sampson said. "The players were up front and most of them were asleep. It was a jolt. But there was nothing after that that caused concern."

Sampson said the first thought that came into his mind was Jan. 27 when 10 members of Oklahoma State's traveling party died when their plane crashed while returning from Colorado.

"Life is full of perspective builders," Sampson said. "We said our prayers and we thank the good Lord that we landed and everybody is fine."

The pilot immediately reassured his passengers that no damage had been done. Then after the flight landed in Oklahoma City, he came aboard the team bus.

"(The pilot) said there was some damage to the right wing when the lightning strike hit us," Sampson said.

high school scores

By The Associated Press

Boys
Results of games Monday night:
Colby 56, Larned 38
Scott City 76, Pratt 67

The Sooners stand 10-4 in the league, tied with Kansas and Texas for second place, one game behind Iowa State. It's been a good recovery from their 1-3 start to the conference season. But guard J.R. Raymond, a catalyst to the comeback, has been dismissed from the team for the rest of the year for violation of team policies which Sampson refuses to discuss.

His absence could be telling. Oklahoma has posted a 9-1 record in its last 10 conference games, with Raymond averaging 18.5 points, five rebounds, 3.4 assists and 3.9 3-pointers.

"There's a toughness about our program that insulates us from adversity," said Sampson. "You don't feel sorry for yourself. You don't ask for sympathy. You go practice and get ready to play. Yeah, we have to make some adjustments. But we'll take the right attitude and we'll move forward."

Looking for a dark horse in the Big 12 tournament? Try Texas A&M. The young Aggies are only 10-17 overall and 3-11 in the league. But coach

Melvin Watkins is pleased with what he sees as steady progress.

"This year we've been at least competitive with some of those teams that lead the league," said Watkins. "We've gotten close. Now you go into tournament time and anything can happen. I think we can go in there and get us a win or two."

In a 62-52 victory Saturday over Texas Tech, all but 10 points were scored by underclassmen.

"I think we've played better of late, so we've got some positive things going that way," Watkins said. "And to be honest, we've just been devastated with injuries."

While most people would probably list Iowa State's Jamaal Tinsley as the Big 12's best, Baylor coach Dave Bliss favors Kansas sophomore Kirk Hinrich.

"I think he understands how his team has to operate to be successful," Bliss said. "He never deters from what coaches want and his team needs him to do.

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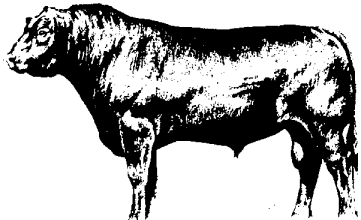
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