

# Cowgirls trounce the Eagles

By Roxie Yonkey  
*The Goodland Daily News*

Somehow you always knew it would be this way — Goodland and Colby for the sub-state title. And the season record, 2-1, was on Goodland's side.

But the loss had come last and it was a blow-out. The wins came first and they were tight. So a Goodland blow-out was probably not what you expected. But it was just what you got.

Cowgirls 54, Eagles 45.

That score was closer than the game really was. Perhaps the outcome was prophesied during Andra Townsend's singing of the national anthem. As she sang the final line, a balloon popped. Signaling a blow-out. In favor of Goodland. And the blow-out means what Goodland fans have been waiting five long years to hear.

Cowgirls go to state — in basketball! And they did it the right way, with the best game they've played this season. "We shot well; we rebounded well," Cowgirl coach Connie Livengood said.

The Cowgirls suffocated the Eagles with defense. The game's first 43 seconds showed the way the rest of the game would be. Colby controlled the tip-off, then coughed up the ball. Cowgirl Jara McKee missed, but Kendra Brack put it back. Then Cowgirl Ashley Hallagin got a steal and turned it into a score. Goodland led by four with 7:17 left in the first quarter.

Colby coach Tom Beckman ran a chaser offense from the very start, not waiting to see who Goodland's hot shooter would be. If he'd had a crystal ball, he probably couldn't have predicted Saturday's hot shooter and rebounder — Brack. She not only held Colby's lone senior, Andra Stephens, out of double figures (with a lot of help from Erica Mann), she scored 14 points and dragged down nine rebounds.

"We knew that we needed 10 points from Kendra to win," Livengood said, "and we had them already by the end of the first half."

Colby came back at the end of the first quarter, taking a 16-15 lead on

Stephens' trey. Dominique Palser extended Colby's lead with a long two to open the second quarter.

Goodland's Jayci Stone tied up the game at 18 with an old-fashioned three-point play with 7:10 left in the half.

The teams exchanged buckets until Cowgirl Cody Pettibone downed consecutive threes. Then Stone found StevieLee Raymer and Brack to take a 10-point, 32-22, Cowgirl lead into the locker room.

At the end of three, Goodland had extended the lead to 14, 46-32. The lead grew to 19 at 4:30 left in the game on McKee's steal that became a Mann five-footer.

Goodland then began to eat the clock with a stall. Colby scored the next 11 points, four straight from steals.

Finally, Pettibone broke the Colby run with a pair of free throws. Goodland led by 10, 54-44, with 29.5 seconds left.

Colby's Summar Stephens scored the Eagles' final point of the season on

a free throw, but it didn't matter.

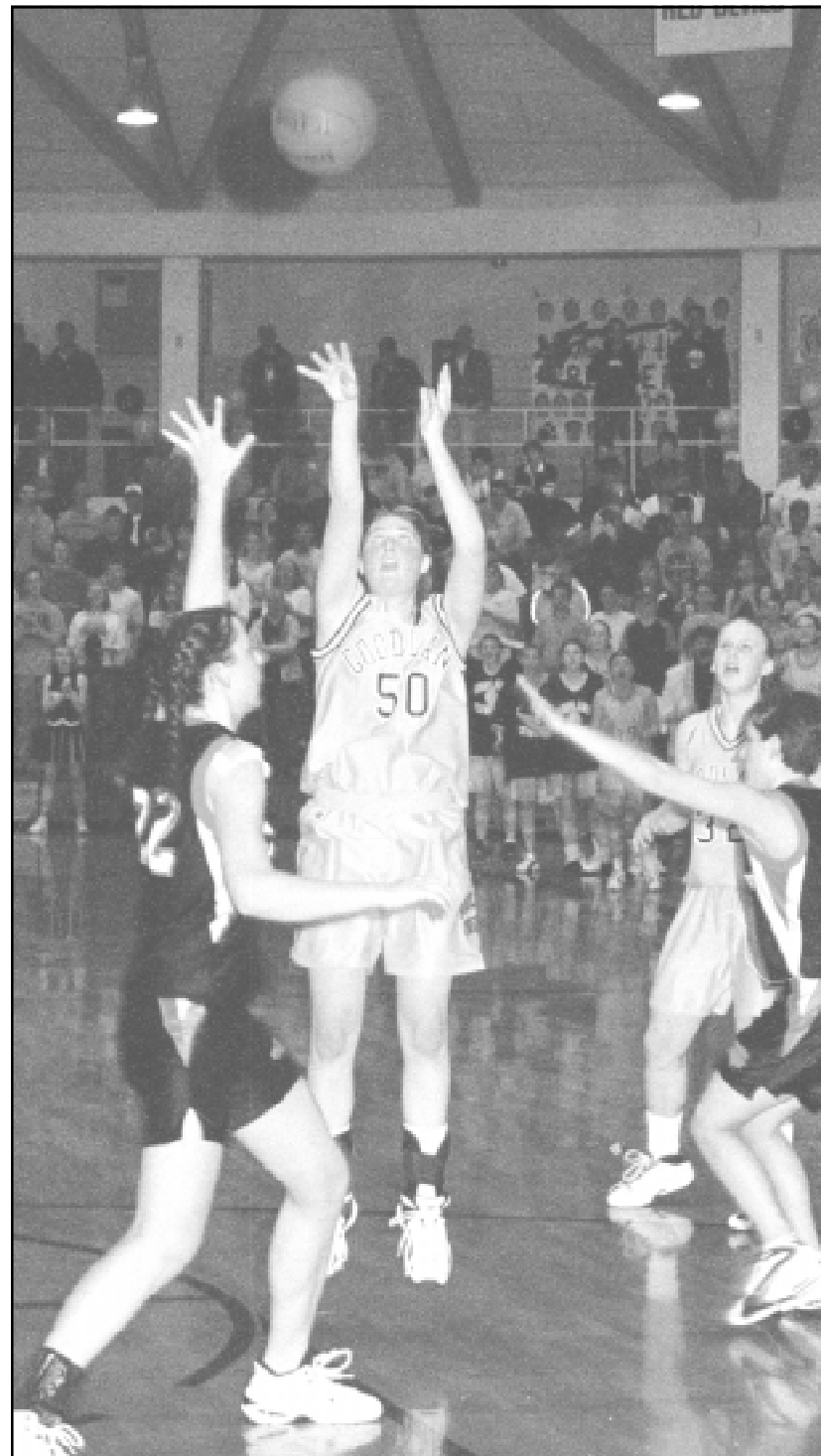
The nearly-inevitable Colby-Goodland game ended with a meaningless point, but the outcome certainly wasn't. Beating Colby for the third time was the charm that sent Goodland to Salina this weekend.

Besides Brack, Pettibone and McKee were also in double figures with 11 points apiece. Stone scored six. Hallagin, Mann and Raymer all had four points each. McKee pulled down nine boards. Hallagin and Stone got five each. Hallagin had three steals and Stone three assists.

Andrea and Summar Stephens led Colby scorers with nine points each. Andra Seeman scored eight.

The two victories in sub-state play raised the Cowgirls' record to 16-6. They are seeded sixth at state and play third seed Ottawa (20-3) at 7:15 p.m. Mountain Time Thursday in Salina's Bicentennial Center. Ottawa defeated defending state champion Burlington 63-55 in their sub-state final.

Colby's season ended at 14-7.



Goodland's Kendra Brack (50) put up a shot from the free throw line over Colby's Andra Stephens. Brack had 14 points and nine rebounds in Saturday's sub-state championship.

Photo by Eric Yonkey / The Goodland Daily News

## Goodland wins game in last minutes

By Roxie Yonkey  
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Winston Churchill told graduates of Harrow School, "never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never."

None of this year's Goodland Cowgirls were there to hear that 1941 speech, but they played Friday as if they had heard the advice and taken it to heart.

With just over a minute to go in the sub-state semifinals, nearly everyone in Max Jones Fieldhouse thought that the Cowgirls' season was finished. They were down by eight and hadn't scored in the fourth quarter.

But the Cowgirls and their coaches would have made Churchill proud. They didn't give in, oh no. Never, never, never, never.

Instead they scored 10 points in the final 1:07 to win 42-40 and advance to the championship game.

"I never gave up and the girls never gave up," Cowgirl coach Connie

Livengood said. "That's the sign of a championship team. I knew we matched up well with them and I knew that if we stepped up, we could win."

Goodland had led 32-30 at 2:16 in the third on two Jara McKee free throws. Then Larned's Sarah Wheaton closed the quarter with a bucket in the lane. She opened the fourth with a five-footer. The Indians' Trixi Rodriguez and Catherine Dikeman followed Wheaton with consecutive buckets, both from Cowgirl turnovers.

And Larned led by six, 38-32, with 2:54 left.

Cowgirl Cody Pettibone tried a 12-footer with 1:48 to go, but missed. Larned tied up the rebound and received the ball on the alternate-possession rule. Cowgirl Lacey Brenner then hacked Dikeman while they were trying for a rebound. Dikeman made both her free throws.

Larned led by eight, 40-32, with 1:16 left.

Cowgirl season's future looked to be a short one — very short. They weren't playing particularly well and Larned seemed to have all the advantages.

But the Cowgirls didn't know they were in deep trouble. They refused to lose. Never, never, never, never.

At 1:07 left, Cowgirl Jayci Stone put up an off-balance three. It was an ugly shot — ugly until it went in.

Stone wasn't surprised at the shot's success and neither was her coach.

"She practices that all the time, so she was ready when she needed to be," Livengood said.

Goodland still had to foul and they had to hope that Larned wouldn't make their free throws. They didn't.

Four time outs were called in the final 1:16. Livengood reminded the girls each time that the clock was against them.

"We had to gamble and hope they would miss their free throws," she said. "I told them to try to get a five-second

call first. If they didn't get that, go for the foul."

Cowgirls sent Indians to the line three times in the final minute. The Indians came away with no points and no rebounds. Stone and Pettibone got them all.

The first Larned free throw came down to Stone. It became an Ashley Hallagin three.

The second Larned free throw also came to Stone. It became a McKee layup from Hallagin. McKee's bucket tied the score at 40 with 27.0 seconds left.

Larned had won their first-round game in overtime and their broadcaster predicted they'd win in overtime again.

He — and they — didn't reckon with the Cowgirls' determination to win.

The third Larned free throw came to Pettibone. Stone turned it into another McKee layup.

Goodland led by two, 42-40, with 13.3 seconds left.

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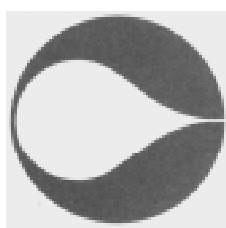
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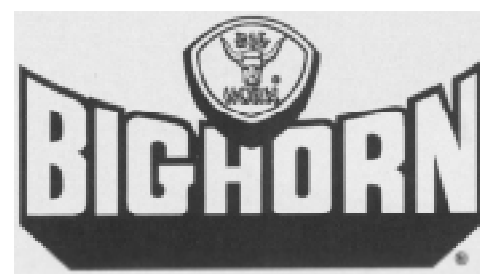
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