

from our viewpoint...

Cowgirls deserve accolades for title

There was an air of excitement when the Cowgirls opened the pool play Friday in Salina, and that turned to the thrill of victory when they completed a sweep of the Class 4A state volleyball championship Saturday afternoon.

Coach Jerry McKee and his team deserve all the cheers and congratulations for the season-long effort that paid off with the state title.

The Cowgirls did not lose a match to a Kansas school. Their only loses were to tough Colorado teams at the first of the season.

“It was awesome,” our courtside photographer, Liz West, said. “They played fantastic games. There was a large crowd from Goodland there on Saturday.”

The play of Tomi Windell on Friday was great, as she served for 10 straight points to bring the Cowgirls back to win the first game against Circle High School of Towanda. The Thunderbirds were leading 19-14 when Windell started her streak. The score was 24-20 when Alisha McKee got a kill to cement the win.

That was the type of play the Cowgirls continued to produce as the games went on and they got closer to the championship. The real challenge Friday was when they were able to come back from losing their first game to top-seeded Abilene, 28-26. They had to take the match in the next two games, winning the second 25-14 with aces by Dani Bedore, Courtney Schields and Kelsey Herl.

That forced the third game, which seesawed until Bedore took charge with the score 8-9 in favor of Abilene. With her serving, the Cowgirls were unstoppable and won the game and match 15-9.

Saturday, the Cowgirls took the first game against Clearwater and there was a growing sense that the championship was in their hands.

The crowd support was wonderful, and Coach McKee said he was proud of the team effort. He said the girls handled the pressure, played with intensity and kept their focus.

This is the first state title for the volleyball team since 1988, and for the seniors it is a wonderful way to finish their high school years. For the younger girls, it gives them a goal to shoot for. They know the level of play it takes to win a state title.

The Cowgirls are the Class 4A champions!

Our congratulations to Speedy Aguilar for his eighth-place finish Saturday in the state Class 4A cross country meet at Wamego. He received a medal for his finish and All-State honors. His hard work paid off, and we feel the city should be proud of his accomplishment.

Tonight, attention turns to football as the Cowboys strive to move into the next round of the state playoffs by defeating Kingman. Go Cowboys! — *Tom Betz*

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Remember that preventive maintenance?

Eldest daughter's trying to decide whether to shoot her car or her husband.

Although, really, none of the problems was Nik's fault, it was because of him that she had no transportation last Friday.

It all started when Nik got an assignment to go to Savannah to teach a class. That meant he would have to take his Jeep for the two-hour drive and she'd have to drive her car.

The kids live in Augusta, Ga., and work for an Internet company. Since they go to work together every morning and since neither of them is Tinkerbell, they take his Jeep rather than her compact car.

In fact, her car had been sitting in the driveway since May. She took it to catch a flight out of Atlanta and when she got back, the battery was dead. She got it jumped and drove home, not even stopping to get gas.

Ever since, the car sat, dead in the driveway, and nobody worried about it.

"We just don't use it too much," she said. "We go to work together and we generally get by on one car just fine."

But, last week Nik needed to be gone for two days. He would leave on Thursday night and return home Friday night.

Daughter figured it was time to jump start the car so she would have transportation while husband and Jeep were gone.



**cynthia
haynes**

• open season

So on Wednesday afternoon, she made an appointment to have a new battery put in it and tried to jump start it. She let it charge.

Nothing.

Her next move was to call her father. He told her that it sometimes takes a little while to get enough juice into a really dead battery.

So they left the jumper cables on and the Jeep running for 45 minutes.

After that, the car started like a charm and they were off to the shop for a new battery. However, in the middle of a busy street halfway there, the car stopped dead and Nik had to push it off the road.

Remember the ride home from the Atlanta airport and not stopping even for gas?

After pushing daughter's car off the road, Nik went to the nearest gas station and bought a container and two gallons of gas. (Later, they found an empty gas can in the trunk of the car.)

With gas in the car, it was time to try to jump it again.

Kidnappers haven't faced court, jury

A few nights ago, I saw a report on television telling viewers that the two alleged kidnappers of Elizabeth Smart have not yet gone to trial.

Apparently, their lawyers are working the insanity/competent-to-stand-trial path to keep their clients out of prison. Whenever I hear about the "tricks" lawyers try to have their clients found innocent in the eyes of the court, I get angry. I have to make an effort to remind myself that this is the lawyers' job.

One way I do this is to remember what a criminal defense lawyer in Texas once said in an interview. He said he wasn't interested in the truth and he wasn't even interested in justice, he was an advocate for his client. As it turns out, he was defending a drunk driver who killed a law enforcement officer who had stopped to help a disabled motorist. Despite the lawyer's best efforts, his client went to prison, mostly due to the several driving while intoxicated convictions in his past.

Keeping the lawyers' role as advocates for their clients in mind helps temper my anger. However one of the tricks lawyers use, to great success, is to keep a high-profile case in the media.

This is what's happening with the Kobe Bryant case. By making it a daily spectacle, his lawyers seem to be influencing the public in his favor, as evidenced by the threats the alleged victim has received. With the lawyers using most of the "tricks of the trade," Bryant's case is turning into a media circus much like several others in the past few years involving celebrities.

As much as I dislike these celebrity cases,



**greg
stover**

• as i see it

it's difficult not to form an opinion about them. The Bryant case — remember I don't know all the facts — I believe is a case of a wealthy professional athlete deciding he wanted something and, as he is probably used to, getting it. I'm thinking he saw his alleged victim as simply a commodity to be used and discarded, a common-class person paid to serve him and others of his social status.

Another "trick" being used by Bryant's defense team is to demonize the victim by drag-

This time, neither the car nor the Jeep would go.

They called a friend, Chris, who drove up in his tiny sports car and jumped both vehicles. Off to the shop with five minutes to spare.

"I made them drive the car into the bay even though they weren't going to put in the new battery until the next day," daughter said. "I knew it wouldn't start again."

The next day, she got her car back and went to the gym while Nik packed and prepared for his trip. While she was running on a treadmill with her headphones on, her husband was trying to reach her both on her cell phone and by having her paged.

The Jeep had died in the driveway and he was late leaving for his trip.

She drove home, and Nik ended up folding himself into the compact.

"He hates driving my car," daughter said. "It's too little for him. That's why we always take his."

And daughter was without transportation.

Another call to Chris, who almost fell out of his sports car laughing, and she was on her way to work.

Saturday morning she called me.

The Jeep was still dead in the driveway and wouldn't be going in to the shop until Monday.

Luckily, both her car and husband are in running condition now.

ging out her alleged sexual history. I don't know about most people, but I don't accept the idea that if a woman has consensual sex, even if with multiple partners, it means she cannot be raped in the eyes of the law.

It makes me wonder if the defense team for Brian David Mitchell and Wanda Barzee, the alleged kidnappers of Smart, will try and demonize her. My guess is that if their insanity strategy doesn't work, then they will.

Another item that makes me doubt that Mitchell and Barzee will ever be held accountable for their alleged actions is that they are being held in Utah. Utah is the state where Edward J. Hackett was paroled. Utah was warned by the parole board that Hackett could still be a danger to society and should be closely monitored, but he ended up in Maine where 21-year-old Colby College senior Dawn M. Rossignol was murdered.

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