

# Sports



AT THE 56th Annual National High School Finals Rodeo in Gillette, Wyo., Chance Harman of Oberlin took fourth in saddle bronc. Chance has competed for two years in the saddle bronc class through high school rodeo.

## Graduate finishes fourth in saddle bronc competition

Chance Harman would rather be on a horse. The 18-year-old cowboy from the Norcat area has been riding since he was a baby, when his father Ron would take him riding. Two years ago he started to participate in high school rodeo. He is now going on his third year on the rodeo circuit. In May, he graduated from Decatur Community High and in July he took fourth in saddle bronc riding at the 56th annual National High School Finals Rodeo in Gillette, Wyo. This was the second year he had been to the national finals, which drew more than 1,500 contestants from 39 states, five Canadian provinces and Australia to vie for \$225,000 in college scholarships. Besides the national contest, Chance was named the Wrangler Saddle Bronc Champion and

awarded the WW Livestock Systems dealer's \$250 scholarship at the Kansas High School Finals Rodeo, held in June in Topeka. Besides being a two-time Kansas state saddle bronc champion, Chance has participated in calf roping and team roping with Cole Kinderknecht of Norton and Rena Unger of Oberlin. Chance is now getting ready to leave for college in Curtis, Neb. He will be attending the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, where he wants to get a degree in horse production management. After that, he said, he isn't sure where he wants to go, but he does know that he wants to get a job working with horses. He said he plans to rodeo in college, continuing with saddle bronc riding and hopes to also compete in team roping and calf roping.

Since he will be rodeoing, Chance said he plans to take his horses with him. He has a bay mare which is 8 years old. He said he has only had her for the last two months. He also owns a sorrel gelding which he has owned since the horse was 2, and he is now around 6. Chance said he trained the horse and rides him in competition. Chance said he started to rodeo his junior year of high school because he just wanted to give it a try. He has liked it and decided to stay with it. Off and on through the summer, he has been to rodeos in Kansas and Nebraska. He is sitting second in the Kansas Pro Rodeo Association for saddle bronc though he hasn't turned pro yet. He had to wait until he is 18, but he hopes to get his pro card this year. His parents are Ron and Renee Harman.

## Coyotes/Devils join forces

Three girls from Jennings are joining the Decatur Community Junior High girls volleyball teams this year as the Coyotes strive to find a way for their younger players to compete. An agreement between the Prairie Heights and Oberlin school boards allows the junior high students from Jennings, for football and volleyball, to practice and play with Oberlin's teams. Jennings High football players will play with Hoxie, but the Coyotes will field a high school volleyball team. Besides a new melding of teams, the Oberlin junior high girls will have a new coach. Melissa Dreher will head the junior high volleyball squads this year. Coach Dreher said Monday that she has 15 eighth graders, including two from Jennings, and 15 seventh graders including one from Jennings.

Most of the eighth graders played last year, Coach Dreher said, so they should have some good experience. Last year, both Oberlin junior high volleyball teams took second in the Northwest Kansas League Tournament and both ended the year with an 8-5 record. This year's eighth graders beat Hoxie and Colby to get into the championship round with Oakley.

The first junior high match will be on Thursday, Sept. 2, in Oberlin against the St. Francis Indians. The seventh-grade games will start at 4:30 p.m., with the eighth grade games directly afterward. Coach Dreher said that with only a couple of practices under their belts, it is hard to know how her teams will do this year, but she has high hopes for them.

# Lady Devils have tough act to follow this season

By CYNTHIA HAYNES  
After going all the way to substate and returning home with second place last year, the Decatur Community High volleyball squad will have a tough act to follow. The squad lost eight seniors and has only two seniors and three lettermen to lead the team this year, Coach Pat Dorshorst said. Lettering last year and returning will be senior Trina Shields and juniors Lydia Karnopp and Kaitlyn Stapp. Out of 34 players, 13 will be freshmen, eight sophomores and 11 juniors. Young or not, the girls have been working hard, Coach Dorshorst said. "It will be good to have some matches and get some court experience under our belts," she said. "Skill wise, we're in good shape." Looking at the first matches, which will be in Grainfield on Friday against Wheatland and Hoxie, Coach Dorshorst said she isn't sure what to expect. Hoxie beat out Oberlin in the Class 2A Substate Tournament last year. The Indians also lost some seniors, she said, but probably not as many as Oberlin.

The coach wasn't sure about Wheatland, which she thought either had a young team last year or will have one this year. Last year, the Lady Red Devils started off the season against the same two teams and beat the Wheatland Shockers, 25-18, 25-12 and Hoxie, 27-25, 25-18. Later in the year, they beat the Indians 25-21, 25-21 in Hoxie and 25-22, 19-25, 15-7, at the Oberlin Invitational. The second-game loss to Hoxie was Oberlin's only loss at the invitational. It's hard to tell what this year will bring, Coach Dorshorst said, since the Northwest Kansas League is always difficult. "It's traditionally a high-caliber league," she said. "Any team could win on any given day." Other teams in the league are Class 4A schools Goodland and Colby, Class 2A schools St. Francis, Hoxie, Quinter and Oakley and Class 1A Atwood. Lost to graduation were Abby Ream, Bayley Bryan, Kelsey Dorshorst, Rebekah Hasty, Kerrie Olson, Leah Marietta, Rena Unger and Sarah Ruf. Ruf, Dorshorst, Ream and Unger were selected for the Northwest Kansas All League team by the

league coaches. It was the first time that four girls from the same school had been selected for all league honors as far back as Mrs. Dorshorst could remember. Ruf, Dorshorst and Unger also played in the eighth annual All-Star Tournament in Goodland last year and Ruf was named the Most Inspirational Player in the matchup between girls from all over the area. While play begins in Grainfield at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Coach Dorshorst said, since there are three teams, she didn't know if Oberlin would be in the first round. Sometime this week, the host team will send out a schedule, she said, but as of noon on Monday, she hadn't received it. Both varsity and junior varsity will play on Friday, Mrs. Dorshorst said, and for most of the season, the ninth-grade team will also get to play. Oberlin's first home games will be the annual C Team Invitational starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 18. The annual Oberlin Invitational will be on Saturday, Oct. 2, starting at 9 a.m. Oberlin will also be host for the Northwest Kansas League Tournament, which will start at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 16.

## Runners ready to take off

They're re off and running — all over town. The Decatur Community High cross country team has been practicing and on Thursday will have their first opportunity to show off their speed at the annual Soap Scrimmage and Run on Thursday. The run part of the action starts at 7:30 p.m. while the Oberlin football players get ready to show off their skills. The cross country team will leave Smick Field and run a course around town, with the boys running two laps of the track and the girls one. Then all the runners will run a mile around town and return to the stadium, where the boys will again run two laps and the girls one. This year the team is almost evenly divided, as seven boys and six girls take to the field. Coach Dick Ahlberg said that he expects to have a good year in his 28th season with the cross country team. The girls team will have three returning lettermen, including senior Molly Coleman and juniors Lora Marietta and Whitney Beinke. New on the girls squad this year will be freshman Rebecca Helm and junior Tawni Davis.

Rounding out the team will be senior Amy Grace from St. Francis. Since the Indians didn't have enough cross country runners for a team and Grace wanted to run her senior year, the superintendents and principals of the two schools put their heads together and found a way. Although Grace can practice at home, she has been coming to Oberlin to be with the team at least during the first week of practice before St. Francis started classes. Coach Ahlberg said that she plans to continue practicing with the team as much as possible. She will be able to run with the team at meets except for regionals and state. If she gets to those, she will be the St. Francis team. All seven of the boys on the team are returning runners. Andy Leitner and Aaron Helm, sophomores, are both returning lettermen, as are juniors Teryn Grafel and Kellen Doeden. Also returning are juniors Brent Stallman, Zeke Ruzicka and Scott Miller. "We think the boys will be a little better this year," Coach Ahlberg said. "They're a year older and

stronger. And the girls are all pretty talented. We're looking forward to a good year." The team lost seniors Shane Montgomery, Krista Fowler and Keely Witt. However, most of the runners this year have experience and both Grafel and Coleman are two-year lettermen. Last year, the girls team came in fourth and the boys eighth at the Class 2A Regional Cross Country meet in Phillipsburg, with none of the Oberlin runners qualifying for state. However, the top Oberlin runners at regionals, Marietta, 16th, and Leitner, 23rd, have a chance to try again. After the Soap Run, the team will travel to Norton on Thursday, Sept. 2, for its first meet at the Norton Country Club, starting at 4:30 p.m. The Norton course is fairly flat and nice, Coach Ahlberg said, but the team likes Oberlin's course at the country club best because it is scenic with hills, trees and a stream with bridges. The 37th annual Oberlin Invitational will be held Tuesday, Sept. 28, starting at 5 p.m. at the Oberlin Country Club.

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