



# SION

SION STORM BASKETBALL ARCHIVES - 2004/05

## **Basketball News**

Congratulations to the Storm Basketball team on a great season, 24-3, which included the District 16 Championship. Their season ended with a loss to Lee's Summit in the Sectional Championship. Season highlights included a victory over Class 5 State Champion Kickapoo on their home court and mid-season recognition in the USA Today Super 25 national rankings. The jv team ended their season 10-9. The freshman 'A' team finished 14-3 while the 'B' team finished 6-1. Congratulations to all on a great season. Anna Florzak and Morgan Henderson were selected to the All-State team.

## Sion 2004-05 Basketball Roster

### Varsity

Number	Athlete	Grade
10	Anne Leroy	Jr.
12	Annie Shepard	Soph.
13	Anna Florzak*	Jr.
15	Kaitlin Bowen	Jr.
21	Amanda Barnard	Jr.
22	Kristen White	Soph.
23	Eva Schaible	Jr.
33	Liz Judy	Soph.
35	Hillary Buren*	Jr.
41	Jennifer Varriano	Soph.
42	Hayley Besheer	Jr.
50	Morgan Henderson*	Jr.
52	Kelley Murphy	Fr.
54	Elissa Post	Fr.

Caitlin Angold, manager  
Sally Meiners, manager

### Junior Varsity

Number	Athlete	Grade
10	Anne Leroy	Jr.
11	Hayley Besheer	Jr.
12	Lauren Chalmers	Fr.
15	Liz Judy	Soph.
20/22	Emily Duschen	Soph.
21	Carolyn Schorgl	Fr.
23	Jill McCaffrey	Fr.
25	Elissa Post	Fr.
33	Kate Vignatelli	Fr.
35	Stefanie Tomlin	Soph.
41	Jennifer Varriano	Soph.
44	Allie Woods	Fr.
54	Kelley Murphy	Fr.

Andrea Fulks, manager  
Leah Hoffman, manager

\* Denotes Captains

## Notre Dame de Sion 2004-05 Basketball Results

Date	Opponent	Junior Varsity	Varsity
Nov. 23 (Tues)	Columbia-Hickman	L 45-54	W 55-42
Nov. 29-Dec. 3	<a href="#">Lee's Summit Bronco Invitational</a> (var)		
Nov. 29 (Mon)	Lee's Summit West		W 64-27
Dec. 1 (Wed)	Blue Springs		W 49-18
Dec. 3 (Fri)	Hickman Mills		W 55-50
Nov. 29-Dec. 3	<a href="#">Lee's Summit Bronco Invitational</a> (jv)		
Nov. 29 (Mon)	Lee's Summit West	W 38-33	
Dec. 1 (Wed)	Blue Springs	W 46-37	
Dec. 2 (Thur)	Lee's Summit North	L 28-36	
Dec. 06-11	<a href="#">Blue Springs Tournament</a> (var)		
Dec. 7 (Tues)	Blue Springs		W 53-39
Dec. 9 (Thurs)	Pembroke Hill		W 53-40
Dec. 11 (Sat)	Blue Valley North		W 51-32
Jan. 03 (Mon)	St. Thomas Aquinas (jv)	L 64-22	
Jan. 04 (Tues)	Columbia-Rock Bridge canceled		
Jan. 07 (Fri)	Jefferson City	W 45-41	W 43-42
Jan. 08 (Sat)	Jefferson City-Helias	L 39-41	W 56-24
Jan. 11 (Tues)	St. Teresa's Academy	W 37-29	W 48-15
Jan. 13 (Thurs)	Springfield - Kickapoo	L 23-49	W 48-44
Jan. 18-20	<a href="#">Bishop Miege Tournament</a> (var)		
Jan. 18 (Tues)	Schlagle		W 77-50
Jan. 19 (Wed)	Blue Springs		W 49-31
Jan. 20 (Thurs)	Bishop Miege		W 44-29
Jan. 20 (Thurs)	Blue Valley North (jv)	L 40-45	
Jan. 27 (Thurs)	Pembroke Hill	W 52-14	L 48-54
Jan. 28 (Fri)	Springfield-Parkview	W 43-37	W 46-36
Jan. 31 (Mon)	Lee's Summit	L 29-24	L 27-54
Feb. 01 (Tues)	Center	W 38-7	W 67-40
Feb. 03 (Thurs)	O'Hara	W 59-14	W 59-29
Feb. 07 (Mon)	Bishop Miege	W 53-45	W 60-29
Feb. 08 (Tues)	Schlagle re-scheduled		
Feb. 11 (Fri)	St. Joseph's Academy	L 34-39	W 61-46
Feb. 14 (Mon)	St. Pius X	W 42-12	W 53-37

Feb. 15 (Tues)	Topeka-Washburn	L 27-46	W 46-43
Feb. 08 (Wed)	Schlagle (var only)		W 55-30
Feb. 21-25	<a href="#">District</a>		
Feb. 23 (Wed)	North Kansas City		W 58-43
Feb. 25 (Fri)	Hickman Mills		W 67-48
March 02 (Wed)	Sectional-Lee's Summit		L 53-65
March 05 (Sat)	Quarter Final		
March 11 (Fri)	Semi Final		
March 12 (Sat)	Championship		

## 2004-05 Freshmen Basketball Roster

White	Purple	Athlete
13	24	Sally Burns
15	35	Ashley Elder
21	21	Alli Dandurand
23	23	Erin Spangler
25	25	Samantha Keil
33	31	Caroline Roth
35	33	Mollie Smith
40	40	Margaret Peeples
42	43	Chelsea Johnson
44	44	Stephanie Brown
52	32	Katherine Calovich
55	51	Melinda Dressman

Liz Nelson, manager

## Notre Dame de Sion 2004-05 Freshman Basketball Results

Date	Opponent	Result
Nov. 23 (Tues)	St. Pius X A	W 33-30
Nov. 30 (Tues)	St. Teresa's Academy	W 46-27
Dec. 03 (Fri.)	Shawnee Mission East A/B	L 51-19
Jan. 03 (Mon)	St. Thomas Aquinas A	W 30-18
Jan. 05 (Wed.)	Blue Valley North A re-scheduled	
Jan. 08 (Sat.)	St. Teresa's Academy A/B	W 39-28 W
Jan. 12 (Wed)	Bishop Miege A/B	W 32-25 W 49-36
Jan. 17 (Mon)	St. Teresa's Academy A/B	W 44-17 W 42-21
Jan. 18-20	<a href="#">Blue Springs FR Tournament</a>	
Jan. 18 (Tues)	Lee's Summit North	W 47-30
Jan. 19 (Wed)	Blue Springs South	L 33-44
Jan. 20 (Thurs)	Liberty	W 37-25
Jan. 24 (Mon)	Blue Springs South A/B	L 23-30 W 38-5
Jan. 25 (Tues)	Blue Valley North A/B	W 26-15 W 64-21
Jan. 28 (Fri)	Blue Valley North A	W 36-29
Jan. 31 (Mon.)	Shawnee Mission North A	W 65-41
Feb. 03 (Thurs)	O'Hara A	W 44-17
Feb. 09 (Wed)	Blue Valley North A/B	W 51-20 W 88-6
Feb. 10 (Thurs)	Shawnee Mission East A/B	W 33-25 L 33-38

The links will expire, but the text is below.

Articles:

Ames Tribune (3/22/05)

Kansas Ciy Star article (3/03/05)

Kansas City Star article (3/02/05)

Kansas City Star article (2/21/05)

Topeka Capital Journal article (2/16/05)

Springfield News-Leader article (1/14/05)

Kansas City Star article (1/12/05)

Kansas City Star article (1/07/05)

Examiner article (12/02/04)

Lee's Summit Journal article (11/30/04)

Columbia Daily Tribune article (11/24/04)

Missouri guard commits to Cyclones

By Scott Nulph March 22, 2005

Anna Florzak got her first taste of Iowa State women's basketball while watching the Cyclones win back-to-back Big 12 Conference Tournament titles in 2000 and 2001.

She said she's been hooked ever since, and Monday made her dream a reality, verbally committing to the Cyclones for the 2006-07 season.

Florzak, a 5-foot-11 point guard, just completed her junior year at Notre Dame de Sion Academy in Kansas City, leading her team to a 24-3 record before losing in a state sectional final.

She becomes the second commitment for the Cyclones for next year's class. Carroll standout guard Shellie Mosman committed to coach Bill Fennelly and the Cyclones a year ago and recently was named to the Class 3A all-state team after leading her team to the state tournament as a junior.

Florzak also becomes the third top Missouri recruit for Fennelly in the last year. All-state center Rachel Pierson of St. Louis and guard Heather Ezell of state champion Kickapoo High in Springfield are two members of next year's class who will try to fill the shoes of the Cyclones' five graduating seniors this season.

ISU will graduate only one senior next year - Brittany Wilkins - but still has two more scholarships available with Florzak's commitment.

Florzak, who also finished sixth last year in the Missouri state cross country meet, said Monday that she was looking for a program that fit her up-tempo style of play and also met her academic values.

"The beliefs and values of the ISU program are so similar to my family's," Florzak said. "You can just see the chemistry between the team and coach Fennelly and his staff seems so perfect. And the team's GPA was one of the best in the country, so I know they put a lot of emphasis on academic discipline, just like my school."

Florzak averaged 11 points and 6 assists a game for Notre Dame de Sion this past season while making 40.2 percent of her 3-point attempts and 89.6 percent of her free throws.

Florzak said she attended two ISU games this season in Ames while also seeing them play in the Big 12 Tournament. She also said she's already gotten the speech from Fennelly about how the point guard at ISU can be the best job in the world ... and the worst.

"It's exactly the way I want it," Florzak said. "You are the leader on the court, and you're expected to know everything the coach wants the team to do."

Florzak, who will be a freshman when current starting point guard Lyndsey Medders will be a senior, said playing time wasn't a major factor in her decision.

"You have to prove yourself anyway; they're just not going to give the spot to you," she said. "It was that I found a program that was right for me; I just felt knew it was right."

Posted on Thu, Mar. 03, 2005

Lee's Summit stuns Sion

JoNel Henning hits six threes, leading Tigers' comeback

The Kansas City Star

With Lee's Summit trailing by 11 and looking lost, girls basketball coach Brian Bubalo told his players at halftime to lay off the three-point shots.

So what did his senior leader, JoNel Henning, do? She jacked a three a mere 33 seconds into the third quarter. Lucky for her, she made it.

"She hit the first one, and after that, I told my coaches it's a good thing she hit it," Bubalo said. "I shut up after that."

Good strategy, because a little more than a minute later, Henning hit another. And another. And another. And another.

In all, Henning was four for four on threes for the quarter, made six for the game, and her 22 points led Lee's Summit to a come-from-behind 65-53 victory over Notre Dame de Sion in a Class 5 sectional at Lee's Summit West.

"I was just so pumped," said Henning, who entered the game averaging seven points. "There was so much pressure. This was not going to be my last game."

“Coach told us to let off the threes. But I was feeling it.”

A swarming full-court defense by Sion held Lee's Summit to just 19 first-half points as the Storm stormed out to a 30-19 lead.

But Henning's hot hand ignited the Tigers. Teammate Danielle Adams, who was held to just two first-half points, scored 15 in the second half as the Tigers exploded for 46 second-half points.

Lee's Summit is one step away from qualifying for its third straight trip to the state tournament in Columbia. The Tigers will face Truman in a state quarterfinal Saturday in Warrensburg.

— Bob Luder/The Star

Posted on Wed, Mar. 02, 2005

Past isn't prologue for Lee's Summit, Sion

By BOB LUDER

The Kansas City Star

Take a glance at the final score the last time the Lee's Summit and Notre Dame de Sion girls met — or, the last two times for that matter.

The first thought about tonight's Missouri Class 5 sectional is that it's a mismatch.

The Tigers doubled the score on the Storm 54-27 in a regular-season game on Jan. 31. Last season in the state quarterfinals, Lee's Summit won by 18.

Sion's players and coaches have been doing their best not to think about any of that as they prepared to meet the Tigers at 6:30 p.m. at Lee's Summit West.

And Lee's Summit isn't buying any of it either.

Sion and Lee's Summit are 1-2 in The Star's big-class girls top five.

“That score is very deceptive,” said Lee's Summit coach Brian Bubalo, whose team is 23-3. “We were up seven at halftime. And I think we were up 12 when (Sion coach Mike Dunn) pulled his starters before the end of the third quarter.

“I kept thinking he'd put them back in, but he never did. By the latter stages of the fourth quarter, we'd pulled our starters, and the game finished as sort of a JV game.

“We're not going into this thinking we're 27 points better, that's for sure.”

Dunn said he didn't think his team would have any problem putting the earlier game behind it, either. When the Storm met Lee's Summit that first time, it was coming off a loss to Pembroke Hill, the team's first of the season. The players' confidence had been shaken a bit.

But the Storm, 24-2, hasn't lost since. Confidence shouldn't be an issue this time, especially following a 19-point spanking of Hickman Mills on Friday in a district final.

“We’re real pleased (Lee’s Summit) won Friday,” Dunn said of the Tigers, who beat cross-town rival Lee’s Summit North in the final of their district. “We get another shot.

“They played real well that last game. We were No. 1 in the state. That got their team motivated. They executed their game plan, and we really struggled.

“Still, we were only down seven at halftime.”

Dunn knows that for Sion to be successful tonight, his girls must do a better job of stopping Lee’s Summit’s inside twosome, Ashley Patterson and Danielle Adams, who scored 30 of the Tigers’ 54 points.

“We can’t let them score like that,” Dunn said. “If we don’t stop at least one of the two, it’s going to be a long night.”

Lee’s Summit also has capable outside shooters in Megan White and JoNel Henning.

Sion also has a strong inside-outside combination, led by Morgan Henderson in the lane and Anna Florzak and Amanda Barnard on the perimeter.

“We have to watch their big three,” Bubalo said.

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Posted on Mon, Feb. 21, 2005

## MISSOURI DISTRICT BASKETBALL

### Postseason drama ahead

Several intriguing matchups as district play starts this week

By SAM MELLINGER

The Kansas City Star

Missouri high school basketball’s second season starts today – the time when winless teams have hope and top-ranked squads have to worry. Starting today, one loss ends the season of teams in the top two classes.

The urgency of district play provides for the best hoops of the year, as long as you know where to look. Let’s see where this postseason’s most intriguing questions will be answered.

- Girls: Is Notre Dame de Sion fully recovered from its midseason swoon? If not, it won’t take long to find out at North Kansas City. Sion, which regained the top spot in the big-class poll last week, will probably play Hickman Mills or Raytown in Friday’s final.

Raytown is 20-4; Hickman Mills 20-3 and ranked fifth. Sion beat Hickman 55-50 in the final of the Lee’s Summit/LS North tournament in December.

Sion, 22-2, has won seven in a row since losing to Pembroke Hill and being blown out against Lee's Summit in late January. One of those victories was over defending Missouri big-class champion St. Joseph's Academy; another against 2004 Kansas 6A runner-up Topeka Washburn Rural.

How far can Lee's Summit West's girls go in the school's first year? Even after a loss to Raytown on Friday, LS West's 18-5 record is mighty impressive.

Even with LS West as host, this district is a tough one to call with Center and O'Hara. With Krishna Lee, O'Hara is a threat against anyone. And not even Nostradamus could predict what Center will do. Coming off a fourth-place finish in Class 4 and returning top players Jernisha Cann and Nikia Henry, Center has beaten Pembroke Hill, 19-4, and lost to Excelsior Springs, 7-13, and that's just this month.

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Published Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Rural girls take close loss in battle of elite

By Brent Maycock

The Capital-Journal

Two straight losses after a 15-0 start hasn't shaken the Washburn Rural girls' confidence to the core.

If anything, last Friday's loss to Shawnee Heights and Tuesday's 46-43 setback to visiting Notre Dame de Sion has sharpened the Junior Blues' determination.

"I think deep down inside they knew that we played a good team Friday and a much, much better team tonight," Rural coach Bill Annan said following the loss to Missouri's No. 4-ranked Class 5 team. "That's got them focused, and I think we played a lot better tonight, I really did. If a couple of breaks go our way, it's probably a different outcome."

Rural, ranked No. 2 in Class 6A, had a chance to make those game-swinging breaks late, but couldn't capitalize.

Down five early in the fourth quarter, the Junior Blues pulled back within 42-41 on Kelsey Chipman's putback with 3:48 to play and then got a chance to take the lead after the Storm's Amanda Barnard -- who already had a game-high 16 points, misfired on a 3-pointer. Jacci Tinkel's 3-pointer was off the mark (her first miss of the game after a 4-of-4 start) and Chipman was stripped after grabbing the rebound.

Notre Dame converted at the other end on a 10-foot jumper by Hillary Buren to restore a three-point edge. The deficit stayed there, though, and Rural got a chance in the final minute.

Tinkel missed a game-tying 3-pointer, but Rural got the ball back for another shot. But they didn't get one as Chipman bobbed a pass at the top of the key and Notre Dame's Anna Florzak came up with the steal and then sank two game-clinching free throws with 9.6 seconds left.

Chipman sank a long two with two seconds left, but the Storm inbounded safely and ran out the clock.

"We don't execute down the stretch and against good teams, that's where you get a win or loss," Annan said. "You've got to make plays down the stretch and they made a few more than we did."

Rural weathered a hot start by the Storm (21-2), which canned eight of its first 10 shots en route to a 21-12 lead. Tinkel capped the first quarter with a 3-pointer and that sparked a big second frame by Rural in which it held Notre Dame to just five points and got a tough guarded jumper by Manns for a 27-26 halftime lead.

After its 8-of-10 start, Notre Dame made just 9 of its final 28 shots. But Rural never led by more than three and five straight points by Barnard in a 30-second span in the third quarter put the Storm ahead for good.

Chipman led Rural with 11 points and Tinkel had 10.

NOTRE DAME DE SION GIRLS 46, WASHBURN RURAL 43

Notre Dame de Sion 21 5 11 9 -- 46

Washburn Rural 15 12 8 8 -- 43

Notre Dame de Sion (21-2) -- Florzak 2-6 2-2 6, Barnard 6-12 0-0 16, Schaible 1-3 0-0 2, Buren 4-6 2-2 10, Henderson 4-11 3-4 12, Shepard 0-0 0-0 0, White 0-0 0-0 0, Bowen 0-0 0-0 0, Murphy 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 17-38 7-8 46.

Washburn Rural (15-2) -- Tinkel 4-7 1-1 10, Shufelberger 3-8 0-0 7, Zimmer 1-6 0-0 2, Manns 3-8 2-2 8, Chipman 4-8 3-4 11, Silovsky 0-2 0-0 0, Tucker 1-1 0-0 2, Ostrander 1-4 0-0 3. Totals 17-44 6-7 43.

3-point goals -- Notre Dame 5-10 (Barnard 4-7, Henderson 1-1, Florzak 0-2); Rural 3-9 (Tinkel 1-4, Shufelberger 1-1, Ostrander 1-2, Silovsky 0-2). Total fouls -- Notre Dame 11, Rural 12. Fouled out -- none.

Published January 14, 2005

Lady Chiefs suffer first loss

Notre Dame de Sion, third in Class 5, upsets No. 2 Kickapoo, its first home defeat in four years.

By Rod Shetler

For the News-Leader

Everything seemed to be against Notre Dame de Sion.

A long road trip, its top bench player hobbled with a bad ankle and the second-ranked team in Class 5 – the Kickapoo Lady Chiefs – waiting on its home floor.

All of that couldn't slow the Storms as they upset the Lady Chiefs 48-44 Thursday night, handing Kickapoo its first loss.

The defeat was also the first home loss of Kickapoo head coach Stephanie Phillips' four-year career with the Lady Chiefs.

"I was surprised how ready the girls seemed, how anxious," said first-year de Sion coach Mike Dunn. "They didn't seem to be intimidated at all. We'd been playing so-so, we'd had a long layoff and I thought, 'OK this one could be a coin flip.' We came out hot."

The victory over Kickapoo (11-1) paved the way for de Sion (11-0), entering the game No. 3 in Class 5, to take over the top spot after No. 1 ranked Incarnate Word lost earlier in the week.

Usually, coaches play down the significance of rankings, but Dunn could not hide his excitement at the possibility of being ranked at the top of Class 5.

"It's hard to ignore," he said. "These girls have earned it. Sion has never been there before."

The beginning of the game looked like the Storms might have to hold off a little longer on taking over the state's top spot.

Kickapoo jumped out to an 8-3 lead behind five quick points from senior guard Greta Wiersch, but de Sion rallied with an 11-4 run to close the first quarter with a 14-12 advantage.

De Sion roared into the second quarter with a 3-pointer from Amanda Barnard and a pair of treys from Anna Florzak as the Storms upped their lead to 25-12 with 4:45 left before halftime.

"They were hot," said Phillips. "They were hitting everything."

Sion held a 27-16 lead at halftime, but that lead looked to be in jeopardy with a fast Lady Chiefs' start to the second half.

Leslie Hanchey opened with a short jumper, and a steal and bucket by Heather Ezell got Kickapoo within seven at 27-20. Sion built its lead back to 33-23, but a 3-pointer at the buzzer by Ezell trimmed Sion's lead to 37-33, setting up a tense fourth quarter.

Trailing 44-39, Kickapoo's Lindsey Bailey brought the crowd to its feet with a 3-pointer with 2:24 left, making the score 44-42.

Wiersch drove the lane and hit a layup with 1:10 remaining tying the game at 44.

With 18 seconds left, de Sion's Morgan Henderson grabbed an offensive board and put the ball back in for a 46-44 lead.

Kickapoo had a chance to tie with 11 seconds left as Hannah Carter dished to Ezell down low. A held ball was called, giving it back to de Sion, which hit two free throws to ice the game.

"It seemed like we kept doing things tonight to stop our own momentum," said Phillips. "But de Sion is very good. They're great shooters, and they are strong inside."

Nonconference game

Notre Dame de Sion (11-0) 14 13 10 11--48

Kickapoo (11-1) 10 14 14 8--44

NOTRE DAME DE SION – Florzak 11, Barnard 16, Schaible 2, Buren 4, Henderson 15.

KICKAPOO – Carter 7, Ezell 10, Wiersch 14, Bailey 9, Hanchey 4.

Kickapoo B 49, Notre Dame de Sion 23  
Posted on Wed. Jan. 12, 2005

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Kansas City Star

After nearly a month of nothing but practice, Notre Dame de Sion, the No. 1 team in The Star's big-class girls basketball poll, finally returned to action last week.

The Storm received its biggest scare of the season last Friday, trailing late before escaping with a 43-42 victory over Jefferson City. In the closing minutes Anna Florzak made a steal that led to a lay-up by Hillary Buren, putting Sion up one.

Jefferson City answered with a successful jump shot, but Florzak scored the game-winning free throws on the Storm's next possession. The Sion victory snapped Jefferson City's nine-game winning streak.

"I knew they'd give us fits," coach Mike Dunn said. "Our first game back, our homecoming game. Little bit of nerves, little bit of rust, combined with a good team that really wanted to beat us."

The Storm defeated Jefferson City Helias on Saturday and had a 9-0 record entering a game Tuesday against St. Teresa's.

- The O'Hara girls basketball team is making up for a rough start, and as the victories pile up, Krishna Lee is establishing herself among the area's better players.

Lee poured in 29 in the Celtics' 57-44 victory over Clinton last Friday. Performances like that are not accidental. O'Hara needs Lee to have big nights.

"Krishna does everything well in my opinion," coach Mary Haggerty said. "She really moves without the basketball well, and (Friday) she was finding the gaps and attacking the basket."

Haggerty said it was important that her team understand Lee's importance, and she is pleased with the way others have consistently given her the ball.

“It took a while for the kids to understand each other, get a feel for each other,” she said. “We've always played hard, it was just getting in rhythm, getting in sync.”

O'Hara defeated Warrensburg on Monday and was 8-4 entering a make-up game Tuesday against St. Pius X.

Posted on Fri, Jan. 07, 2005

Players, coaches chill out during icy weather

By MARCUS FULLER

The Kansas City Star

Because of the harsh weather, Shawnee Mission East wrestler Ryan Sonderegger just might be the poster boy for idle athletes.

He entered the Christmas break with a 15-0 record at 171 pounds and recently was champion at the Johnson County Classic. On Tuesday night, he was to take part in Senior Night festivities.

But thanks to a harsh three-day arctic blast, he was pinned along with a majority of Kansas City-area high school winter sports athletes. Like so many events this week, SM East's double dual meet against Olathe North and

SM South was victimized by the weather.

“It was kind of upsetting, but we are going to reschedule it,” said Sonderegger, a returning state champion. “I wrestled on Christmas and New Year's with my father. I can't take too many breaks. Not if I want to stay undefeated.”

Sonderegger's father, John, the SM East coach, notified his wrestlers Tuesday through the Lancers' Web site that school was called off, which meant all athletic events and practices were postponed. John also pleaded with his athletes not to slack off. Did anybody actually do anything though?

“I didn't think so,” John said when SM East finally practiced Thursday. “We practiced for three hours. That was one of the hardest ones we've ever had.” The frustration and nuisance caused by the icy weather wasn't limited to wrestlers.

Basketball players such as Blue Valley North junior Casey Crawford can't wait any longer. With losses to Olathe East and Lee's Summit at the HyVee Shootout, the Mustangs are 1-2 and have fallen short of expectations.

“So far our season has been on the downside, but it's early,” Crawford said. “Practices have stepped up 100 percent though. There's a lot more running and a lot more intensity. The coaches have really been in our face more because they felt like we aren't proving ourselves.”

Before the winter storm, the Mustangs were hoping to notch a win Tuesday night at home against Kansas 6A champion Olathe South, 5-0. That game was rescheduled, but BV North can surely get back on track with a win tonight against rival BV Northwest.

“I was looking forward to Olathe South for three weeks,” Crawford said. “I don't like sitting on a loss for this long.” Rockhurst senior guard Tom Farmer felt exactly the opposite. His week started like any other during the school year, but by early Tuesday afternoon he was back in chill mode.

He found out in the morning Rockhurst wouldn't be playing that night against St. Thomas Aquinas. School ended early and, after studying for a bit, he took up his PlayStation controller for a game of Madden 2005. He next watched Will Ferrell in “Anchorman” and later saw Ferrell again cheering his alma mater Southern Cal while the Trojans demolished Oklahoma in the Fiesta Bowl.

It was almost as if Christmas break never ended, but Farmer said he was actually a bit disappointed about not playing the Saints. Several students from Rockhurst and Aquinas know one another, having grown up attending Catholic schools.

“Monday people at school were talking about it. The whole school gets pumped for the Aquinas game,” he said. “The one major positive though is I just get to kick back.”

The extended break was hardly a vacation for Notre Dame de Sion coach Mike Dunn and Raytown South coach Bud Lathrop. Both coaches were more than eager to return to action this week but were forced to play the waiting game like everyone else.

Dunn's team showed some early dominance this season at 7-0 before Christmas but will have gone almost a month without playing when it debuts at home tonight against Jefferson City.

The Storm didn't make the trip Tuesday to Columbia Rock Bridge. Sion last took the court Dec. 11 in a win over BV North in the Blue Springs South tournament final.

“We couldn't play at HyVee because of finals that week,” said first-year coach Dunn. “It helps going into the break winning, because I was able to introduce a lot of new things. Being 7-0 made the girls much more receptive.” Facing a three-week suspension for using obscene language during practice,

Lathrop decided to retire after 46 seasons at Ray-South.

But after school administration recently welcomed him back Monday, Lathrop was scheduled to reunite with his team Wednesday night at Excelsior Springs before the game was postponed.

Nasty weather might have delayed his comeback to the court, but Lathrop invited his team to his home Wednesday. He hadn't seen or spoken to them since leaving Dec. 16.

“We watched some film of the 1990 game with Lee's Summit and some other games,” said Lathrop, 68, who hopes to be back coaching tonight as Ray-South plays Lee's Summit. “I have a life other than basketball, but I still love to coach. People want me to coach, so that's what I'm going to do.”

To reach Marcus Fuller, sports reporter for The Star, call (816) 234-7747

Story last updated at 11:44 a.m. Thursday, December 2, 2004

Cats, Broncos fall in semifinals

By Dion Clisso

Examiner Assistant Sports Editor

The Blue Springs and Lee's Summit North girls basketball teams will get an early season preview of Suburban Big Seven play Friday in the Lee's Summit North Tournament.

The teams will play in the third-place game after losing their semifinal games Wednesday night at North.

The Wildcats fell 49-18 to No. 1 seed Notre Dame de Sion in the first game while Hickman Mills stopped the Broncos 76-56 in the second semifinal.

Both teams ran into a buzzsaw, finding themselves down early and never able to mount a comeback. Blue Springs fell into a 16-4 hole after one quarter. The Wildcats struggled offensively but did force the Storm into 19 turnovers with their defense.

"I was as encouraged today as I was the other night," first-year Blue Springs coach Tony Armstrong said. "We battled the whole night. I thought our defense was a lot better tonight. They are a good team. To only give them a lot of their points off of turnovers is a good thing."

Notre Dame's defense was tough on the Wildcats, too. Blue Springs committed 26 turnovers, including 10 in the first quarter.

The defense, though, allowed only five 3-pointers to the dangerous Storm shooters.

"Defensively we really stayed on them," junior forward Sam Neely said. "Our coach was very proud of us this game. We worked on defending the 3-pointer a lot at practice to get ready for this game. I'm glad we held them to a 30-point win."

Tiffany Dorris led the Wildcats with seven points.

North didn't get down quite as quick as Blue Springs, but Hickman Mills controlled the game from start to finish. The Cougars' Keisha Walker got hot early, scoring 10 of her game-high 26 points in the first quarter.

The Broncos put on a few small runs to cut the lead to 21-12 at the end of the first quarter and 34-26 near the end of the first half, but that would be as close as they would get.

"With Keisha hitting four of those threes in the first half, that kind of got us," North coach Tricia Lillygren said. "Some of those were deep. When we watched them Monday night they were dribble penetrating. We knew that was going to be an issue, but we had no idea they were going to hit outside like they did.

"They were going down for them tonight. They are good players; we've got to expect things like that. We've got to find a way to stop or at least slow those things down. With Walker and (Tyra) White, they are a nice scoring combo. They are going to be tough all game long."

North struggled to get its offense going in the first half, committing nine turnovers. The Broncos found the passing lanes better in the second half as they trimmed the turnovers to seven.

The Broncos were able to work the ball inside to Monique Jones and Sasha An for some easy baskets but Hickman Mills' 29-of-52 shooting was too much for North to overcome.

"We had a little speech in the locker room at halftime about getting tough and boxing out, getting the rebound," said An, who finished with a team-high 12 points. "We kept our heads up and looked down the floor and tried to make the smart moves we know how to do.

"We have to work on rebounding; that is definitely what we are going to work on in practice. Then we will go out and see what Blue Springs has to offer to us and we will go from there."

Melissa Schuitema added 10 points and Jones finished with eight for North.

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From the Lee Summit Journal (11/30/04)

Sion storms past West, wins 64-27

By Nick Parker The Journal Staff

On paper, Lee's Summit West and Notre Dame de Sion appeared to be pretty similar teams.

But size and experience helped Sion stand above West and capture a 64-27 win Monday night in the first round of the Bronco Invitational at Lee's Summit North.

"I looked at the roster and saw that they didn't have any seniors on the team either. I thought 'Here's a team in a similar position as us,'" said West head coach Kirk Hipple. "But they're a solid team. I think three or four of those girls are back from last year. That was a team that went all the way to quarterfinals before losing to Lee's Summit."

Quick guard play helped the Titans stay close in the first quarter. In fact, West held them twice in the opening minutes and trailed by just three points at 17-14 when the quarter ended.

Poor shooting by the Titans, combined with dominant inside play by Sion's Kelley Murphy and Morgan Henderson, allowed the Storm to widen the gap in the second quarter.

West scored just three points in the second quarter, all by sophomore Alyssa Mullen who was 1-of-2 from the line and hit a short jumper during the eight-minute stretch.

Sion stretched the lead with both strong play under the basket and solid outside shooting from junior Amanda Barnard. Barnard had a game-high 29 points during the contest, including six three-pointers.

"What a threat they are," Hipple said. "They can hurt you both inside and outside. Then, to be able to get the offensive rebounds like they did. Those second chances hurt us. We've got to find a way to limit those. We learned a valuable lesson tonight."

Despite the frustration of seeing his squad struggle against the bigger, more experienced Sion team, Hipple said there were positives to pull from the game. While the team didn't shoot particularly well (8-of-15 from the floor), he said he expected to see more of those shots fall as the team develops maturity and patience.

"We're a young team and sometimes I think we look for the first open shot instead of waiting for the right shot," he said. "I think we saw that some later in the game when they started pulling

away. I think the girls got frustrated and went for the first available shot thinking that was the only one they might get."

Tournament action continues for the Titans at 5:30 p.m. tonight when they take on North Kansas City.

Kewps caught in Storm

Mirts OK with late push.

By JUSTIN TAYLOR of the Tribune's staff

Published Wednesday, November 24, 2004

It was the perfect way to start off a new season, a new era and with all new players. Well, it was almost perfect.

Notre Dame de Sion won 55-42 last night at Hickman gym, but that didn't dampen Hickman girls basketball Coach Tonya Mirts' enthusiasm about breaking in five new starters from a team that was the Class 5 state runner-up last year.

"This could have been a 30-point blowout, but it wasn't," Mirts said. "Our kids expect to be successful, and they fought like a successful team. If we develop a low-post presence and other kids start cutting and get used to our offense, I think we have the potential to be a very good basketball team."

Hickman has just one senior and started a freshman and a sophomore.

"We knew coming into this that we were better than we thought we were going to be," sophomore Lauren Nolke said. "Now we know that we're going to be pretty good this year.

"We're definitely going to have more confidence as we start playing more games. We were all pretty nervous in the beginning."

Even with the nerves, the Kewpies got off to a good start in the season opener, making six of their first seven shots to take a 12-6 lead. But the Storm came back to tie the game at 16 at the end of the first quarter. Sion used a fast-break offense to stretch the lead to 31-23 by halftime.

"They got a lot of easy buckets in transition in the first quarter," Mirts said. "They transitioned really fast, and young kids have a habit of just turning and jogging down the floor. You talk about that in practice, but when they experience it in the game, they figure it out."

The third quarter didn't start well for Hickman. It took the Kewpies until 4:34 left in the quarter to finally score their first points when Sade' Aaron hit a jumper.

With 45 seconds left in the third quarter, the Storm had stretched the lead to 14 points. But the Kewpies had one more push left in them.

Nolke, who scored a game-high 17 points, hit back-to-back 3-pointers with to bring Hickman within eight points at 41-33.

Senior Megan McCabe opened the fourth quarter with a 3-point play to get the Kewpies within five. She finished nine points and five assists.

The Kewpies missed five straight shots after that, though, and Sion pulled away for the win with a 7-0 run over the next 2:30.

"The nice thing about us is we're in a huge learning progression with as many young kids as we have," Mirts said. "To compete that hard and to be that close late in the game, we cut it to five, and we had some great looks, and at that time they went real cold. But I just don't know how much was left."

Mirts said she expects her players to learn from playing against what she called one of the top two teams in the state.

"This loss will pay more dividends than anything else that could have happened tonight," she said.

Sion Coach Brian Schowalter was impressed by the Kewpies.

"If anybody overlooks them because they lost their top five players, it's going to be a long night," he said.

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