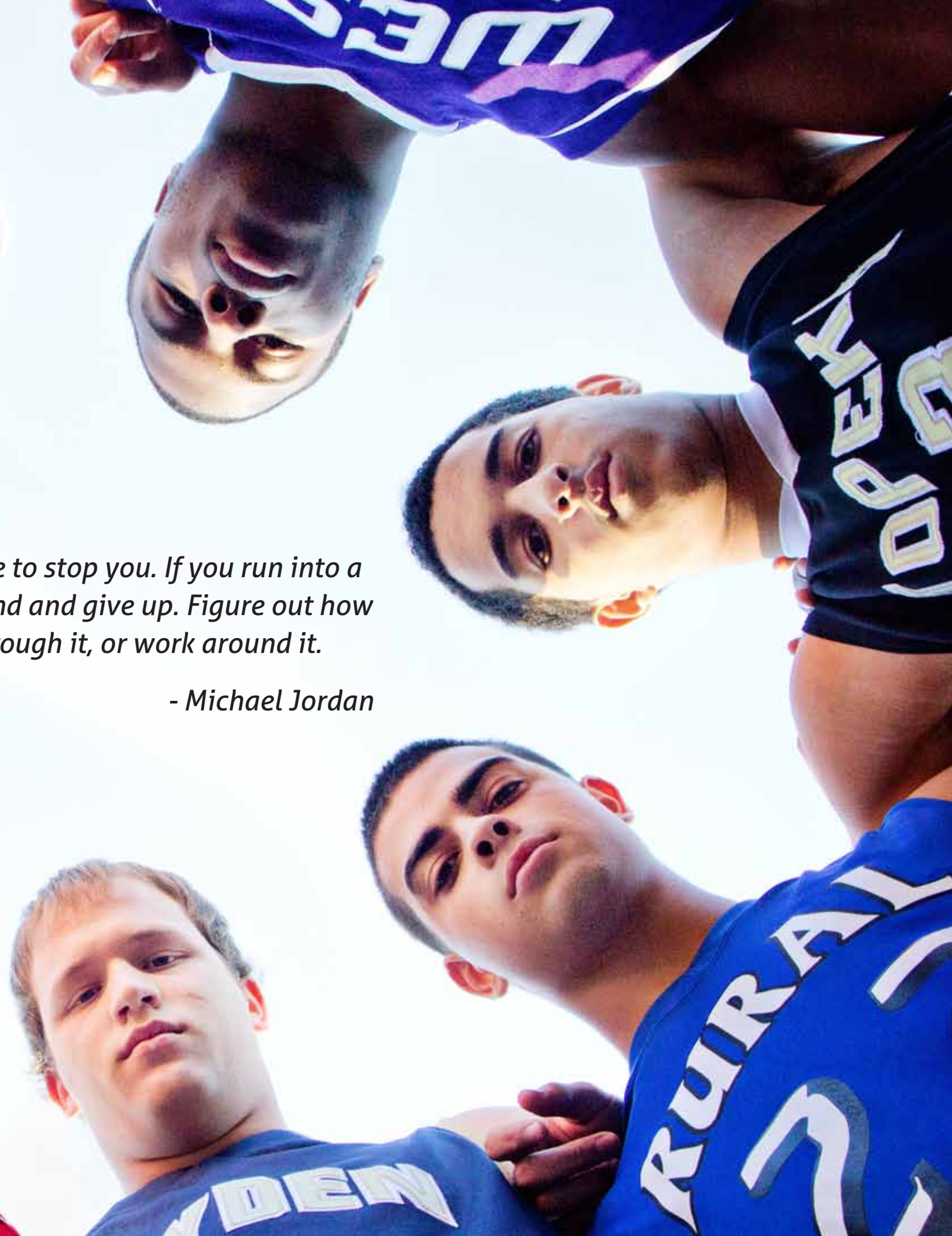




*Obstacles don't have
walls, don't turn around
to climb it, go through it.*

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of four basketball players in a huddle. The players are looking towards the camera with serious expressions. They are wearing blue and black jerseys. The player at the top left is wearing a purple jersey with white lettering. The player at the top right is wearing a black jersey with white lettering. The player at the bottom right is wearing a blue jersey with white lettering. The player at the bottom left is wearing a blue jersey with white lettering. The background is a bright, overcast sky.

Don't let anyone stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn back and give up. Figure out how to climb it, break through it, or work around it.

- Michael Jordan

ROSSVILLE

It doesn't matter if a high school basketball team's record is 21-0, 0-21 or somewhere in between – if the players don't bring the right attitude to practices and games, the team will ultimately be difficult to coach.

Despite ending last season with a winless record, team attitude has never really been a problem for the Lady Bulldogs.

"These kids are great, and we didn't have a bad practice last year," said Rossville coach Jim Channel. "There wasn't ever a day I didn't want to come to practice, and most of the kids are that way, too."

The most important factor for Coach Channel in achieving success for his team is to find better ways to put points on the board. While the team played well on the defensive end last season, the Lady Bulldogs need to do more than just keep their opponents from scoring.

"We didn't win a game last year, but I don't think we got beat by more than 10 or 12 points ever," Channel said. "We play hard and we do things right, but we just have a hard time putting the ball in the hoop."

Coach Channel hopes to get his team over the hump by taking things one day at a time. He doesn't feel the need to circle games on the schedule before the season begins because for his players, it's best to set their sights on one goal at a time and focus on games as they arise.

"We set one goal this summer, and that's to win the Dickinson County Tournament," said Channel. "If we get that goal accomplished, then we'll set another one. We've just got to stair step it up after last year and not get ahead of ourselves."

"These kids are great, and we didn't have a bad practice last year. There wasn't ever a day I didn't want to come to practice."

- Coach Jim Channel



Lady Bulldogs: Mindy Wilson, Senior; Jessica Wehrli, Senior; Mandy Wilson, Senior; Makenzie Matavosky, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 1 at Wamego
- 5-10 Dickinson Co. Classic
- 13 at Frankfort
- 16 ACCHS-Effingham

January

- 3 Silver Lake
- 6 Riley County
- 10 Rock Creek
- 13 at St. Marys
- 17-21 Burlington Tourn.
- 31 St. Marys

February

- 3 at Wabaunsee
- 7 at Osage City
- 10 at Silver Lake
- 14 Wabaunsee
- 17 at Riley County
- 23 at Rock Creek

DID YOU KNOW?

As a school, Rossville received the Kansas State High School Activities Association 3A State Basketball Tournament Sportsmanship Award in 2007, 2009 and 2010.



SILVER LAKE

A solid class of senior basketball players is something you would expect to see at a large high school where many kids try out for the team. Yet, as a 3A school, Silver Lake plays host to a girls basketball team with seven seniors who have all proven to be solid individuals both on and off the court.

In addition to their years of experience playing basketball, one thing that Coach Tyler Stewart appreciates most about this year's seniors is their ability to be leaders for every girl on the team.

"I think every senior girl leads in a different way," said Stewart. "The leadership styles vary between players that are more outspoken to players that just lead by example. It's a great mix because the way these kids lead might reach some of the freshmen, and I think it's going to really work to our benefit."

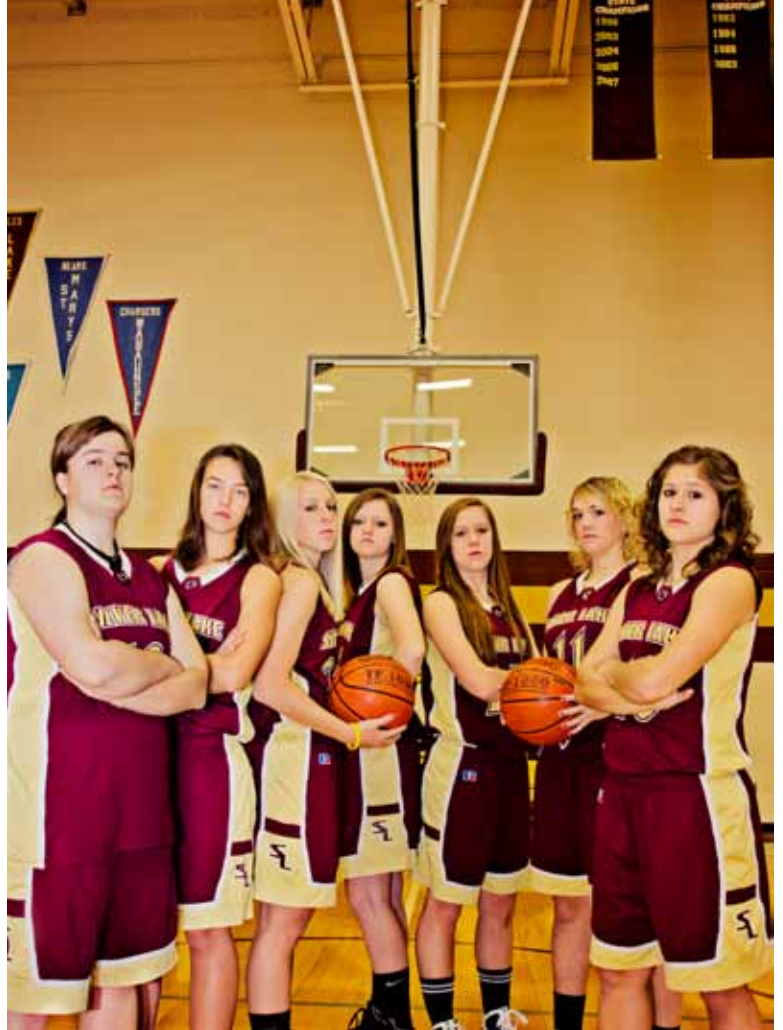
The Lady Eagles are not just known for their presence on the court though. As a team, the seniors and their underclassmen take time to help out in the community, putting on basketball camps for younger kids and volunteering hours at the Ronald McDonald house.

"It's good to see that they have some great character qualities, and they like to help people," Stewart said. "It's not just about basketball for them. It's about helping outside in the world, too."

Coach Stewart is counting on that character and leadership from each of his seven seniors at the very start of the season. The Lady Eagles begin their tough schedule with Holton, Riley County and Jefferson County North, teams that all look to contend for the state title again this season.

"Those first three games are going to be huge for us," said Stewart. "We're going to get a good test, and we're going to see where we're at at the very beginning of the season."

"It's good to see that they have some great character qualities, and they like to help people. It's not just about basketball for them."



Lady Eagles: Kayla Thayer, Senior; Becca Holder, Senior; Perry Krogman, Senior; Kylie Bledsoe, Senior; Quinn Barker, Senior; Kaci Campbell, Senior; Jamie Pfannenstiel, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 6 Holton
- 9 Riley County
- 13 at Jefferson County North
- 16 St. Marys

January

- 3 at Rossville
- 6 Rock Creek
- 10 at Wabaunsee
- 13 at Riley County
- 16-21 Tonganoxie Tourn.
- 24 Sabetha
- 27 at Wamego
- 31 Osage City

February

- 3 at St. Marys
- 7 Perry-Lecompton
- 10 Rossville
- 17 at Rock Creek
- 21 at Council Grove
- 23 Wabaunsee

DID YOU KNOW?

The Lady Eagles have won state titles in 1983, 1984, 1988 and 2002 and are tied with Hayden for the most state championships won by a girls basketball team in Shawnee County.



- Coach Tyler Stewart

HAYDEN



Lady Wildcats: Nicole Federico, Senior; Mary Lawlor, Senior; Maureen Kennedy, Senior; Bri Heinen, Senior

Playing in summer basketball leagues with high school teammates can really pay off in terms of improving the way the team plays together. But for the Hayden girls basketball team, the extra practice gives them more than just the added experience.

“It’s a good way to build team unity,” said Hayden coach Jesica Farmer-Walter. “They’re a great group of girls, they have positive attitudes and they really work hard. I feel like they’re a close, tight-knit group, and they all get along great.”

One of the challenges the Lady Wildcats will face again this season is tough matchups in Centennial League play. As the only 4A school in a league dominated by 5A and 6A competitors, Coach Farmer-Walter and her team will have to find ways to keep up with the intense playing level.

“When it comes to Centennial League basketball, you have to show up every night to play because if you don’t, you could get beat,” Farmer-Walter said. “There’s no easy game, but it’s great for our team because it prepares us to play in the 4A state tournament.”

Coach Farmer-Walter’s team returns a solid group of juniors and seniors who saw some varsity playing time last year. And with great senior leadership setting the tone for the team, Coach Farmer-Walter is counting on her players to grow stronger as a team and do the little things right to get the job done on game night.

“I think it’s going to be a matter of coming together as a team and working on believing in each other, trusting each other and playing hard,” Coach Farmer-Walter said. “If we do that right, I think we can accomplish some good things this year.”

SCHEDULE

December

- 6 at Emporia
- 16 Seaman
- 21 at Basehor-Linwood

January

- 3 at Highland Park
- 6 Emporia
- 10 Junction City
- 13 Topeka High
- 17-21 Burlington Tourn.
- 24 Ottawa
- 27 at Holton
- 30 at St. James

February

- 3 Highland Park
- 7 at Junction City
- 10 at Topeka West
- 14 Manhattan
- 17 at Seaman
- 21 Washburn Rural
- 24 at Shawnee Heights

DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to tying with Silver Lake for the most state basketball titles of any girls team in Shawnee County, the Lady Wildcats are tied with the Highland Park boys for the most state championships in the county in the last two decades (1992, 1993, 1995 and 2004).



“They’re a great group of girls, they have positive attitudes and they really work hard. I feel like they’re a close, tight-knit group.”

- Coach Jesica Farmer-Walter

HIGHLAND PARK

Tim Barber would've never seen himself coaching girls basketball, let alone being head coach at his alma mater. But after taking an assistant coaching job with the Highland Park girls basketball program last year and watching another girls head coach step down, Coach Barber knew he couldn't leave.

"When Coach Baird came in this summer and told the girls that he was leaving, I could just see the disappointment on their faces," said Barber. "I heard the girls say, 'Everybody always leaves us,' and that's one of the main reasons I put in for the head coaching job. I just couldn't leave them."

Most of Coach Barber's experience in coaching has been with boys basketball teams, so the chance to coach girls basketball has been a unique opportunity for him. Yet aside from having different players, this team of girls has already stood out for Coach Barber from any other team he's coached.

"I think they're unique because of what they've been through," Barber said. "I'm their third head coach since they've been here, and they've really dealt with adversity pretty well. The dedication the girls have and the love that they have for each other and the game just draws you to them. I just want them to feel like someone believes in them and that they are important."

Coach Barber hopes to see his girls stand out on the court this season as well, but he knows it's going to take more than just talent for the team to be successful. In addition to adjusting to a new coaching system, Coach Barber will need to see a lot from his four returning seniors.

"I'm looking for a lot of leadership and commitment from my senior girls," said Barber. "Outside of the seniors, we're a pretty young team, so I need them to buy into whatever the coaches ask them to do and get the younger players to come up to their level and take a big role on the team."

"The dedication the girls have and the love that they have for each other and the game just draws you to them."

- Coach Tim Barber



Lady Scots: Shanise Brooks, Senior; Devyn Edwards, Senior; Delores Smith, Senior; Shantae Talbert, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 5-9 Paola Invitational
- 16 at Topeka West
- 20 Field Kindley

January

- 3 Hayden
- 6 at Topeka High
- 10 at Emporia
- 13 Seaman
- 17 Manhattan
- 26-28 Emporia Tourn.

February

- 3 at Hayden
- 7 at Shawnee Heights
- 10 Emporia
- 14 Topeka High
- 17 at Washburn Rural
- 21 Junction City
- 24 Topeka West

DID YOU KNOW?

As part of a tradition at Highland Park, the theme song from the Terminator movies is played before every home game to help pump up the Scots and intimidate their opponents.



SEAMAN



Lady Vikings: Peyton Michalski, Senior; Shelby Slimmer, Senior; Mallory Diederich, Senior; Kelsey Akin, Senior

To an outsider, the success of a high school basketball team often seems to rest on the shoulders of the coach and his or her ability to guide the team in the right direction. However, Seaman coach Steve Alexander prefers to approach his team with the idea that the players can take the lead and control their own destiny.

Through the Lady Viking basketball program, Coach Alexander gives his players opportunities to better their game from the start of the summer to the beginning of the season. Most of the opportunities are voluntary though, allowing the girls to determine their level of success.

“I don’t want them stretched too thin,” said Alexander. “I don’t want them burned out. I want them to have the opportunities if they can take advantage of them, but if they can’t then that’s ok, too.”

Having a sense of ownership in the team is important for Coach Alexander and his players. When it comes to setting goals for the season, he emphasizes player-driven objectives that align with their best interests.

“As a team, I really want them to come up with what goals they want to accomplish for the year,” Alexander said. “We always sit down and try to figure out some goals, not only goals like winning league, but what sub-goals you have to get to be able to achieve that.”

One of Coach Alexander’s personal goals each year is for his players to get better from the beginning of the season to the end, which requires him to make the most out of court time for the players and the team.

“It’s always a work in progress,” said Alexander. “You have to determine how you’re going to handle your team so your younger players are getting as much court time as possible so they’ll be better in the future, but still trying to do what’s best for your varsity team.”

“I want them to have the opportunities if they can take advantage of them, but if they can’t then that’s ok, too.”

SCHEDULE

December

- 2 Blue Valley SW
- 6 at Lawrence Free State
- 9 Lansing
- 13 Shawnee Heights
- 16 at Hayden

January

- 3 Junction City
- 6 Washburn Rural
- 10 at Topeka High
- 13 at Highland Park
- 18 Topeka High
- 26-28 Topeka Tourn.

February

- 3 at Junction City
- 7 Topeka West
- 10 at Manhattan
- 14 at Washburn Rural
- 17 Hayden
- 21 at Shawnee Heights
- 24 Emporia

DID YOU KNOW?

Barbara Sipes, Seaman girls basketball alum, won gold medals with the 1955 U.S. Pan American team and the 1957 U.S. World Tournament team. She also went on to be the leading scorer in the 1967 U.S. Pan American team’s silver medal finish.



- Coach Steve Alexander

SHAWNEE HEIGHTS

Coach Bob Wells knew last season that this year would be different for the Lady Thunderbirds. In fact, he started preparing his younger players to take the reins well before the senior class left the helm of the Shawnee Heights girls basketball program.

"We had a pretty senior dominated team last year, so throughout the season last year, we put an emphasis on trying to make sure we got some of the younger girls in the games and got them some varsity experience," said Wells. "While we're planning on that group returning from last year, there's also room for kids that didn't play much to step in and play for us."

For Coach Wells, no matter what players they lose, the expectations for the team stay the same – improve every day and prepare the team to compete in the state tournament. However, one thing that will change for this group is the team dynamic.

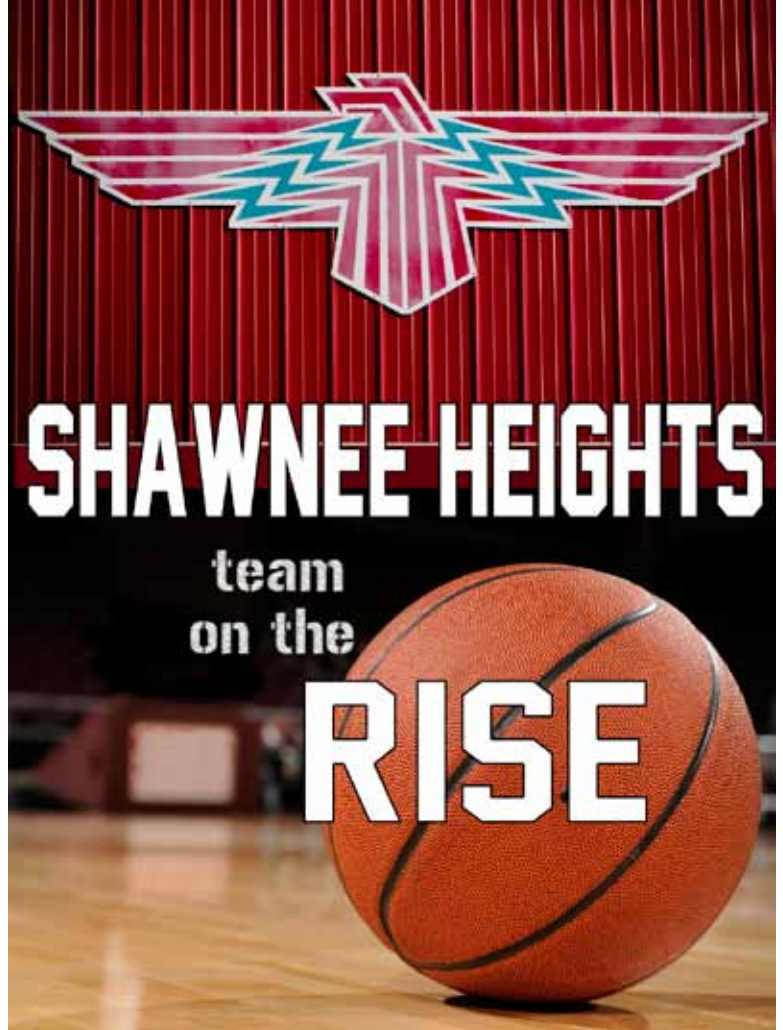
"We're going to have kids who have never been in a leadership role who have to step up and be leaders this season," Wells said. "They don't have those upperclassmen to look for anymore. They're going to be the ones we look for to step up and make plays."

With only one returning starter, Coach Wells looks to develop depth within his team and achieve more balance than the Lady Thunderbirds have seen in the past. If things fall into place for Coach Wells, he believes his team will be a force to be reckoned with toward the end of the year. But for now, the team needs to take things one step at a time.

"I really haven't looked a whole lot beyond our first game," said Wells. "It's going to be important for us to work through that first game, and then we'll look to the next game."

"We're going to have kids who have never been in a leadership role who have to step up and be leaders this season."

- Coach Bob Wells



SCHEDULE

December

- 2 at St. Teresa
- 6 at Lansing
- 9 Lawrence Free State
- 13 at Seaman
- 16 Washburn Rural

January

- 3 Topeka High
- 6 Manhattan
- 10 Topeka West
- 13 at Emporia
- 20 at Washburn Rural
- 26-28 Emporia Tourn.

February

- 3 at Topeka High
- 7 Highland Park
- 10 Junction City
- 14 at Topeka West
- 17 at Manhattan
- 21 Seaman
- 24 Hayden

DID YOU KNOW?

Shawnee Heights graduate Brenda Shaffer-Dahl led the Lady Thunderbirds to a state championship and an undefeated season as a senior in 1986. She went on to play at Washburn and is currently the Lady Blues' all-time leading scorer and rebounder.



TOPEKA WEST



Lady Chargers: Autura Campbell, Junior; Ashley Grant, Senior; Jade Hartke, Senior; Raven Cameron, Senior

Setting preseason goals like being 3-0 by winter break, hosting a first round sub-state game and making it to the state tournament may seem unrealistic for a team coming off a 3-18 season. But for first year coach Jason Wilson, it's all about bringing a new attitude to the Topeka West girls basketball program.

"Coming in, we're setting the expectations high, and we'll check the list off as we hit each goal," said Wilson. "We're a program that's 11 years removed from a state title, so we want to get back to that caliber."

While it will be important for the Lady Chargers to be disciplined and in good condition to run Coach Wilson's new system, what he believes will be the greatest factor is how the team approaches each game and the season as a whole.

"We're going to try to change the mental attitude of this program and get it back to where it once was," Wilson said. "We want to change the perception of who we are and how we represent ourselves. When we walk on the court, we need to expect to be the team to beat, and it starts with [the players]. If they believe in themselves and have the mental attitude that we can compete each night for 32 minutes, then hopefully it'll carry out when the final buzzer sounds."

As a new coach, putting a team in position to be competitive every night is often a daunting task, but Coach Wilson feels that some of the keys to his game plan are already in place, and he can already see a shift in the mindset of his players.

"They've been working from the time I've had them this summer until now," said Wilson. "They've definitely started working harder than I expected them to. Now, once they buy into the system and understand that change is good, they're going to do a lot of good things."

SCHEDULE

December

9 Washington
13 at Schlagle
16 Highland Park

January

3 at Washburn Rural
6 Junction City
10 at Shawnee Heights
13 Washburn Rural
17 at Olathe North
20 at Junction City
26-28 Topeka Tourn.
31 at Topeka High

February

3 at Manhattan
7 at Seaman
10 Hayden
14 Shawnee Heights
17 at Emporia
21 Topeka High
24 at Highland Park

DID YOU KNOW?

All-state basketball player Nadira Hazim led the Lady Chargers to a 6A state championship in 1987. After playing four years at Kansas State, she returned to Topeka West as an assistant coach and helped the Lady Chargers to another 6A state title in 1994.



"When we walk on the court, we need to expect to be the team to beat, and it starts with [the players]."

- Coach Jason Wilson

TOPEKA HIGH

The key to starting a successful basketball season comes from the right amount of commitment and preparation. Attempting to fulfill one factor without the other can lead to trouble before the season even begins.

For the Topeka High girls basketball team, pre-season preparation hasn't been an issue this year. In fact, Coach Shanna Perine believes these players have been the best she's seen in terms of working hard to improve their game.

"I've got a lot of kids that have really put a lot of time in," said Perine. "They're working anywhere from 10 to 20 hours a week on making their game better, and I've never been anywhere where the kids are that committed to something."

Not only are the girls committed to preparing themselves on the basketball court, but they also show that same level of dedication in the classroom. Coach Perine's returning players are the epitome of student athletes, achieving overall GPAs between 3.5 and 4.0.

"This team is unique in the aspect that they're very smart kids," said Perine. "I think that a lot of people look at Topeka High and think that I probably wouldn't field a team of 4.0 students, and I do, so that makes me proud."

Commitment and preparation will be key for the Lady Trojans this season, as this year's team will be very young. While Coach Perine returns several girls with varsity experience, many underclassmen may be called upon to play varsity minutes. The team also lost last season's leading scorer, Daria Sprew.

"I think that this season will be a lot different because last year we had a go-to player, somebody that could score 20 to 30 points a game," said Perine. "It gets pretty easy to rely on that one person, and we don't have that person anymore. Our kids have to take on a lot of responsibility, which I think will help them, and I think we'll be better for that reason."

"I think that a lot of people look at Topeka High and think that I probably wouldn't field a team of 4.0 students, and I do, so that makes me proud."

- Coach Shanna Perine



Lady Trojans: Bri Madden, Senior; Krystal Corhn, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 2 at Junction City
- 6 Washburn Rural
- 9 at Olathe North
- 16 at Emporia

January

- 3 at Shawnee Heights
- 6 Highland Park
- 10 Seaman
- 13 at Hayden
- 18 at Seaman
- 26-28 Topeka Tourn.
- 31 Topeka West

February

- 3 Shawnee Heights
- 7 Emporia
- 10 at Washburn Rural
- 14 at Highland Park
- 17 Junction City
- 21 at Topeka West
- 24 Manhattan

DID YOU KNOW?

Known for its electric atmosphere and strong community spirit, the Topeka High gymnasium, nicknamed "The Dungeon," ranks at the top of the Kansas Best 150 list as the best high school gym in the state.



WASHBURN RURAL

After capturing the state title three years ago, the Washburn Rural basketball girls have worked their way back to the state tournament but have fallen short of the championship in the last two seasons. Now, after graduating a solid group of seniors, the Junior Blues are looking to regroup in hopes of making another state title run this season.

What has been most important for Coach Kevin Bordewick and his team is the work they've put in during the offseason, especially in the summer. Open gym, practices and team camp have all taught the Junior Blues what they need to do to prepare for the upcoming season.

"We learned a lot about ourselves in terms of what our weaknesses are and what we need to do to get to the next level," said Bordewick. "We know that we have some shortcomings we need to work on, so the girls were in here a lot over the summer working on various aspects of their game."

With the tradition of success in the Washburn Rural girls basketball program, players are driven each year to go to state. Coach Bordewick's expectations for his players run high every season, but they always remain the same.

"Our expectation is that in whatever role you have, you're going to play as hard as you can, show up with the attitude that we're going to get better and be a good example for any younger kids we have on the team," Bordewick said.

After losing the leadership and experience of last year's senior class, Coach Bordewick is looking to his younger players to step up and take the lead.

"We're going to have to find people to fill those roles, and I think it's going to have to come from the younger ones," said Bordewick. "We have to have girls that show up every day ready to work hard to make sure that happens."

"We learned a lot about ourselves in terms of what our weaknesses are and what we need to do to get to the next level."

- Coach Kevin Bordewick



Junior Blues: Hannah Weingartner, Junior; Charly Michaelis, Junior; Erika Lane, Junior; Stephanie Moser, Senior; Alycia Garcia, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 1 Wyandotte
- 6 at Topeka High
- 9 Olathe Northwest
- 13 at Shawnee Mission West
- 16 at Shawnee Heights

January

- 3 Topeka West
- 6 at Seaman
- 10 at Manhattan
- 13 at Topeka West
- 20 Shawnee Heights
- 26-28 Free State Tourn.

February

- 3 at Emporia
- 7 Manhattan
- 10 Topeka High
- 14 Seaman
- 17 Highland Park
- 21 at Hayden
- 24 at Junction City

DID YOU KNOW?

Junior Blues alum Jeneka Joyce was named Miss Kansas Basketball after leading her team to the 6A state title in 1999. She was the Junior Blues' all-time leading scorer with 1,549 points and went on to play in 49 games as a freshman and sophomore at Notre Dame.



ROSSVILLE

Derek Dick has seen a lot of success with the Rossville boys basketball program in his three years as head coach. And while the team looks to be competitive once again this season with its returning group of seniors, the expectations are a little higher this year.

“One of the unique things about this group of seniors is that they have the chance to make it to the state tournament all four years of high school,” said Dick. “No other team has done that in school history.”

The past three seasons, the Bulldogs have had a 3A all-state first team player on the court, and without the presence of that key factor, they’ll have to find a new way to make it back to the state tournament. However, Coach Dick is confident that by using a larger rotation of players throughout the season, his team can make up for the missing role player.

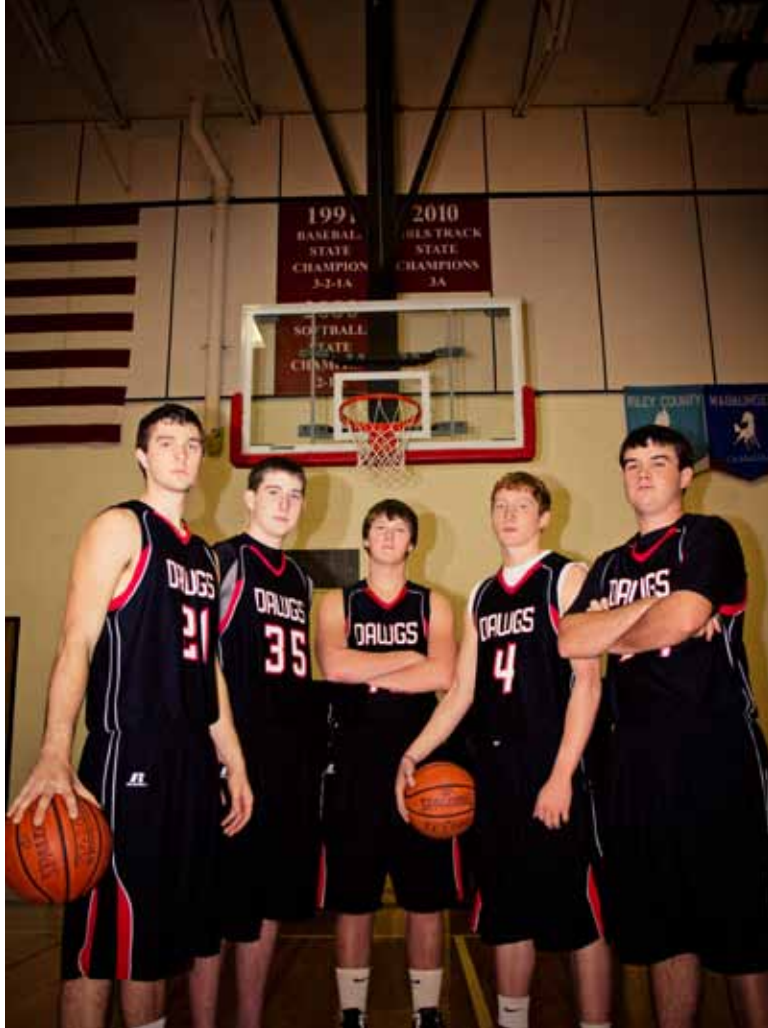
“In the past, we’ve had one or two players getting the majority of the shots, whereas this year, we could have a different leading scorer every night,” Dick said. “We’ll be much more balanced as a team, in addition to having good depth and good size.”

Another factor missing from Rossville’s resume this season is varsity experience from the returning players. Coach Dick believes he has several players who are capable of stepping up and having a good year for the Bulldogs, but it may not be something fans see from the team right away.

“We might start off a little slow, but the more practice we get over the course of the season, the better we’ll be,” said Dick. “The main thing is that we play hard and play together. We’ve got enough talent that if we do that night in and night out, we’ll win a lot of games.”

“We could have a different leading scorer every night. We’ll be much more balanced as a team, in addition to having good depth and good size.”

- Coach Derek Dick



Bulldogs: Travis French, Senior; Marik Lyons, Senior; Sam Reesor, Senior; Derek Wehner, Senior; Brandon Kerwin, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 1 at Wamego
- 5-10 Dickinson Co. Classic
- 13 at Frankfort
- 16 ACCHS-Effingham

January

- 3 Silver Lake
- 6 Riley County
- 10 Rock Creek
- 13 at St. Marys
- 17-21 Burlington Tourn.
- 31 St. Marys

February

- 3 at Wabaunsee
- 7 at Osage City
- 10 at Silver Lake
- 14 Wabaunsee
- 17 at Riley County
- 23 at Rock Creek

DID YOU KNOW?

Trips to the state tournament are very familiar territory for Coach Derek Dick. In addition to coaching Rossville to the last three state tournaments, Dick led his high school team to the tournament in 2000 as the Bulldogs’ leading scorer.



SILVER LAKE



Eagles: Dylan Holthaus, Senior; Tyler Warren, Senior

After 21 years as a head basketball coach, Linndy Frieden is encountering a new experience with the Silver Lake boys basketball program this season – coaching his youngest team yet.

Upon graduating seven lettermen last year, including all-league and all-state players, Coach Frieden is left with a very young and inexperienced team.

“It’s really tough this year with young kids,” said Frieden. “A bunch of these kids haven’t played varsity basketball, so the first challenge is trying to get all of our kids on the same level.”

Silver Lake’s JV and freshman teams experienced a great deal of success last season, which holds promise for Coach Frieden in terms of talent coming up to the varsity team.

“We’ve got good, young kids, but the speed of varsity basketball is totally different,” Frieden said. “It will be very interesting to see how quick we can make that transition from freshman and JV basketball to varsity basketball.”

One of the biggest challenges the Eagles face from the start is making the transition between football and basketball.

“Two-thirds of the kids on our team play football, so it makes it a little challenging when you begin practicing with the other guys and then get the football players back only a week or two before your first game,” said Frieden.

Once they get past the shift between sports, Coach Frieden will be looking to fill seven spots left by the seniors and find the roles everyone will be playing early on in the season.

“The last couple of years, we were bigger, we were more experienced and we were a little bit deeper than we are now,” said Frieden. “We had four or five players that could step up and lead us in scoring on any given night, so now we’re trying to find people to fill those shoes as quick as possible.”

“A bunch of these kids haven’t played varsity basketball, so the first challenge is trying to get all of our kids on the same level.”

SCHEDULE

December

- 6 Holton
- 9 Riley County
- 13 at Jefferson County North
- 16 St. Marys

January

- 3 at Rossville
- 6 Rock Creek
- 10 at Wabaunsee
- 13 at Riley County
- 16-21 Tonganoxie Tourn.
- 24 Sabetha
- 27 at Wamego
- 31 Osage City

February

- 3 at St. Marys
- 7 Perry-Leocompton
- 10 Rossville
- 17 at Rock Creek
- 21 at Council Grove
- 23 Wabaunsee

DID YOU KNOW?

Silver Lake standout Lon Kruger played his college career at Kansas State and was named Big Eight Player of the Year in 1973 and 1974. He has gone on to have a successful coaching career in both college and the NBA and is currently the head coach at Oklahoma.



- Coach Linndy Frieden

HAYDEN



Wildcats: Sam Glennon, Senior; Matt Hutchinson, Senior; Alex Schmidtberger, Senior; Collin Strobel, Senior

Judging a book by its cover is something an old adage advises us against, and Coach Ted Schuler would warn opponents of the Hayden boys basketball team from committing the same crime. While the road may not be as smooth as they'd like this season, come February, Coach Schuler believes his team could be really tough to deal with.

"This team is going to be a very unassuming team," said Schuler. "People may watch the team walk out on the floor and think 'That's not a basketball team. That's not a team that should be winning some of these games.' Yet all they do is work hard, and they play the game the right way."

The Wildcats return four seniors to the varsity team, and Coach Schuler will have to work five or six new guys into the rotation this season. And despite putting in extra work during the summer, Hayden's strength of schedule from the start of the season may make it challenging for the team to find its rhythm.

"It may take a while to get things going, but those five or six guys have the talent and the ability to be really good by February," Schuler said. "This is a hard working group, and they all have the capability to be strong leaders and make the team cohesive."

The ultimate goal for Coach Schuler's team is to win the state tournament and hang their banner on the gym's west wall, leaving a lasting legacy at Hayden. However, in order for his team to compete for that goal, Coach Schuler will need to see constant effort from his players.

"We're not a team that is going to be able to coast by in a quarter here or there," said Schuler. "We have to make sure that every quarter, we're focused and ready to play. If we do that, I would put these guys up against any team in the state."

"This is a hard working group, and they all have the capability to be strong leaders and make the team cohesive."

- Coach Ted Schuler

SCHEDULE

December

- 9 at St. James
- 16 Seaman
- 21 at Basehor-Linwood

January

- 3 at Highland Park
- 6 Emporia
- 10 Junction City
- 13 Topeka High
- 17-21 Burlington Tourn.
- 24 at Leavenworth
- 27 at Holton
- 31 at Emporia

February

- 3 Highland Park
- 7 at Junction City
- 10 at Topeka West
- 14 Manhattan
- 17 at Seaman
- 21 Washburn Rural
- 24 at Shawnee Heights

DID YOU KNOW?

Fellow teammates and Hayden alumni Mark Turgeon and Tom Meier helped the Wildcats capture back-to-back state titles in 1982 and 1983. Turgeon and Meier went on to have successful careers at Kansas and Washburn, respectively.



HIGHLAND PARK

The approach that Ken Darting takes to coaching basketball may be a little unorthodox for most basketball fans. Coach Darting and the Highland Park basketball boys don't talk about win-loss records, playing in big games or making a run for the state title, but they have a very specific reason for doing so.

"We've been in the state finals six of the last nine years and won four state championships, and in that time, any kid that's ever played here will tell you that we never talked about winning the state championship because it's out of our control," said Darting. "You can be good enough to win state, and one bad referee call or one turned ankle at the wrong time in the year or one great team that's just as good or better than you, and you don't make it there."

When it comes to setting goals for the season, Coach Darting prefers to focus on the process rather than the result. He expects every player in his program to play as hard as they can, because he knows it's the only thing they can guarantee in a game each night.

"If we can't control it, then there's no sense in talking about it," Darting said. "You can control doing the right things in games and doing them hard, but you can't control whether you win or lose. We just have to take it as it comes, one day at a time."

One thing out of Coach Darting's control this season is his team's level of experience. With two seniors leading the way that haven't played a minute of varsity between them, it looks to be an interesting but exciting season for the Scots.

"The main challenge with having a young team is the unknown," said Darting. "You don't know how they're going to come together. But I really believe that in every game we play, we'll have a chance to win."



Scots: Trey Wheeler, Junior; Inyard Payton, Senior; Oshai Clark, Junior; Michael Johnson, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 8-10 Leavenworth Tourn.
- 16 at Topeka West
- 20 Field Kindley

January

- 3 Hayden
- 6 at Topeka High
- 10 at Emporia
- 13 Seaman
- 19-21 Topeka Invitational
- 26 Manhattan

February

- 3 at Hayden
- 7 at Shawnee Heights
- 10 Emporia
- 14 Topeka High
- 17 at Washburn Rural
- 21 Junction City
- 24 Topeka West

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2007, Highland Park standouts Lamont Austin and Kyle Weams led the Scots to a 5A state championship and only the second undefeated boys basketball season in city history.



"The main challenge with having a young team is the unknown. You don't know how they're going to come together."

- Coach Ken Darting

SEAMAN

In his time as a student manager at Kansas State University, Craig Cox learned from successful college coaches Jack Hartman and Lon Kruger every day in practice. As a graduate assistant at Fort Hays State University, former NAIA Coach of the Year Bill Morse was Cox's example, preparing him for his future coaching career.

"What it taught me working for [Coach Morse] was that everything we did was completely opposite of Coach Hartman, but the fundamentals they taught and the demands they had were the same," said Cox. "So, no matter what system you teach or how you want to play, you still teach the same fundamentals."

Coach Cox will have to keep that mentality at the forefront as he brings a new style of play to his first season with the Seaman boys basketball program. In the midst of his transition to a new program, one thing Coach Cox won't have to worry about is having a team of players that are willing to work for him.

"One of the things I've always respected about Seaman in coaching against their teams is that no matter what the talent level was, the teams and players here always play hard," Cox said. "That's really important because if you're spending all of your time trying to get kids to give you effort, you're not going to get a lot else done. So we don't have to worry about that."

The new system Coach Cox brings to Seaman will help create opportunities for his key players and enhance the strengths of the team. However, he knows that starting small and getting better every day will be extremely important to the success of this season's basketball team.

"One of the important things to help you improve every day is the attention to detail," said Cox. "The little things really matter, and if you give proper attention to those things on a daily basis, then you're going to continue to get better every day."

"One of the things I've always respected about Seaman in coaching against their teams is that...the teams and players here always play hard."

- Coach Craig Cox



Vikings: Adam Heald, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 2 Blue Valley SW
- 6 at Lawrence Free State
- 9 Lansing
- 13 Shawnee Heights
- 16 at Hayden

January

- 3 Junction City
- 6 Washburn Rural
- 10 at Topeka High
- 13 at Highland Park
- 19-21 Valley Center Tourn.
- 27 Topeka High

February

- 3 at Junction City
- 7 Topeka West
- 10 at Manhattan
- 14 at Washburn Rural
- 17 Hayden
- 21 at Shawnee Heights
- 24 Emporia

DID YOU KNOW?

The atmosphere at Seaman basketball games wouldn't be the same without the students. As one of the most recognized student sections in the area, Seaman fans dress up in themes every game night to show their spirit.



SHAWNEE HEIGHTS

After a tough couple of seasons with the Shawnee Heights boys basketball program, Coach Pat Buchanan is the first to admit that the Thunderbirds need to see two important things happen this year – a change in the program’s structure and a shift in the team’s competitive nature.

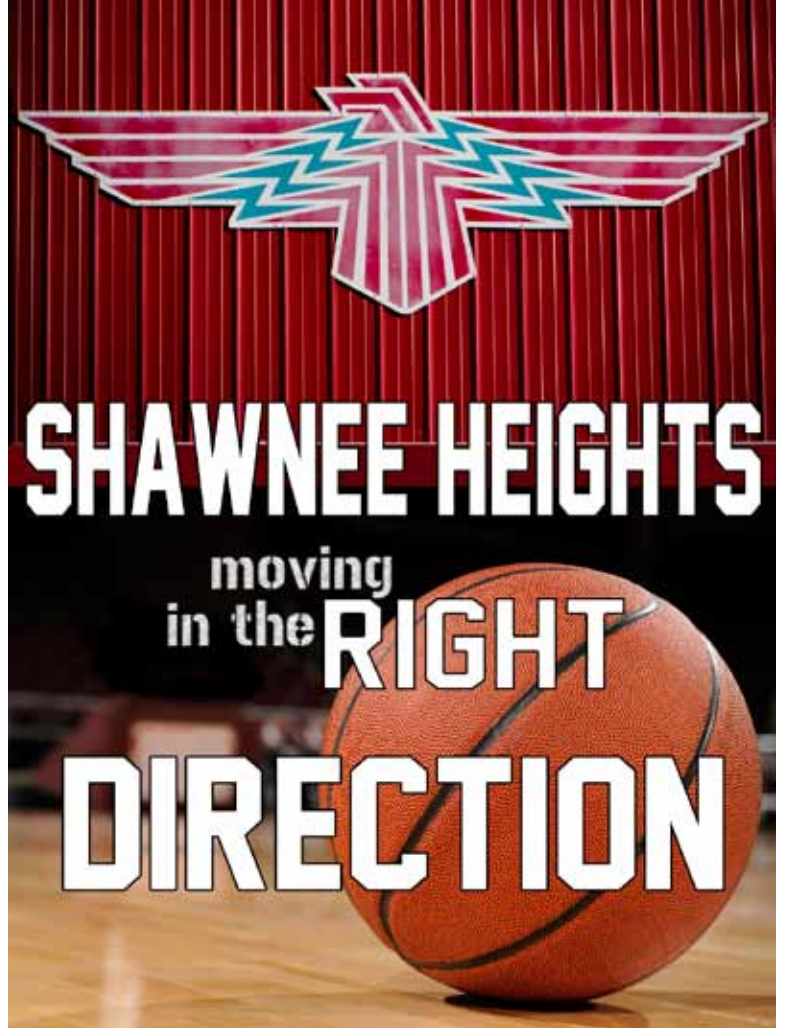
“If you keep doing the same things you’ve been doing, you’re going to get the same results,” said Buchanan. “We have to change some things up in practice so we start doing things better. And we certainly have to change the mentality we’ve had in the last couple of years.”

Coach Buchanan’s overall goal for his team is to be more competitive in games, and whether they win or lose, the players and the coaches need to have a sense that they’re moving in the right direction. In keeping his players’ best interests in mind, Coach Buchanan knows that the change must start from the top.

“I want them to be better players and better people having played for me,” Buchanan said. “I want to change the atmosphere, and I think it all starts with me and seeing myself as the role model. All eyes are on me as far as the program is concerned, and I want to build a positive, winning attitude.”

As a young team, things are still up in the air for the Thunderbirds as Coach Buchanan works to blend players together and create the most competitive team for game night. What will be important for Coach Buchanan is getting the team to buy into his changes, but with the enthusiasm his players have shown in the off season, the transition looks to be pretty seamless.

“They’re eager to be out there, and they’re eager to compete,” said Buchanan. “They’re open to communicating with each other and the coaches, and they’re willing to get the hard work done to benefit their play on game night.”



SCHEDULE

December

- 2 at KC Turner
- 6 at Lansing
- 9 Lawrence Free State
- 13 at Seaman
- 16 Washburn Rural

January

- 3 Topeka High
- 6 Manhattan
- 10 Topeka West
- 13 at Emporia
- 19-21 Chanute Tourn.
- 27 at Washburn Rural

February

- 3 at Topeka High
- 7 Highland Park
- 10 Junction City
- 14 at Topeka West
- 17 at Manhattan
- 21 Seaman
- 24 Hayden

DID YOU KNOW?

Although he’s known for his golf skills, former Thunderbird Gary Woodland was also a standout basketball player, leading Shawnee Heights to two state titles. Woodland played a year of basketball at Washburn before transferring to KU to play golf.



“I want to change the atmosphere, and I think it all starts with me and seeing myself as the role model.”

- Coach Pat Buchanan

TOPEKA WEST



Chargers: Emeka Okoronkwo, Senior; Antonio Ross, Senior; Jonathan Mariani, Junior; Doug Turner, Senior

In the transition between the first and second year of a coach's career at a school, expectations for the program's future are often adjusted as students, teachers, parents and fans see what the coach can bring to the table. However, for second year coach Luke Brosius, expectations haven't changed, despite having a year under his belt with the Topeka West boys basketball program.

"At the beginning of the year, we don't tell our kids that we expect to win so many games or anything like that," said Brosius. "We just tell our kids that we expect them to work hard every day out, we expect them to be disciplined and we expect them to play together. If we do those things each and every day in practice, we hope that the wins will take care of themselves."

After playing a year in the Centennial League, Coach Brosius understands how important it is to set clear expectations for his players on the level of commitment they need to have for the program to be successful.

"We play in one of the toughest leagues in the state, so every night, you're going to have your hands full," Brosius said. "We feel like if our kids are working hard, being disciplined and doing exactly what we ask, they've got a great chance to win every night."

Coming off a tough first season with a new coach, the group of returning players has the opportunity to see some individual success this year under Coach Brosius' system. But, he expects his boys to stick to the game plan and keep their priorities straight on the court.

"One thing that we tell our kids is that everything happens within the team," said Brosius. "The individual glory may come with the team's success, but the team is put above everything else. I think these guys buy into that and know that we expect them to be leaders."

SCHEDULE

December

6-9 Olathe South Tourn.
16 Highland Park

January

3 at Washburn Rural
6 Junction City
10 at Shawnee Heights
13 Washburn Rural
19-21 Topeka Tourn.
27 at Junction City
31 at Topeka High

February

3 at Manhattan
7 at Seaman
10 Hayden
14 Shawnee Heights
17 at Emporia
21 Topeka High
24 at Highland Park

DID YOU KNOW?

Charger alum C.B. McGrath was an all-state selection and was named Mr. Kansas Basketball as a senior in 1994. McGrath went on to play four seasons at Kansas, helping the Jayhawks to four conference championships and a 123-17 record.



"We feel like if our kids are working hard, being disciplined and doing exactly what we ask, they've got a great chance to win every night."

- Coach Luke Brosius

TOPEKA HIGH

In the last few years, success hasn't been hard to come by for the competitive Topeka High boys basketball program. Two seasons ago, the Trojans captured the Centennial League trophy and only missed last year's title by a close loss at the end of the season.

This year, Coach Pat Denney hopes the season will look very similar and that his returning players will pick up from where they left things in February. He believes that both successes and shortcomings from past seasons will teach his players how to better face the challenges of the game.

"I hope we learn to play better basketball," said Denney. "We're a year older and a year wiser, and I think we have great senior leadership. I think these kids are poised to play better basketball."

That poise comes from a special group of seniors that has spent four years dedicating themselves to the Trojan basketball program. For Coach Denney, the uniqueness of these seniors is why he loves going to work and having practice each day.

"Even though they haven't accomplished anything yet, the time they've spent with each other and in this program has meant a lot to us coaches, to the school and to this program," Denney said. "They've set the way, and they've put on a good example for our younger kids coming up."

Coach Denney will rely on that experience from his senior leaders to carry the team through tough matchups all year long. Although the season will be daunting from the start, Coach Denney wouldn't have it any other way.

"Last year was so intense and so fun because every game was important down the stretch," said Denney. "We hope that by the end of the year, by the time we hit late January and into February, we're playing for something, we're playing to get better and we're playing our best basketball. I know it's going to be exciting, and these kids are ready to have a good year."



Trojans: Marcus Fillyaw, Senior; Evan Robinson, Senior; Darryln Johnson, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

2 Olathe South
6 Washburn Rural
16 at Emporia

January

3 at Shawnee Heights
6 Highland Park
10 Seaman
13 at Hayden
19-21 Topeka Tourn.
24 at Olathe North
27 at Seaman
31 Topeka West

February

3 Shawnee Heights
7 Emporia
10 at Washburn Rural
14 at Highland Park
17 Junction City
21 at Topeka West
24 Manhattan

DID YOU KNOW?

Topeka High basketball alum Fred Slaughter played college ball at UCLA in the early 60s for legendary coach John Wooden. As a center, Slaughter helped the Bruins to two Final Fours and Wooden's first national title in 1964.



"Even though [the seniors] haven't accomplished anything yet, the time they've spent with each other and in this program has meant a lot."

- Coach Pat Denney

WASHBURN RURAL

It hasn't taken Clint Meitler long to make an impact with the Washburn Rural boys basketball program. Coming off a berth in last year's state tournament, Coach Meitler attributes his success to having great senior leadership and changing the way things are done at Washburn Rural. With a new group of seniors at the helm of his team, Coach Meitler looks to capitalize on their prior achievements.

"Last year, we did some things that hadn't been done here in quite a while," said Meitler. "We had a great season and we accomplished a lot, but there's still more to achieve beyond what we did last year. For these senior guys, I hope their goals are to take things to the next level."

Coach Meitler encourages his seniors to set goals beyond winning league or state titles. Last year's team goals ranged from achieving certain semester grades to being undefeated at home, all of which were selected by the players. And as they step into new leadership roles and set their sights on the season, Coach Meitler sees promise in this senior class.

"I think this class really has the potential to stand out in what they do with their senior year," Meitler said. "I think they have a chance to really do some special things and hopefully make their mark on the program."

Creating tradition is now Coach Meitler's way of leaving his mark on the Junior Blues program. Every Thursday night last season, the team got together and went to a different player's house, where the parents fed them supper. Coach Meitler hopes to continue building traditions and developing his team both on and off the court.

"It was a lot of fun last year, and I think it's something the guys really bought into," said Meitler. "It's not about being on the basketball court. It's about getting to know each other and being more of a family."



Junior Blues: Brandon Ediger, Senior; Josh Sweet, Senior; Ryan Wynne, Senior; Josh Woodward, Senior; Drew Boggs, Senior

SCHEDULE

December

- 1 Wyandotte
- 6 at Topeka High
- 9 Junction City
- 16 at Shawnee Heights

January

- 3 Topeka West
- 6 at Seaman
- 10 at Manhattan
- 13 at Topeka West
- 19-21 STA Tourn.
- 25 Olathe East
- 27 Shawnee Heights

February

- 3 at Emporia
- 7 Manhattan
- 10 Topeka High
- 14 Seaman
- 17 Highland Park
- 21 at Hayden
- 24 at Junction City

DID YOU KNOW?

Two-time all-state player Ron Paradis won a state championship with the Junior Blues in 1960 and played in the 1964 Final Four for Kansas State. Paradis was inducted into the Kansas Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1986 as both a player and a sportscaster.



"I think this class really has the potential to stand out in what they do with their senior year."

- Coach Clint Meitler