

Experienced Eagles working toward tradition

Written by Deb Egenberger

Thursday, 02 September 2010 20:05 - Last Updated Thursday, 02 September 2010 20:11



Eight letter winners return.

Experience.

It's a word Brady volleyball coach Lynne Johnson says with a bit of hesitation mixed with delight.

"I honestly don't know when the last time was, if ever, that I could say one of our team strengths is our experience," Johnson said.

The Eagles have eight returning letter winners which include Maggie Burke, a junior setter who transferred from Maxwell.

The other seven seasoned players are three seniors, two juniors and two sophomores who spent plenty of time on the court last fall.

"They're all strong players," Johnson said. "That helps make our scrimmages challenging and our team balanced."

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And Brady's depth goes beyond the letter winners. Johnson said there are girls in all grades vying for varsity positions.

"The internal battle for spots on the floor forces everyone to work a little harder," the coach said, "and it feeds that competitive spirit."

BHS VOLLEYBALL	
Sept. 2—MAXWELL, 5:30 p.m.	
Sept. 8—PAXTON/SMC TRIANGULAR, 5 p.m.	
Sept. 16—STAPLETON/McPHERSON COUNTY, 5:30 p.m.	
Sept. 17—at Callaway Tournament, 5:30 a.m.	
Sept. 14—Medicine Valley/South Loop at Medicine Valley triangular, 8 p.m.	
Sept. 24—at Easton Forum, 5 p.m.	
Sept. 25—BRADY TOURNAMENT, 9 a.m.	
Sept. 26—Maywood/Wallace at Wallace triangular, 5 p.m.	
Oct. 5—MEDICINE VALLEY/MAYWOOD, 5 p.m.	
Oct. 8—at Wauneta/Palisade, 5:30 p.m.	
Oct. 11—ARTHUR COUNTY, 6:30 p.m.	
Oct. 16—at Wallace, 5:30 p.m.	
Oct. 19-21—Sandhill Conference at Arthur, TBA	
Oct. 26—Akeley/Sandhills-Theford at Theford triangular, 5 p.m.	
Oct. 30—HICKOCK COUNTY, 5 p.m.	
Nov. 1, 2—32-A sub-district at Cozad, TBA	

The competition between players has not broken down the teamwork idea either.

If anything, Johnson said, it has made the Eagles a more cohesive unit.

"Their practice shirts say 'We is greater than me,'" Johnson said. "That's a concept we're working toward all the time. The less selfish they get, the better the team is. It's all about what each of us can do to make the team better."

If Johnson had to choose a weakness for her team, she said it would be lack of height.

"But what we lack in height we hopefully make up for with good jumpers," she said.

The Eagles move back to Class D-2 this season after a year in D-1.

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That also means a move back to a sub-district that includes Anselmo-Merna, Eustis-Farnam, Maywood and Medicine Valley with powerhouse teams such as Wallace and Paxton in the other half of the district.

“What they have that we don’t have is tradition,” Johnson said of Wallace and Paxton volleyball programs.

But the Eagles are well on their way. With a solid 21-9 record in 2008 and a 21-7 finish last fall, Johnson said Brady

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