

Eaton Reds Basketball thrives under new team culture

A new-look Reds take massive steps towards success under new coach Tanner Ervin

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It was a season defined by growth for the Eaton Reds Basketball team, but the usual growing pains normally felt didn't happen. It was a season of new surroundings and a new identity. First year head coach Tanner Ervin set the culture and the young squad followed suit.

For the Reds, the season didn't end as they'd hoped, but the culture and foundation for years to

come was set in stone. Ervin said, "It was so fun getting to know them on and off the field." It was a necessity for Ervin to know his players. Building a sturdy culture always begins with a sturdy foundation. The Reds finished with a 13-10 record, placing third in the Patriot League, and they also got a ticket to the first round of the 4A state tournament.

Taking on Fort Lupton, who the Reds had previously lost to earlier in the season 64-48, the Reds

were in for a battle. On this occasion, the Reds were ready. One of the standouts of the season, Lucas Stone (24), put together a cohesive display of offense and defense with 22 points and ten rebounds. Senior Mitch Haythorn was alongside Stone rebounding and assisting.

Unfortunately, the journey ended in Fort Lupton and a season of development finished early. The Reds were down by one late in the game, but Fort Lupton's free throws were the dagger. A season of expectation ended early.

In his first year as head coach, Ervin displayed what it meant to care for a team and a community. Ervin said, "I just want to thank everyone for all of the support this year; the students and members from around the community played huge roles in our success."

The Reds were a team that played for each other. Sophomore, Ely Madaleno said, "The season was a refresh to the whole program. This team has way more heart and way more of a motive



Ely Madaleno(26) drives towards the hoop against University compared to last year's team."

Team was an apparent vocabulary word for the Reds this year. The team stuck together for each other and the community. Although the season did not end the way the players had hoped, the impact that Ervin, the players, and the coaching staff made was phenomenal. The expected growing pains for the Eaton Reds, instead, turned into something beautiful: a foundation that will easily be built upon. Ervin said,

"I look forward to just building on this past year and getting better. I thought we created a great culture this year and that is because we have great kids. I think if we (coaches and players) improve some of our weaknesses and continue to get better at our strengths, we can have another great season next year."

The Reds can look forward to the future and that is something to be proud of.



Mitch Haythorn (24) dribbles the ball forward in home game against University

Eaton Reds Girls Basketball wraps up foundation building season

Despite the season ending the future is bright for the Reds

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The Eaton Reds Girls Basketball season has come to an end after suffering a one point loss to Pagosa Springs in the second round of the playoffs. While their season didn't end the way they wanted it to, the team still had plenty of success throughout the season. They ended with a final record of 16-9, while also taking a few key wins over their big time rivals, the University Bulldogs and the Strasburg Indians. They had very strong senior leadership along with key freshmen contributors as well.

Head coach Chris Love said, "We really had a player-led team. The growth that the players showed within that was awesome to see. We are still just developing. The girls knew from the beginning, because we had so many new things that it was



Tayla Wiedeman(24) leaps to block the ball against University going to be a slower build but we played real well and had a really easy time familiarizing ourselves with each other."

Senior Tayla Wiedeman was the leading scorer throughout the season, putting up 14.2 points a game while shooting a team high

of 49 percent from the field. She also contributed on the glass, putting up 6.0 rebounds a game. Not only did she make an impact on the offensive side of the ball, but she was a presence on the defensive end, finishing the season with 30 blocks. She played a huge

part in the success of the Reds throughout the entire season. She said, "Going into each game, I knew that I needed to control my emotions throughout the game because I was the one who everyone would be looking to if we were down or if things weren't going our way. I also made sure to never let myself take plays off and always play hard to be sure I was setting an example and contributing positively towards the team."

The next two leading scorers for the Reds came from the stud freshmen, Courtney Steinkamp and Delaney Reuter. While it was their first year in the program, they had no problem settling right in and making a huge impact for the Reds. Steinkamp finished the season averaging 12.8 points a game and Reuter fin-

ished close behind with 8.6. The young talent is going to be with the Reds for years to come. Chris Love said, "The talent is there. We need to be able to replace the leadership that was lost. We have three starters that are returning and have a lot of underclassman talent. Although talent only gets you so far. We have to be ready to work right when we hit the floor next year and I am really excited for when that moment comes."

While the Reds are losing four seniors that all contributed in one way or another to help the team win, they will be returning ten players, three who were a part of the starting five. While this season came to a close with a tough loss, Coach Love and the Eaton Reds Girls Basketball team have a lot to look forward to in the years to come.