

## Cashton basketball teams face conference battles

By Zach Rastall  
Sports Writer

As 2022 winds down and we welcome in the new year, a busy calendar awaits for both Cashton basketball teams.

The Cashton boys' basketball is off to a strong start to their season, though they've seen relatively little action thus far. The Eagles went into Christmas weekend with a 4-0 record that includes three non-conference wins — 48-31 over Melrose-Mindoro at home, 62-30 over Kickapoo on the road and 65-28 over Viroqua on the road — and a 72-41 home victory against Brookwood in their lone Scenic Bluffs contest to this point.

Before we close the book on 2022, the Cashton boys welcome in Blair-Taylor (3-4) for a non-conference battle Thursday, December 29 at 7 p.m. in Cashton, then hit the road for a makeup conference clash with Royall (6-0 overall, 2-0 Scenic Bluffs) Friday, December 30 at 7 p.m. in Elroy. They ring in 2023 with a non-conference game against Independence (2-5) Monday, January 2 at 7:15 p.m. in Independence.

After that, the Eagles (4-0, 1-0) enjoy three straight Scenic Bluffs matchups at home: vs. Hillsboro (6-1, 2-1) Thursday, January 5, vs. Necedah (2-5, 0-2) Saturday, January 7 and vs. New Lisbon (3-4, 1-2) Tuesday, January 10. All three games are set to get underway at 7 p.m.

Meanwhile, the Cashton girls' basketball team sports a .500 record both overall and in Scenic Bluffs play thus far.

The Eagles (4-4 overall, 2-2 Scenic Bluffs) began with home wins over Seneca and Necedah by identical scores of 57-21 and then beat Independence 43-27 in their road opener to move to 3-0 at the time. Next came a trio of road games: a 58-51 loss to Royall, a 47-42 loss to Kickapoo and a 55-51 win over Brookwood, the last of which came without star player Braylee Hyatt.

In its last two games, Cashton lost 49-31 at home to Hillsboro and then took a 48-33 road defeat at the hands of Westby.

The Cashton girls cap off 2022 at home against Blair-Taylor (8-0) — the No. 1 team in Division 5 according to the WisSports.net coaches' poll — Thursday, December 29 at 5:30 p.m., then start 2023 by hitting the road to face the New Lisbon Rockets (2-8, 1-3) Tuesday, January 3 at 7 p.m. in New Lisbon.

After that is a pair of home games: a rivalry clash with Bangor (6-1, 3-1) Friday, January 6 at 7 p.m. and a non-conference showdown with Viroqua (2-7) Monday, January 9 at 7:15 p.m.

Cashton's Colin O'Neil sets up and arm bar against De Soto's Peyton Crager during the Tomah Scramble on December 10. O'Neil is eager to help the Eagles contend for the top spot in the Scenic Bluffs Conference in 2023 after a six-year title drought. First, however, is the annual Bi-State Classic this week. O'Neil finished eighth at last year's tournament and went on to represent Cashton at the WIAA state meet in February. Photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media.

# Numbers + Experience

## Cashton grapplers eyeing SBC summit again

By Nate Beier  
Sports Editor

It's been awhile since the Cashton wrestling team has been in a spot to compete for a Scenic Bluffs Conference championship. However, numbers and experience have the Eagles in that familiar position again this year.

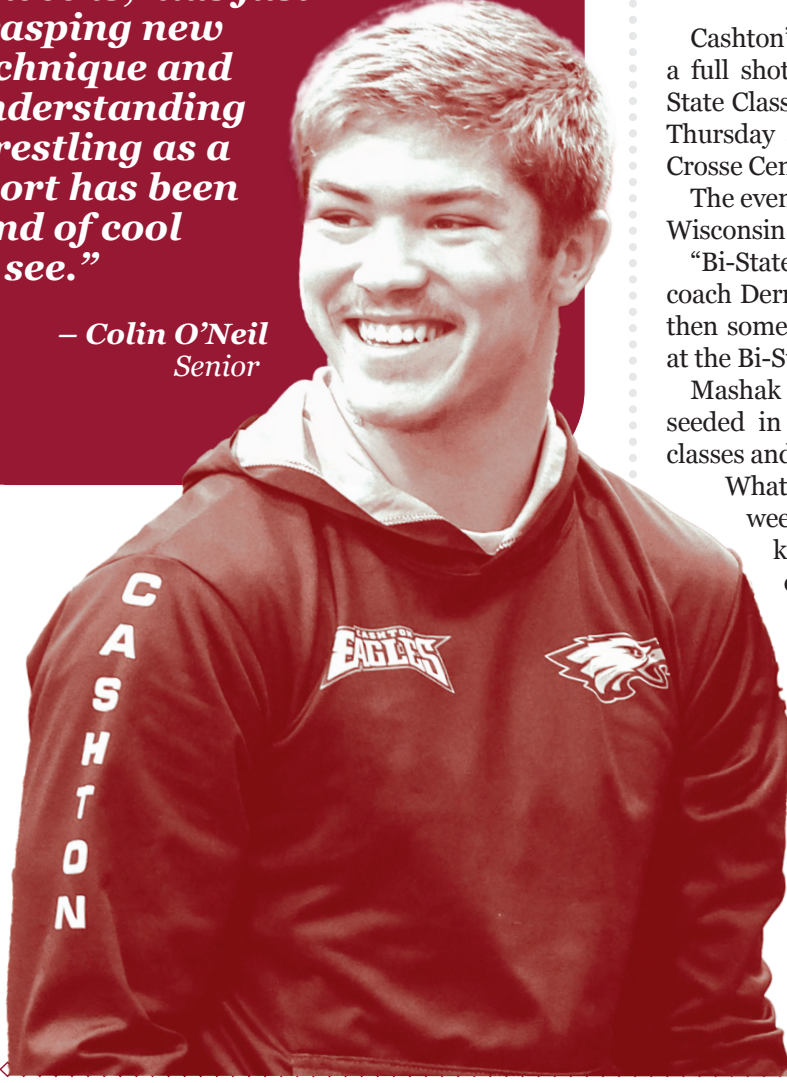
The Eagles' wrestling program is hovering around 15 members this year, which is quite similar to last year. However, there are a number of returning faces that will help shore up the CHS lineup — especially in the upper weights — and make the team rather formidable within the confines of the Scenic Bluffs Conference. For head coach Derrick Mashak, however, the scope of success is wider than just competing for a league title.

"Yes, the team goal is a conference title," said Mashak, but he wasn't

'WRESTLING' continued on page 9

*"...the growth we're seeing already in these first couple of weeks; kids just grasping new technique and understanding wrestling as a sport has been kind of cool to see."*

— Colin O'Neil  
Senior



## Eagles ready to take on the Bi-State Classic

Cashton's grapplers both new and old will get a full shot of experience at Holmen's annual Bi-State Classic, which is set to run later this week on Thursday and Friday, December 27-28 at the La Crosse Center.

The event features dozens of programs from both Wisconsin and Minnesota.

"Bi-State will be a great test," said Cashton head coach Derrick Mashak. "If we wrestle to our seeds, then some of Cashton's wrestlers will make waves at the Bi-State."

Mashak pointed out that he has four wrestlers seeded in the top 20 in their respective weight classes and two of those are in the top ten.

What does that mean for the Eagles this week? That could translate to a number of kids wrestling on the second day of the event and challenging competitors for a placeholder spot. The Bi-State Classic tournament pools all wrestlers together in a weight class, regardless of division.

Colin O'Neil was the team's top finisher at the Bi-State Classic a year ago. O'Neil went 4-3 and was forced to take eighth after losing his last match 3-1. Austin Culpitt finished 10th at 285 a year ago.

The first session of the event starts at 10 a.m. Thursday and the first session of Friday — the semifinal round — starts at 10 a.m. Friday.

# Viroqua gymnastics co-op wins first Coulee dual

By Nate Beier  
Sports Editor

Morgan Siekert swept all five events in last Tuesday's Coulee Conference opener against Arcadia.

Siekert posted a 9.05 on both the vault and floor. The Cashton junior finished with a 9 on bars and scored an 8.9 on the beam to lead the Viroqua gymnastics co-op. A score of an even 36 was Siekert's all around score, which was nearly four points better than the runner-up.

Isabell Korn followed suit with a 32.125 in the all around.

Korn was second on beam (8.4) and floor (8.3). The Cashton sophomore was third on vault with a 7.9.

Emma Harem was second on the vault with an 8.35 and was third on beam (7.85). Harem was the third place all around with a score of 31.35.

### WEST SALEM INVITE

Morgan Siekert won the all-around in the Blackhawks' opening meet of the year — the West Salem invite on Saturday, December 10.

Siekert posted a meet-best score of 9.15 on the vault and finished in the top five in two other events which paved the way for the win in the all-around. The Cashton junior scored a 35.6 to win the all-around.

Siekert was second on beam with a 9.25, which was just a tenth of a point away from first place, which was won by Reedsburg's Emily Craker. The former Coulee Conference gymnast of the year was fourth on bars (8.6) and 15th on the floor with an 8.6.

Isabell Korn won the floor exercise with a score of 9.25 and finished third in the all-around with a combined total of 34.925. Korn scored a 9.225 to take third on



Viroqua's Marlena Toney (Cashton) switches her grip on the bars at the beginning of her routine during last week's dual with Arcadia. Photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media.

beam and tied for sixth on the vault with an 8.2. On the uneven bars, Kork was eighth an 8.25.

On vault, Emma Harem was tied for 12th. Marlena Toney was 33rd and Makayla Gooselaw 43rd.

Toney was tied for 28th overall on the uneven bars while Harem was 32nd and Gooselaw 43rd.

Harem cracked the top 10 on the balance beam with a

score of 8.3. Gooselaw was 20th and Toney 23rd.

Harem placed 23rd on floor with Toney coming in 34th and Gooselaw 44th.

In the all-around, Harem finished 18th with a combined score of 30.9. Toney was 24th with a score of 28.975 and Gooselaw was 32nd (25.425).

First head coach Melissa Peterson expressed

satisfaction with her team's first live competition of the year — especially since the team has certain limitations in practice.

"We spend the first five weeks of the season without getting on a full floor. Today's meet was the first time the ladies were able to run their entire routines on a floor instead of one tumble strip."

Peterson continued, "I'm ecstatic with the outcomes. Every single one of them performed the routine we knew they were capable of. They will only improve throughout the season as they are able to get more practice and have the winter break to get on their floor daily."

### UP NEXT

The Viroqua co-op will return to action on Saturday, January 7th at Mt. Horeb and will compete the following weekend at Holmen.

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