



Caleigh Harmon leaped into the air to block a McCreary Central pass in last week’s 9-0 win over the Lady Raiders.



Senior Alexa Garcia puts the ball back into play with this throw in against the Lady Raiders of McCreary Central last week. Green County won the game 9-0 to move their record to 7-2.

Lady Dragons Soccer team sweeps competition last week

By **SHELLEY BISHOP**
R-H WRITER

After a tough game and defeat against district rival LaRue County, the Green County Lady Dragons took the field last Monday as they hosted the McCreary Central Lady Raiders. The Lady Dragons walked away victorious, beating the Lady Raiders 9-0 in the contest. Mia Blaydes led all scorers with 8 goals, breaking the school record for goals in a single game, which she set last year with 6 goals.

Jordan Divens also scored a goal for the home team. Divens also added 3 assists to her stats for the game. Lauren Davis also had 3 assists and Jaycee Keen added 1 of her own. Olivia West received her 5th shoutout of the season. Last Thursday the Lady Dragons traveled to Franklin Simpson to take on the Lady Wildcats. The Lady Dragons proved to be victorious in the hard-fought, physical game with a score of 6-1. Blaydes led all scoring with 5 goals,

bringing her season total to 37. Keen added to the scoring with a goal of her own. Divens ended the game with 2 assists, and Jessa Sidebottom and Davis each had 1 assist. West ended the game with 6 saves. The Lady Dragons ended their three-game week with a game on Saturday night against the Hart County Lady Raiders. With the community swept up in Cow Days festivities, the Lady Dragons looked forward to their matchup against their

district rivals with huge district tournament implications on the line. The game started out physical, with Blaydes scoring the lone first half goal. In the second half, Blaydes added to her scoring with 4 more goals. Cate Coppola, who played her first game in a week, added a spark to the Lady Dragons attack and defense with her speed and grit. Coppola also had an assist in the game. Divens, Kloe Jewell, and West added assists to the stat sheet. West

also ended the game with 5 saves. After the 3-0 week, freshman Jordan Divens said, “I really love my team! We are having so much fun! Coach Lowe and Ashley have challenged me to be a better player.” Junior Faith Coppola added, “I enjoy being a part of this team. The work we put in is starting to show and we are becoming a better all around team.” Kloe Jewell summed up this year’s team well. “I believe our season this year has so much talent.

Every single one of our players bring something to the field every time they step on it. We’ve learned how to play together really well this year and every single one of us are fighting for another win every game and you can tell. I can’t wait for the rest of the season and to get some more wins with some of my best friends!!” The Lady Dragons’ travel to Taylor County tonight to battle the Lady Cardinals in another district matchup.



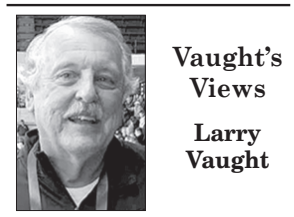
Mia Blaydes uses her head for more than just classwork. Blaydes’s third of 8 goals against McCreary Central was a header that slipped past the Lady Raider goalie in the 9-0 win.



Freshman Jordan Divens avoids the McCreary Central defender in last week’s win at Dragon Stadium. Divens had a goal and three assists in the Lady Dragon 9-0 win.

Photos by Shelley Bishop

Talented Kentucky will face loaded SEC this season



Vaught's Views
Larry Vaught

If Blue Ribbon College Basketball Yearbook publisher Chris Dortch is right, Southeastern Conference basketball is going to be really, really good this year. Not only does Dortch have Kentucky No. 3 in his publication’s preseason rankings, but he also has Arkansas (6), Tennessee (10), Alabama (13), Auburn (15) and Texas A&M (21) in his top 25. “That has nothing to do with the SEC buying the back cover ad in the book, either. They have done that for the last four years,” joked Dortch. “This league is strong top to bottom. South Carolina might struggle but they also have a high-profile five-star (Greg “GG”

Jackson) who has committed to North Carolina originally. He will be a one-and-done guy. “Coaches around the league love the stuff that (Vanderbilt) coach (Jerry) Stackhouse runs. They might not have great talent but they are not an easy out for any team. (Coach) Matt McMahon had scorched earth when he got to LSU. He had one walk-on player left. But he got a freshman class ranked in the top 20, took a bunch of transfers, including three who played for him at Murray. LSU will be dangerous.” No SEC team likely will be more dangerous to Kentucky’s SEC title chances than Arkansas and coach Eric Musselman. The Razorbacks have made the Elite Eight the last two years but lost its five primary starters and returned only two scholarship players. Musselman signed six freshmen, including three McDon-

ald’s All-Americans. Guard Nick Smith is already projected as a top five pick in the 2023 NBA draft and is Blue Ribbon’s SEC Newcomer of the year. “It’s hard to rank a team with zero returning starters in the top six in the county but they had a crazy recruiting class,” Dortch said. “Nobody works the transfer portal better than Arkansas. They signed a lot of size, including Trevon Gracile of Missouri. They also added Ricky Council of Wichita State. “He just has a way of getting his guys to really put out and they just are not afraid of anybody. They just do not quit.” Dortch has North Carolina, which lost to Kansas in the national title game, No. 1 in his preseason poll followed by Gonzaga, Kentucky, Houston and Duke. The Tar Heels return Armando Bacot, a likely challenger for national player of the year honors, along with

dynamic guard Caleb Love. The addition of 6-11 Northwestern transfer Pete Nance elevated North Carolina over Gonzaga to No. 1. “Nance can pass, handle the ball, shoot well and protect the rim,” Dortch said. “He was just what they needed.” Still, Dortch debated putting Kentucky No. 1. “It’s one of the most veteran teams Cal has ever had. There will never be a Cal team without five-star freshmen and he has some great ones again,” Dortch said. “He’s got Sahvir Wheeler. If he cuts down on turnovers, he’s a really solid point guard. There is a defensive size liability but you have got to catch him on the other end. “Then there is Oscar (Tshiebwe). Who could have foreseen the year he had? I knew he would be a good player but nobody could have forecast that year he had. I don’t know if he can do that again but I expect him to play really well again.”



Returning national player Oscar Tshiebwe is a big reason UK is ranked No. 3 in the Blue Ribbon College Basketball Yearbook, but five other SEC teams are in the top 25. (Vicky Graff Photo)

Dortch is looking for a breakout year from 6-9 senior Jacob Toppin who no longer will be in the shadow of anyone else. “He’s a guy who could make it to the league (NBA). He’s 6-9, mobile, protects the rim,” Dortch said. “Then you have (transfer) Antonio Reeves who has really

impressed me. Everybody thinks he is a jump shooter but he can put the ball on the floor and is also a good passer. “That’s why you could easily make a case for Kentucky being No. 1 but even being that good does not mean winning the SEC this year will be easy.”