

SOUTHERN NASH HS ATHLETICS OH GREAT SCOTT



THE ULTRA-LEGENDARY SCOTT COLLIE ENJOYED A TREMENDOUS CAREER AS A TEACHER AND COACH AT SOUTHERN NASH
(Photos Submitted by Carl Copeland)

Collie announces retirement at SN



THERE IS ONLY ONE...
SCOTT COLLIE

By GEOFF NEVILLE
Graphic Sportswriter

STANHOPE -- Usually man of quiet confidence and deep conviction, Scott Collie couldn't help but feel a deep sense of trepidation when asked to be Southern Nash's fast-pitch softball coach 10 years ago.

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SCOTT COLLIE WAS PART OF 17 CONFERENCE TITLES AT SOUTHERN NASH HIGH SCHOOL



SCOTT COLLIE WON 173 GAMES IN 10 YEARS AS SNHS' SOFTBALL COACH



THE SOUTHERN NASH LADYBIRDS HAD PLENTY OF REASONS TO CELEBRATE THIS SPRING
(Photos Submitted by Carl Copeland)

WHAT A FUTURE! Young stars paced Ladybirds

From Staff Reports

STANHOPE -- Southern Nash went toe-to-toe against one of the state's premier girls soccer programs on Wednesday -- and certainly wasn't embarrassed by the outcome.



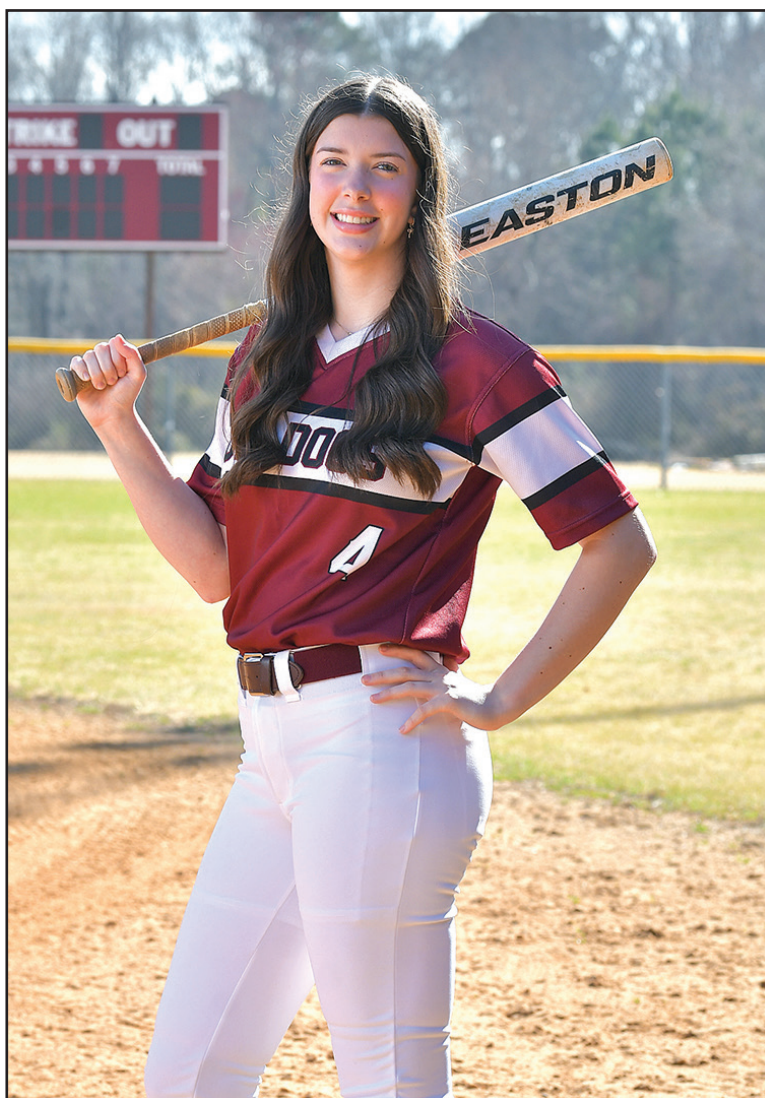
The young Ladybirds, competing in the Elite Eight of the state playoffs for the first time in school history, fell 4-0 to Western Alamance -- the undefeated defending state champion.

But it was hardly a blow-out as the Ladybirds, under the direction of the legendary Robbie Kennedy, capped



SNHS FRESHMAN BROOKLYN RICE

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NASH CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR MULTISPORT STANDOUT GRACYN KING

Comeback capped year for young Central squad

By CHANCE PUCKETT
Correspondent

ROCKY MOUNT -- Few things are as exciting as high-pressure, high-leverage situations in softball.

That's exactly where the Nash Central Lady Bulldogs found themselves in the second round of the Class-4A State Playoffs earlier this month, chasing rival



SouthWest Edgecombe down 6-3, with just six outs separating Central and the end of its season.

But that's when things got interesting. Head Coach Todd Brewer's Lady Bulldogs tied the score at 6-6 in the road half of the sixth inning in hopes of keeping their season alive, shifting

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Solid Season For NN Knights were effective in Big East

By CHANCE PUCKETT
Correspondent

RED OAK -- Big East Conference Girls Soccer produced one of the most exciting seasons in recent memory this spring, with the top half of the league producing some of the area's best teams on the pitch.

Among that group was the Northern Nash Lady Knights, who rode a 5-4-2 mark in league play to the No. 12 seed in the Class-6A East, advancing to the second round of the playoffs for the second time in three seasons.

Finishing the year at 11-7-3 overall, Northern reached the state playoffs for a fifth-straight season, with this year's campaign highlighted by a dominant first-round victory over Fayetteville's E.E. Smith.

The Lady Knights blanked the Golden Bulls 9-0 on May 11, continuing a trend of impressive performances throughout the season against nonconference opponents.

Northern boasted a 5-2-1 mark outside of league play during the regular season, starting the year with four-straight victories while outscoring Triton, North Johnston, Vance County and Nash Central by a whopping 20-1 margin.

The Lady Knights won six of their first seven games, tying the one result that wasn't a victory during the Brittany Showcase against Currituck County from the coast.

Throughout the year, Northern was largely led by the senior duo of Annliese Freeman and Ava Lloyd, who combined for 21 goals while passing out 22 assists as well.

Freeman led the way for the Lady Knights in 2026 with a team-best 40 total points, with Lloyd ending the year at 24 while fellow fourth-year Kaydi Foster added 12 more.

Aside from the senior class, a key piece that's expected to return to Northern next year is junior Esther Edgerton, who fired off 15 goals this year in her penultimate campaign.



Edgerton contributed 35 points over the course of the season, while her sophomore Madison Peeler also totaled double-digit points — which are calculated on a two per goal, one per assist basis — with 11.

The contributions from those top performers largely helped push the Lady Knights to the impressive season that they had, one that in addition to a second-round playoff berth also saw Northern upset Nash County's top team, the Southern Nash High School Ladybirds.

The Lady Knights upended Southern on April 28 in a 1-0 defensive slugfest, with Edgerton netting the game's only goal via assist from Foster.

It was one of just six losses suffered by the Ladybirds during the regular season, with Southern making one of the deepest runs in school history during this year's playoffs.

The Ladybirds are Nash County's last team left standing, having competed in the fourth round at Western Alamance on Wednesday night.

Knocking off Southern and sweeping archrival Rocky Mount proved to be positive steps towards the future that head coach Baltazar Rodriguez is building on the pitch for Northern, one that looks to be headed in a positive direction next year as well.



TYNLEY DEW (LEFT) WAS ONE OF THE KEY FRESHMAN STARS THIS SEASON FOR THE SOUTHERN NASH HS LADYBIRDS

SOCCER

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off their campaign with an impressive 18-7 overall mark to go with a 9-3 worksheet in the super-competitive Big East Conference.

The homestanding Warriors delivered two goals apiece in each of the two halves to earn the semifinal berth.

But while other clubs have simply been overpowered by Western Alamance, the Ladybirds were able to hold their own, thanks in part to their strong crew of veteran defenders.

The loss capped off unprecedented playoff stretch for the Ladybirds, who won a trio of postseason showdowns, including a 3-1 decision over conference rival Wilson Fike, in order to advance into Elite Eight of the tournament.

The victory over Fike was especially impressive in the sense that the Golden Demons had defeated Southern Nash twice in the regular season -- a true sign of the Ladybirds' consistent improvement as the spring progressed.

Southern Nash came through with

a whopping 116 goals as part of its prolific body of work, with freshman standout Brooklyn Rice leading the way with an unbelievable 41 tallies.

Senior Ana Alonso was next with 22 goals, while junior Leila Gonzalez notched 15 markers.

Freshmen Tynley Dew and Hailey Couch, both of whom are destined to be cornerstones for SNHS' promising future, collected 14 apiece.

At many times in the postseason, Kennedy had seven freshmen competing on the field at the same time.

That's a nearly unbelievable number for any high school girls soccer program -- let alone on that qualified for the state quarterfinals.

Southern Nash definitely has the pieces in place for deep playoff runs over the next three seasons, but Kennedy will still have to find a way to replace seven seniors, including long-time lineup stalwarts Alonso, Erika Landa and Jenny Flores.

COLLIE

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In this case, knowledge wasn't Collie's best guide. That's because, as a Southern Nash grad and long-time teacher at the school, Collie fully understood the lofty expectations were an inherent part of a program that reached its apex with a state title under the great Rosalie Bardin in the 1990s -- and continued to experience successful thereafter under several coaches following Bardin's retirement.

"Coach Bardin taught me when I went to Southern," Collie said. "She was my principal at Southern at one point when I was teaching.

"I knew what I was getting into with the tradition, and I certainly didn't want to be the one who messed that up.

"But my daughter (Elisabeth) was going into the ninth grade, and I knew there was some good players coming up through the pipeline. But you never really know how things will turn out."

Well, here's how the story ended 10 years later -- eight consecutive Big East Conference Championships, 48 consecutive league wins over the past several years, 62-1 over the last 63 regular season games, undefeated regular season marks in 2024 and 2025 and a 178-33 overall record during that 10-year span.

Certainly, Collie didn't mess things up. Instead, he built upon an amazing foundation that was already in place and continued to develop the Ladybirds into a statewide powerhouse.

But life, priorities and the desire to exhale become more important as one ages. And now, at 56 years old, Collie decided it was time to step away as he

announced his retirement from both teaching and coaching last week.

"People who have already been through (retiring) told me that I would know when it was time," Collie said. "It's something I am at peace with. For me both professionally and personally, it was time."

Collie went out in style this spring, leading an overachieving SNHS club to a 22-2 record and a spot in the fourth round of the state playoffs despite dealing with injuries and mass graduation from the Ladybirds' prolific 2025 squad.

"Maybe we didn't win a state championship, but I feel like went out on top," Collie said. "This was a special year for me, both on the softball field and in the classroom."

A former athlete at SN who followed every sport possible at the school ever since he was a young boy growing up in Spring Hope, Collie left Nash County after graduation to attend North Carolina State University.

He never planned on being a teacher, but SN, as it has done with so many alums, has a way of drawing people back home.

After a short stint at the middle school, Collie began teaching at SN in 2001. He was an assistant basketball skipper back then before taking over as the girls head coach -- and leading the Ladybirds to a conference tournament championship in 2004.

"To this day, winning the tournament that year was one of the most special moments of my career," Collie said.

Collie continued to guide the Ladybirds to success and also enjoyed a stint as the SNHS boys golf coach.

And after one year as an assistant, Collie saw the softball position open up -- and hesitantly accepted the challenge.

It wasn't like the sport was new to Collie -- he had helped coach his daughter's rec and travel teams every since she was young, and quickly picked up on the nuances of the sport.

But high school? At Southern? With that tradition?

It was, in many respects, a make-or-break moment in Collie's career.

Consider it made. In so many ways.

Collie leaves Southern Nash as one of the school's all-time winningest coaches on a championship standout.

In addition to SN's eight regular season crowns, the Ladybirds tacked on five more tournament titles. Collie also led Southern to a trio of girls golf championships. And SN's 2004 girls hoops heroics brings the grand total to 17.

Just as important, Collie was a responsible caretaker of SN's softball tradition -- along with the school's reputation as well.

Loyal, honest and never one to cut corners just to win a game, Collie won with class and honor, and he never disrespected the values of his school, players, community and family.

"I think to say Scott will be missed is an understatement," said Southern Nash Athletic Director Robbie Kennedy. "He has been a fixture here for a long time.

"The thing about Scott is that he has always done things the right way. That's just the way he is. And he is also a true friend. I've seen him just about every day for the last 25 years."

Northern Nash to host hoops camp

From Staff Reports

RED OAK -- Legendary head coach Grover Battle will host the annual Northern Nash High School Girls Basketball Camp from June 1-4 at the historic NNHS Gymnasium in Red Oak.

The event is open to players in grades 4-12 and will run from 5:45-8:45 p.m. each day.

The camp registration fee is \$35,

which includes a T-shirt.

Registration forms can be picked up at the NNHS Main Office and can be mailed to:

Northern Nash HS
Coach Grover Battle
4230 Green Hills Rd
Rocky Mount NC
27804

Checks can be made payable to Northern Nash Girls Basketball.

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gears and finding a new ballgame on their hands -- but that wasn't the case for long.

Of course, what's a good stickball game without a bit of back-and-forth.

The Lady Cougars struck once in the bottom of the sixth to retake the lead at 7-6, once again putting Nash Central's back against the wall, this time with just three outs left to save the season.

Three runs later, though, the Lady Bulldogs jumped ahead for the first time since the middle of the third and took a 9-7 lead, one that proved to be the inevitable final score and would be enough to advance to the third round of the playoffs, a major achievement for the school.

While the third round would be where Nash Central's season would come to an end, the year was a special one for the Lady Bulldogs and was certainly something to build on for the program.

Central finished the year at 14-9, bouncing back in a big way from last year's 9-13, 2-11 in the league campaign.

A rejuvenated season came in large part due to an element of explosiveness and consistency that the Lady Bulldogs found within its lineup, one that was peppered with strong numbers from the top of the lineup all the way through the nine hole.

Most impressively, the majority of Central's output is expected to be



NCHS SENIOR RYLEE BREWER

back on the diamond for the Lady Bulldogs once again this time next year.

The emergence of sophomore Rayleigh Summerlin, who fired off a team-best batting average of .460 and first-year Bella Dillane, who closed the year at a .423 clip, were perhaps the most important pieces for Central, while Graycn King (.386), Elin Johnson (.375), Destini West (.350) and Chandler Wood (.316) each racked up impressive numbers of their own.

King is the only senior of that group, and in fact Wood is the only junior, meaning that opponents will have to face a threatening lineup in maroon for quite some time.

Semajah West, Haley Frazier and Rylee Brewer -- the daughter of the team's head coach -- all carved out roles offen-

sively for themselves as well, with Brewer the lone graduating senior of that trio.

Where West, a freshman, was most valuable though was in the circle, where she made 22 appearances and compiled a 10-8 record while holding opponents to stout 5.71 earned run average. Like West, Johnson is a freshman, and ranked second on the team with eight appearances.

While the playoff run it's likely what's to be the most remembered about this season, there were a lot of impactful wins prior to the postseason as well.

Beating local rivals is always special, and that's something Central did this year too.

The Lady Bulldogs blitzed Rocky Mount twice and thumped Northern Nash in the only meeting between the two foes, while also sweeping two-game sets against Fike, Princeton and Louisburg as well.

Prior to its comeback victory over SouthWest, Central blanked T.W. Andrews 14-0, setting the table for a strong run to the third round.

While Brewer and King are notable departures due to graduation, it's easy to assume that Nash Central will be penciled in for a playoff spot again next spring -- and will likely be anticipated to make a run, perhaps and even deeper one, in the 4A East this time next year.