



By Pastor Vince Carrig

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Coaches hate to use injuries as a reason for not succeeding, but even Plainsmen basketball Head Coach Shawn Cole would not mind coaching a fantasy team made up of players who will start Perkins County's season sidelined.

All-district and all-around outstanding performer Michael York will not see game action until at least February due to a shattered thumb on his (right) shooting hand.

Although York can already hit three-pointers with his left hand and will eventually disintegrate defenses with both hands, this will leave little time for the Plainsmen to assimilate York in time for a playoff run.

Taylor Boldt (collarbone), Brody Prante (shoulder) and Austin Gaston will also remain unavailable to the Plainsmen for a while as well.

But Coach Cole (third year, 25-18) gets good injury news this year, as Tyler Brott returns for a full season after missing all but two games of 2009-10.

Brott will give the Plainsmen a nearly immovable presence in the low post, good for rebounding

and high-percentage bank shots. The senior center possesses the ability with his height (6-foot-6) to shoot over defenders and agility to get around them and to the glass.

“We should have an easier time scoring points this year because we have some better shooters,” Coach Cole said of the 2010-11 edition.

He likely refers to sophomore guards Quinton Hite and Jake Sexson. Hite will play the point and carry a lot of the ball-handling responsibility for the offense. Both Hite and Sexson can slash to the basket and exploit open lanes. Sexson especially can fill the nets from long range (both inside and beyond the arc). With Brott anchoring the post, the three give Perkins County a tough inside-outside offense to defend.

Speaking of shooters, senior wingman Jeremy Hagan never shied away from jacking up a mid-range shot at a crucial point in a ballgame last year, and hit plenty of them. Hagan also battled hard on defense to keep dribblers in front of him and contested shots last year.

“Our team should be good for a C-2 team. The pre-season injuries will push some sophomores into some playing time. I feel this will help us in the long-run when the injured players return. It will help with our depth.”

The Plainsmen start their 21-game, regular-season schedule tomorrow (Friday) night with a visit from the Maxwell Wildcats, and turn right around to host the Hershey Panthers Saturday night.