

Female Athlete of the Month

Rachel Hansen

By: Lauren Erath

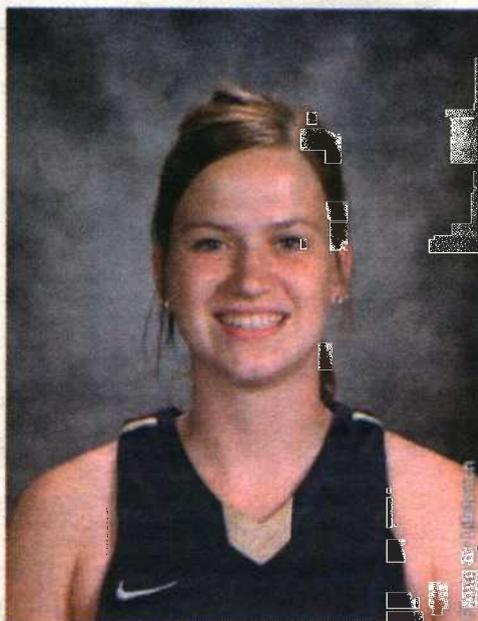
"I want to stay in the athletic-type field," said Rachel Hansen, senior and guard for CSP's women's basketball team. "What I'm planning to do with my degree is go into physical therapy and hopefully work with athletes." Hansen majors in Kinesiology and Exercise Science.

Hansen has played basketball since age six. "Both my parents played," she explained. "I just kind of developed a love for it growing up." Basketball continued contributing to Hansen's life through traveling leagues and her high school team, teaching her useful skills and lessons. "It brings out different characteristics and strengthens different parts of who I am," she said. "I had an injury in high school that sidelined me for six months," she recalled. The injury taught her to persevere through tough times, and "keep up the determination and the hard work when nobody's watching."

Recently, Hansen scored her 1000th point for her college basketball career. However, she does not focus on her own achievements. "I want the team to be successful and win," she said. "The individual things will come." Hansen focuses on helping her team through leading by example. "I'm not the most vocal person," she admitted. "I'm kind of the quiet leader." Hansen added that she will speak up when necessary.

As point guard, Hansen enjoys making decisions for her team. "I like handling the ball and helping my teammates find open shots,"

she expressed. "Winning a championship would be the ultimate goal," Hansen said concerning her team. "Being my last year I'm trying to make the most of it." With this comes plenty of stress. "There is a lot of expectations, especially being a senior," Hansen explained, "but I like it." Hansen plans to graduate this spring and prepare for graduate school. As an athlete and student, Hansen relies on time management for success. "It takes a lot of time management," she stated, "and making sure I'm staying on top of my classes and know what's due when." She also emphasized knowing when she'd have to make up assignments after traveling to games and the need to communicate with her professors. Despite pressure from basketball and classes, Hansen finds ways to have fun with friends and teammates—sometimes through pranks. "I pull pranks a lot," she confided. "I have this fake bug that I sometimes get people with. It's a cockroach." "I usually have a lot of energy," she said. "My teammates are sometimes like, 'Calm down a little bit,' but I just like to have a good time and work hard and enjoy what I'm doing and enjoy it with the people that I'm with."



Thinking over her college career in basketball, Hansen said, "It's been a long journey but it's been a lot of fun. It's crazy to think that it's kind of winding down, me being a senior. All the hard work and the effort and the long hours and the practices—it's definitely been worth it."

Women's Basketball

Fighting for First in the Conference

By: Charles Hines

The women's basketball season is coming to a close with only a few games left until the start of the conference tournament. The team got off to a slow start due to multiple injuries, but has since been playing well. The coach has an eight or nine women rotation that plays most of the game and they employ a matchup type of defensive strategy. With a team comprised mostly of juniors—all but six players—Coach Paul Fessler has to approach the games in a certain way. "Defense is what keeps our team in most games," stated Coach Fessler, "and offensively we are mostly ground and pound." The team is guard heavy, but the coach leans

mostly on the shoulders of two players. Senior guard Rachel Hansen (#11) and junior forward Anika Whiting (#40) are the go-to players on the roster.

There is the possibility of getting an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament, which is always the goal of every season. There are cur-

rently six teams vying for three slots from the conference to make the tournament, but the conference winner gets an automatic bid. The team would like to do major damage during the playoffs and get the automatic NCAA bid. The goal is to peak at tournament time and have the momentum going into tournament. The focus of the team is getting better at the right time, and team chemistry is at its best at the moment.

The overall goal of every season is to have a better team at the end of the year than you had at the beginning of the year, and this team is reaching those goals. "The players are working hard and taking instructions very well," confirmed Coach Fessler. "All the coaches are pleased by the progress being made." Regardless of how the last few games turn out, the objective is to go into the conference tournament feeling confident and coming out with an automatic berth into the NCAA tournament.

