Girls 6th Grade NIT Division

Huskies

Coach Beth Cushman

10	**Samantha Wilson**	**23**	**Taryn Degen**
14	**Sydney Avrin**	**2**	**Brittney Fuller**
30	**Emma Brownsberger**	**24**	**Taylor Cook**
33	**Jordan Acosta**	**8**	**Hannah Cushman**
60	**Brandi Bain**	**21**	**Jessica Shumer**

Scouting Report: They were nothing if not ambitious. Following an inaugural season that saw the Douglas County fifth-graders defeat all comers, they dared to reach higher. The only question: was it too high? To be fair, the girls had confounded even the most seasoned insider and accomplished far more than even the most optimistic prognosticators had expected. Douglas County had gone several seasons without fielding a competitive fifth-grade girls team and it was going to take a herculean effort to bring together all the disparate forces needed to compile a full roster from the ranks of the city's recreation programs - let alone one that could compete with some of the more seasoned squads. Perennial parent-coach Jimmy Acosta connected with seasoned basketball mastermind Beth Cushman just six months earlier and began casting a wide net with the end-game of creating a Douglas County High School Huskies farm program. The challenge was finding enough fifth grade talent living on the right side of the tracks - or at least the right side of Interstate 25. The first two players were naturally the namesake of the coaches themselves. The deceptively diminutive Jordan Acosta had long proven herself a triple-threat, excelling on the softball field, gymnastic mats and the basketball court. Hannah Cushman, the spitting image of her player-coach mom, brought solid skills and a proven lineage. The coaching staff was solidified with former college standout Bill Cook bringing his long-ball hoopster Taylor Cook in tow. Castle Rock Rec's two-year leading scoring Sydney Avrin brought both high-point prowess and needed height to the squad, while competitive veteran Emma Brownsberger completed the Husky's version of the dominating twin towers down low. For speed and defensive tenacity, the Huskies enlisted the talents of both Brittney Fuller and Sam Wilson. What these speedsters lack in height, they more than make up for in all-out hustle. Newcomer Jessie Shumer joins the club after the squad's initial season and brings a great eye for the ball and seemingly endless energy to the court. Rounding out the strong team on its maiden voyage are Brandi Bain, bringing strong experience and a constant threat to take it from coast to coast and Taryn Degen, a born athlete with a killer jump-shot. The only question remaining after going undefeated in the 5th-grade AYL, is whether the team has bitten off more than they can chew, opting to "play up" against larger and more experienced six-graders in the JAM league's remarkably competitive NIT. After a slow and somewhat discouraging start, the team is regrouping, hoping to make a stronger run toward the playoffs. Despite early lessons, hard-learned, the future is bright for this veteran squad, albeit in their rookie season. Looking ahead to 2015, I see a strong future for the Lady Huskies at Douglas County High School.