

Stepping into new roles

Athletes try new things for their senior season

After she handed her teammate a water bottle, senior Peyton Renzi cheered on her team and sat back down on the sideline. Renzi, who was out on the basketball court her first three years, decided to manage the sport her senior season due to her commitment to play softball at the University of Kansas.

“In the past, I've sprained my ankles a lot and I've gotten hurt at various times so I didn't want to risk doing something major,” Renzi said. “I wanted to manage because all my best friends are on the team. It's all different and I miss it sometimes. But for future personal athletic reasons, I'm glad that I didn't play.”

Renzi said at times it was hard to not be out on the court but she could not imagine not being part of the team for her senior year.

“It's obviously different,” Renzi said. “It's kind of hard, especially on game days when listening to the band play before games. It's hard to not to be out there, but it's nice because I get to relax, do my homework and then go work out after practice.”

Head basketball coach Rick Rhoades said having Renzi as a manager was beneficial because she cared so much about the team.

“It's so great to have her be a part of it because she's such good friends with the team,” Rhoades said. “She always picks them up and encourages them when I don't always. She is always a happy face and keeps it light. She's great; I love having her around.”

Rhoades said he was proud of the program the senior class created because it had been a long time since there was a strong senior presence on the team.

“I think finally we have seniors and it's nice to see how it's supposed to be done because they never really had seniors other than their first year,” Rhoades said. “It's been a blessing to have them to show [the underclassmen] how it's done.”

Renzi was not the only girl who stepped into a new role this season. Senior Hannah Maurer, who only played her freshman year, returned for her senior season.

“I came back this year because all my friends play and I missed the sport,” Maurer said. “It's always been one that I've known all my life.”

Maurer said she learned a lot from her team this season and was very glad she made the return to basketball.

“This is my senior year and this my last chance to play,” Maurer said. “Next year, I’ll be playing college sports. I just think that it means something to contribute something to the community. It is a cool opportunity.”