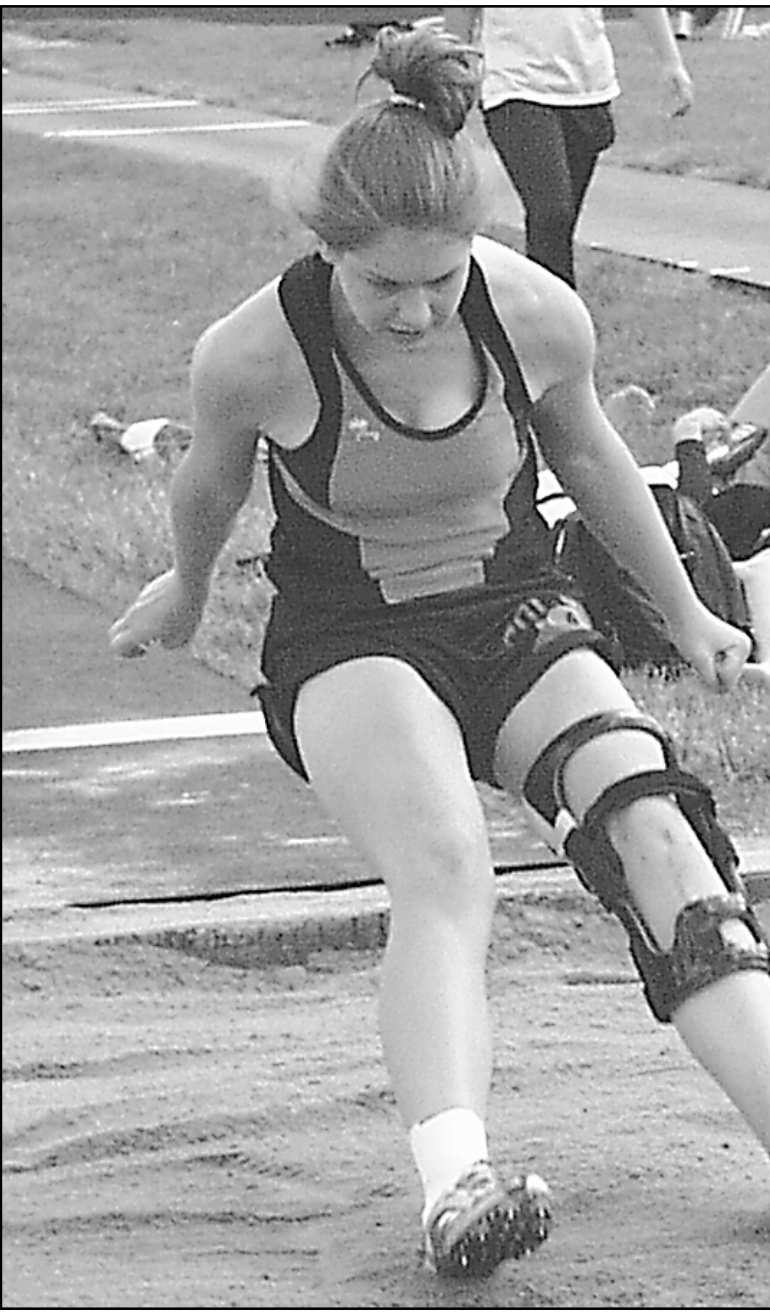


A smooth landing



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Colby High School's Andrea Siemsen competed in the long jump at the Colby Invitational Track Meet on Monday. Siemsen and the rest of the squad will be in Atwood at the Northwest Kansas League Meet on Friday. Events start at 3 p.m.

Rockies pitcher gets shutout against old team

DENVER (AP) — Mike Hampton did it all: with his arm, his bat, his glove and his baserunning.

Hampton's seven-hit shutout in the Colorado Rockies' 6-0 win over the New York Mets on Wednesday night prompted teammate Todd Walker to say, "To me, he's the best athlete I've ever seen."

Rockies manager Buddy Bell agreed.

"He may be the best all-around pitcher I've ever been around, in terms of pitching, fielding, hitting, baserunning," Bell said.

Hampton tormented his former team, tossing his eighth career shutout while striking out five and walking three. He was backed by four double plays.

Hampton, who went 15-10 in helping the Mets to the World Series last year, raised some eyebrows when he signed an eight-year, \$121 million con-

tract with Colorado in December.

Some observers felt he was committing career suicide, since his numbers were sure to suffer while pitching at Coors Field. So far, that hasn't happened.

Hampton is 5-0 with a 2.34 ERA for the season. At hitter-friendly Coors Field, he is 3-0 with a 2.30 ERA.

"I think the biggest key to being successful here is throwing a lot of strikes early in the count," Hampton said. "If you're ahead in the count, you get guys tending to swing more at pitches off the plate."

Hampton helped his cause with a pair of hits, including an RBI infield single in the second when he outraced Rick Reed to the bag.

He also hit a two-out single ahead of

Todd Walker's three-run homer off Reed (4-2) in the seventh. Larry Walker had a solo homer in the sixth, his 12th of the season, but first since April 24.

"He (Hampton) adds another bat to our lineup," Todd Walker said.

Hampton also stabbed two hard grounders up the middle, turning them into easy outs.

"It was an emotional game," Hampton admitted. "It's tough facing the team that you went to the World Series with last year."

Reed went seven innings, allowing 10 hits and six runs with no walks and five strikeouts.

Hampton, who pitched for Houston from 1994-99, improved to 5-0 in his

last eight starts against the Mets, with three complete-game shutouts. He hasn't lost to the Mets since July 14, 1996. Asked if Hampton has exceeded the team's expectations, Bell said, "We knew he was good. But when you see him up close, I think you could say that."

"I don't really think he gets rattled by anything. The things he does, all the really great pitchers do. When they get in a little bit of a hole, they're able to reach back and really do something special. He changes speeds so well. He can really get it done, man. He's fun to watch."

Reed tore a fingernail just before Walker's three-run homer, but said it didn't affect him.

"It was just a curveball that didn't break," Reed said. "He hit it out. What can you do?"

"We ran into a guy who threw nothing but zeros. You've got to tip your hat to him."



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Another Eagle inked

Amber Lane, a senior at Colby High School, signed a letter of intent to play softball at Colby Community College on Thursday afternoon.



A. Lane

team for both season it has existed, plays middle infield and outfield.

A versatile athlete, she has also participated in basketball and volleyball. She is also a member of C-Club and Service Club.

"Amber is an outstanding athlete," said head softball coach Carl Adams. "She has the tools to develop into a very good college player."

Amber is the daughter of Tim and Ronda Lane of Colby.

Avs finally shake Kings

DENVER (AP) — It took longer than anyone expected, but the Colorado Avalanche finally shook the Los Angeles Kings.



Chris Drury and Ville Nieminen scored two of Colorado's four third-period goals as the Avalanche advanced to the Western Conference finals with a 5-1 victory over Los Angeles in Game 7 on Wednesday night. The Avs won the best-of-seven series 4-3.

"You can call it happiness, you can call it relief, call it what you want," Colorado coach Bob Hartley said.

"The only thing I know is that we are moving on."

Rob Blake, traded from Los Angeles to Colorado in February, also scored for the Avs, who are heading to the conference finals for the third straight year. They will face the St. Louis Blues at home in Game 1 on Saturday.

"They took us as far as possible — third period, Game 7," Blake said. "For that I'm happy, but I'm also happy we're moving on."

The Kings ended a phenomenal playoff run that included rallying from a 2-0 series deficit against the Detroit Red Wings in the first round.

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Area Schedule

- Friday, May 11**
Northwest Kansas League Track Meet at Atwood at 3 p.m.
Northwest Kansas League Golf Tournament at Oakley at 3 p.m.
Western Kansas Liberty League Track Meet at Dennen Field in Colby at 3:30 p.m.
Colby Community College baseball at the Region VI West Sub-Regional Tournament in Hutchinson.

Area Briefs

- The Colby Eagle basketball camp, hosted by Colby High School coach Derek Bissitt will run May 29-June 1. Boys or girls may sign up by today. First session will run from 9-11 a.m. for grades 3-5. The second session will run 12:30-3 p.m. for grades 6-8. Cost is \$40. Call Derek Bissitt at 465-5300.
- The Colby Jaycees are hosting a Diamond Skills on Friday at 5:30 p.m. at the Colby Recreation Fields for ages 7-14. Participants must bring a birth certificate. For information call 462-3627.
- There will be an Oakley Booster Youth Track Meet for ages 14 and up on May 19 at the Oakley High School track. Call Jason Robben at 785-672-9027 or e-mail jrobben@go.com.

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