

Runners stride for excellence

By DARREL PATTILLO

Colby Free Press

Coach Bob Mannebach's Colby Eagle cross country team is coming off of a very good year, with the girl's team winning the Northwest Kansas League title for the seventh year in a row, and the boy's winning the title for the second straight year.

"The girl's team went to State last year and took ninth," Mannebach said. "The boy's team just missed by one place qualifying for State." Nate Harter was the lone runner for Colby at the State meet.

"I think we're going to be very competitive this year," Mannebach said, "even without Ivy Ramsey." Mannebach said Ramsey might have been in the top 5 in the state this year.

Ramsey will miss this season while she recovers from ACL surgery on her right knee.

Mannebach thinks that freshman Jessica Stephens will help fill the void left by Ramsey.

"It might take her a couple of meets," he said. "But she's going to be a very good runner."

Colby opens the cross country season next Thursday at Goodland, and Mannebach says he likes the way his



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

Junior Chris Gordon, freshman Jessica Stephens (middle), and junior Erika Erickson ran the cross country practice course Wednesday afternoon. The Eagles are heading to Goodland next week to begin the cross country season.

teams have ran on the Sugar Hills golf course.

"The way it's set up," he said, "they've got a race for freshman and sophomore girls, and junior and senior boys, and junior and senior girls, and they count all of the standings toward the meet."

"We've won that meet quite a few

times. It's very hilly. It really is a great course for us to run on."

While the Eagles lost quite a few seniors last year, Coach Mannebach is still happy with his teams.

"We've got six out of seven of our top boys coming back this year, and four out of five of our top girls."

"We're going to do pretty good," he said.

Baseball commissioner to help avert strike

NEW YORK (AP) — As baseball moved within two days of another work stoppage, commissioner Bud Selig arrived at major league offices and negotiators worked late into the

night to try to avert a strike.

Players are set to walk out Friday unless there is an agreement for a labor contract. Because of the threat, five of the 12 teams traveling for weekend

series pushed back their flights a day, waiting to see if compromises could be reached on the main sticking points: levels for a luxury tax and revenue sharing.

Sampras looking for a win at U.S. Open

NEW YORK (AP) — On a day that past champions Pete Sampras and Serena Williams won at the U.S. Open and one-hit wonders Jelena Dokic and David Nalbandian lost — all in straight sets — Tommy Haas and his foil,

David Sanchez, produced enough eater for a round's worth of matches.

Haas pulled out a 7-6 (1), 3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 7-5 victory that was a struggle for a player usually most comfortable on hard courts. If he can deal with right

arm pain that's been hounding him, Haas could be a title threat.

Haas showed up for the first-round match wearing a white muscle shirt, which was ruled out by tournament referee Brian Earley.

Fall season underway for Trojans

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The Colby Community College Trojans are gearing up for their fall sports seasons. Coach Gina Chvatal begins her second season with the Lady Trojan volleyball team, which finished 8th in the Jayhawk West conference last year. The Trojans will kick off the home portion of their schedule Thursday, Sept. 5 against Pratt Community College and will host the Colby Tour-

namment Sept. 7.

The Trojan cross country team sent three men to the NJCAA Nationals last year, and came away with a 21st-place finish. Colby welcomes new head coach Jeff Becker to the cross country team and is in Great Bend tonight for the Barton County Invitational.

The Trojan baseball squad will play a fall schedule. "I'm very excited about the group I have this year," coach Ryan Carter said. Last year, Colby's baseball

team finished 20-37 overall, 9-23 in the Jayhawk West. Saturday, Sept. 14, Colby hosts the McCook Indians at noon to start the fall season.

Carl Adams and the Lady Trojan softball team tied for fifth last year in the Jayhawk West conference regional tourney and finished with a 25-30 record. "I'm anxious to get the fall season rolling," Adams said. Colby hosts a fall tournament Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 14 and 15.

Chiefs rookie Ryan Sims ends holdout

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Defensive tackle Ryan Sims, the sixth player taken in last spring's NFL draft, agreed to a seven-year contract Wednesday with the Kansas City Chiefs.

The 315-pounder from North Carolina will miss all four exhibition games and may not be ready for the season opener Sept. 8 against Cleveland. Terms were not announced, but a team source said the deal included a signing bonus of around \$10 million, partly deferred to next year.

Throughout the lengthy and bitter

holdout, Chiefs president Carl Peterson had refused to meet with Hadley Engelhard, Sims' agent. Engelhard had been making the rounds of the talk radio shows saying how impossible the Chiefs were to deal with it.

But finally the two got together for breakfast on Wednesday and a deal was struck out.

"We were able to move in the right direction," said Peterson. His assistant, Denny Thum, had done all the preliminary negotiations.

Sims is badly needed. The Chiefs'

defense was among the worst in the league last season and he is the only significant upgrade in personnel.

"As with any negotiation, there was give and take on both sides," Peterson said.

"It's not completely finished because we haven't signed all the documents. But we will get that done tonight and tomorrow and hopefully have the young man on the field."

Coach Dick Vermeil, growing increasingly angry over the rookie's holdout, has said he would probably not be able to help in the season opener.

Oakland A's win 15th straight

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — As Barry Zito notched one out after another, the chants from the crowd became more derisive.

Zito took a perfect game into the sixth inning Wednesday night, leading the Oakland Athletics past the Kansas City Royals 7-1 for their 15th straight victory.

"Going out there in every start, there's always going to be stuff in your personal life and your life on the field that you have to block out," said Zito, Oakland's player representative. "I felt like I did that tonight."

The 15,952 fans at Kauffman, led by nearly 4,000 participants in a radio station's promotion, let the players know how they felt about the possibility of a strike set to begin Friday if the union and the owners fail to reach an agreement.

The chant started in the first inning with "let them strike," and escalated to "strike right now" in the sixth when the Royals fell behind 6-0.

"That's something the people in Kansas City wanted to do," Zito said.

"I don't blame them for being frustrated, but the reality is that this is something that happens in labor unions."

The A's winning streak is the longest in the major leagues since Seattle won 15 straight last season. Oakland completed its first 10-0 road trip, and the streak is the A's longest since they won 17 in a row from May 5-25, 1931.

Zito (19-5) gave up one run on four hits in seven innings. His three strikeouts gave him 154, leaving him third in the AL, one behind Roger Clemens.

When reliever Jason Grimsley — the Royals' player representative — entered the game in the top of the eighth, the crowd booed him loudly.

Sedlacek (3-4) gave up six runs on seven hits in the first inning, then got things under control, allowing only two hits over the next five innings.

Seven players drove in runs for the A's. Every starter got a hit, with Eric Chavez and Miguel Tejada getting two.

Neifi Perez singled to center to break up the perfect game with one out in the

sixth.

"You always know what's going on," Zito said. "I wasn't pitching to maintain some kind of no-hitter. I left the ball up the middle and Perez hit it up the middle. It was a good hit."

The Royals loaded the bases after that. But Mike Sweeney grounded out to short to end the threat.

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Sue Kistler

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