

Going for the gold



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Boys and girls 14 and under participated in the Missouri Valley Association and Kansas Area Amateur Athletic Union Track and Field Championships Saturday at Dened Field, Colby. Shane Holm, Brewster, the son of Shane and Bonnie Holm, won the speed walking competition. Holm has been to nationals three times.

Concession stand help is needed

The Colby Recreation Department is looking for a few organizations or groups to supply a concession stand for a number of gymnasiums for the Mid-America Youth Basketball tournament scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 4, 5, and 6. Depending on the number of

teams, concession stands could be needed in Colby, Brewster, and Rexford, with Atwood and Oakley gymnasiums possibly also used for the basketball tournament. For questions or to reserve a gymnasium for concessions, call (785) 462-4440. Your help is appreciated.

KU close to hiring athletic boss

STORRS, Conn. (AP)—University of Connecticut Athletic Director Lew Perkins is expected to step down by the end of this month to become the athletic director at the University of Kansas. *The Hartford Courant* reported in today's editions.

An announcement may come as early as Tuesday in Lawrence, Kan., the newspaper reported.

Perkins, 58, who was athletic director at Maryland for three years before coming to UConn in July 1990, emerged as the leading candidate last week and negotiations continued throughout the weekend, *The Courant* reported, citing sources it did not identify.

Perkins, who declined to comment when reached at his home Sunday night, was to travel to Lawrence today for a meeting with Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway.

Kansas was seeking to install a permanent athletic director by July 1, the *Lawrence Journal-World* reported May 29.

"We're not confirming or denying anything," Hemenway told the *Journal-World* Sunday night. "We've had good discussions with Lew Perkins and I'll look forward to talking to him further. It's obvious that the process is moving forward quickly."

Kansas has been searching for an athletic director since April 9 when Al Bohl was fired after only 20 months on the job.

Perkins was contacted immediately after Bohl's firing. Perkins had never been mentioned as a candidate in media reports in Kansas.

Perkins told many UConn coaches of his decision Sunday night, *The Courant* reported.

UConn had no announcement regarding Perkins Sunday and there were no details regarding a possible search process.

Perkins is under contract at UConn through July 30, 2005. He has a buyout clause that requires him to pay the university \$200,000 if he accepts another college or professional job, unless he first obtains

a release from Austin. A source told *The Courant* that a release was unlikely, even though Perkins had kept Austin informed of his discussions with Kansas.

Efforts to reach Austin by telephone Sunday night were unsuccessful.

For the 2002-03 school year, Perkins received a base salary of \$273,870. UConn also paid him \$105,108 for the purchase of a qualified annuity or savings product. In addition to those payments, his contract provided him with 28 tickets to games in every UConn sport, home and away, in conference tournaments and postseason play.

Details of Perkins' financial package at Kansas were not available. Bohl was earning \$255,000 a year to oversee the \$27 million Kansas athletic department budget. Bohl's firing made national headlines because of his public dispute with Kansas basketball coach Roy Williams. Williams later left Kansas for North Carolina.

Support the Legion nine

In local news, our Colby American Legion team plays at home twice this week. Today (Monday) we face Ellis at 6:00 for a pair of games and on Wednesday we face Goodland at 6:00 for two as well. Please come out and support your local athletes.



Ray Nolan

● From the Dugout

This week all eyes will turn to Omaha for the men's College World Series. Six of the teams are already set and it looks to be another great championship.

The Super Regionals were played this past weekend at eight sites. Each winner of a Regional was matched against another winner for a best-of-three series.

The Big XII is still alive as Texas is still fighting for a berth against Florida St. Their Saturday matchup was washed out and Texas won the Sunday encounter 8-3. They are set to play today (Monday) and I do not know how they will make up that other game. They might play two today or wait until Tuesday to play the rubber match. If Texas wins tournament officials won't have to worry about it.

Baylor, the other Big XII representative, beat LSU on Friday 4-1 but lost Saturday 6-5 and Sunday 20-5 to earn a trip back to Waco. LSU has made several trips to the College World Series over the years, including back-to-back titles in 1996 and 1997.

Another team with back-to-back titles under their belt is Stanford, who achieved the feat in 1987 and 1988. They are heading back to the

series for the fifth year in a row after beating inter-state rival Long Beach State, 5-1 and 4-2.

Southwest Missouri State is this year's Cinderella after defeating Ohio State in two straight, 13-8 and 13-7. Many people have said that this was not a strong year for the Missouri Valley Conference, but they have a representative in the Series after a seven-year drought. Wichita St. is the last member of the conference to make the series. They last competed for the title in 1996.

That also means that the Jayhawk conference will have a former player in the Series, Tony Piazza of Garden City, who was also drafted this past week. Piazza played for Garden during the 2000 and 2001 seasons. Also going to the Series are Miami, South Carolina, and Cal-State Fullerton. Miami defeated North Carolina State 10-9 and 11-5 to earn the trip, and South Carolina beat North Carolina 5-4 and 14-4 to advance.

Arizona State took Fullerton to three games, but the Titans got their ticket to Omaha Sunday, with a 7-1 victory. If Long Beach State could have beaten Stanford (I am glad they didn't because I am a Stanford fan)

the Big West Conference would have had two representatives in the series. I always find it interesting that the Big West is a major conference in baseball. Much like Hockey, baseball is a regional game. The Big Ten, along with other geographically northern conferences, is not a major power in the sport. They do produce some good teams, such as Ohio State this season, but year after year lesser-known western and southern schools, such as Cal-State Fullerton and Southwest Missouri State, go to the College World Series.

The final two schools that have a chance are Rice and Houston. Houston beat Rice on Saturday, 5-2, but the Owls came back on Sunday and beat the lone Conference USA representative 10-2. No matter who wins, the College World Series will be great as always.

Ray Nolan is an assistant baseball coach at Colby Community College and will favor Free Press readers with commentary during the summer months. Questions can be sent to colbysports@nwkans.com.

Please help us 'bring it on'

You never quite know where I'm going to show up. Today, it's here — on the sports page. The regular sports person, Michelle L. Hawkins, has decided to bow out in advance of her marriage before too many more sunrises and sunsets. So, I'll be dabbling in sports until the vacancy is filled, and I would rather imagine I'll continue to dabble to some degree in the many activities that make up the sports world even after that person comes on board. I decided the proper name for this column should be "Down here" as I envision it falling to the bottom of the page each time it is written. It's closer to the trash can that way.

I don't really know how to start commentating — I believe that not to be a word but I love dealing in words that don't exist because they drive English majors crazy. So I'll just take a deep breath and whatever I exhale will be considered for this column.

We are at that time of the year — yep, it's summer, not on the calendar but in everything else — and kids by the van loads, and of all ages, will be engaged in all sorts of



Tom (TD) Dreiling

● Down Here

activities. I won't even begin to mention the litany for fear of forgetting your favorite and in this business you don't want to do that. But there will be excitement coming from all four corners of town — and all other towns in *Free Press*-land. We'll do our level best to keep the sports-minded folks informed, but, as with everything else it won't hurt our feelings if you roll up your sleeves and get involved in the *informing* aspect. No one- or two-person or even three could begin to do justice to the magnitude of the summer program — or any season's programs, for that matter. We'd need a dozen reporters-plus to do that and I can just imagine *The Kansas City Star* or *The Denver Post* or *The Rocky Mountain News* or *The Wichita Eagle* saying, "Heck, yes, TD, we'll loan you all the people you want at no charge to get the

agenda cleared." I think you get the point.

And then there are those folks who don't care about sports and get a bit irate when they read about little Johnny's single making the paper but not little Susie's clarinet solo. It's called *fair and balanced*, a term embedded in the heads of everyone who works for the FOX news channel. Maybe you can help us flirt with that goal.

So, we're off and running. Summer is here. To those who provide us with the stuff that makes a sports page, keep the word *timely* in mind. Keep us in mind.

I'm bottomed out. Tell next time...

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