

On target



JOEY MELNYK/Colby Free Press

Colby's K-18 team won both of its games against Oberlin on Thursday night at the ball diamonds here. Assisting in wins were Mitchell Tuma, pitching, who also plays third base, and at first was Joseph Heier. The final score on the double header was 9-2, Colby, and 14-4 Colby. The next home game for Colby K-18 is Wednesday against Atwood. The team traveled to Hays today to compete in a six-game tournament that will continue this weekend.

'Silent partner' played role in picking Perkins for KU

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Lew Perkins was No. 1 on a very short list of candidates to become the new athletic director at Kansas, says the man who secretly aided in the search.

Chuck Neinas, the head of Neinas Sports Services, told The Associated Press that Kansas chancellor Robert Hemenway had a pared-down list of four finalists "in the final days of the process."

"Lew Perkins was clearly their first choice," said Neinas. "Unless I'm told otherwise, I always give (clients) more than one choice. Lew is a strong administrator who has surrounded himself throughout his career with some really good people."

Perkins, 58, took the job this week after 13 successful years at Connecticut.

Neinas, who has helped place coaches and administrators at many top universities, including 10 Big 12 schools, said his involvement with Kansas was kept under wraps by mutual consent.

"Chancellor Hemenway and I both felt that was the best way to do it," said Neinas. "I actually prefer to

work anonymously. It just makes it easier to do my job. (Interim athletic director) Drue Jennings called today and released me from my promise of confidentiality."

As it turns out, Hemenway was able to steer Kansas through a potential crisis this spring by hiring his No. 1 candidates for both the athletic director and basketball coach.

Bill Self, who was hired away from Illinois in April, was the only person who was offered the job of replacing head coach Roy Williams.

A few days before Williams left for North Carolina, Al Bohl was fired as athletic director after just 20 months.

Neinas said critics are wrong to say that Perkins took the job in order to get away from the pending crisis at the Big East Conference.

If Big East members Miami, Syracuse and Boston College join the Atlantic Coast Conference, the Big East could lose its standing as a major football league, and this would negate Connecticut's move to Division I-A.

"He was looking for one more challenge. He likes Kansas. He told

me that basically, the only schools he would leave Connecticut for would be Kansas and Iowa, his alma mater," Neinas said.

The administrators that Perkins has helped train was another point that caught Hemenway's eye. People who have worked for Perkins at one time or another include Big 12 commissioner Kevin Weiberg, Jeff Hathaway, who was hired as his replacement at Connecticut, and Kansas State athletic director Tim Weiser.

"I think the chancellor was very impressed," Neinas said. "He wants to get somebody in there he can have confidence in so he doesn't have to spend so much time on intercollegiate athletics. He decided that Lew has the management skills to take care of that."

Perkins' main challenges will be to upgrade the football and women's basketball programs. Many Kansas fans believe Marian Washington's 31-year tenure as women's coach should be reviewed.

"The chancellor liked the fact that Lew is not afraid to make tough decisions," Neinas said.

Neuheisel is out at Washington

SEATTLE (AP) — Washington athletic director Barbara Hedges announced she is firing Rick Neuheisel as Washington's football coach for betting on the past two NCAA basketball tournaments and lying to school officials and NCAA investigators about it.

Neuheisel was suspended with pay and given until June 26 to respond to his notice of termination.

Neuheisel, who acknowledged to NCAA investigators he bet on the tournaments, couldn't be reached for comment.

The NCAA prohibits gambling

on college sports by athletes or athletic department staff.

The 42-year-old Neuheisel, who went 33-16 in four seasons at Washington, insisted he didn't believe he had broken NCAA rules because it was an informal pool and off-campus.

Rockies won't soon forget Pierzynski

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A.J. Pierzynski hit a grand slam in the first inning and added a three-run shot in the seventh, leading the Minnesota Twins to a 15-3 win over the Colorado Rockies on Thursday night.

Pierzynski hit his second career grand slam, had his first multihomer game and finished 3-for-4. His grand slam came on a 0-1 pitch from Darren Oliver (3-5) with Minnesota already leading 3-0.

The All-Star catcher hit Oliver's pitch into the folded seats above the Metrodome's right-field wall to complete the scoring in the Twins'

seven-run inning.

Pierzynski's previous grand slam came May 7 against Tampa Bay. It's

the first time the Twins have had a player hit more than one grand slam in a season since 1993.

Briefs

Mets fire Phillips

NEW YORK (AP) — Steve Phillips was fired as general manager of the New York Mets, a last-place team stuck with a lot of highly paid stars who failed to produce. With the Mets banged-up, booed at Shea Stadium and nowhere near the team that reached the 2000 World Series, owner Fred Wilpon called Phillips into his office. Phillips became the first GM in the majors to be fired this season. Senior assistant general manager Jim Duquette took over on an interim basis through the end of the season and will be a candidate for the permanent position. Duquette is the cousin of former Red Sox GM Dan Duquette.

Decides to retire

PHOENIX (AP) — Five-time All-Star Matt Williams, who had been the last of the original Dia-

mondbacks until recently being released, announced his retirement. Williams, who hit 378 career home runs, spent the past 5 1/2 seasons with the Diamondbacks. Though he still had a year left on his contract, he was designated for assignment by the team June 1. Williams' agent, Joe Longo, said that the player had talked to several teams but ultimately decided to stay home with his family. Williams, 37, had been leaning toward retiring after his contract expired anyway. His release just accelerated the decision, Longo said. The Diamondbacks tried to trade Williams and two other players to the Colorado Rockies for Larry Walker in the offseason, but Williams and Walker rejected the deal.

Contract extended

CLEVELAND (AP) — Team

president Carmen Policy has signed a five-year contract extension with the Cleveland Browns that runs through the 2008 season. Policy, who owns 10 percent of the team, agreed in principle to a new deal in March. He signed the agreement earlier this week, Browns spokesman Todd Stewart said. Policy signed a five-year deal with the club in 1998.

Undergoes surgery

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (AP) — Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant underwent shoulder surgery in New York, and is expected to make a full recovery. Bryant had an inflamed bursa removed and a frayed labrum trimmed in his right shoulder during the surgery. Dr. Louis Bigliani said he expects Bryant to make a complete recovery.

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