

# Opinion



## Free Press Viewpoint

### Colby goes global

By John Van Nostrand

Maybe, just maybe.

A couple of months from now television sets around the world will be tuned in to the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China.

Among all the competitors, one will have a Colby connection. In our headlines earlier this week, we reported how former Colby Community College wrestler Daniel Cormier qualified for the U.S. Olympic wrestling team. Cormier has done it before, in 2004.

It's tough to get to the Olympics, just ask Colby native Eric Luedke who was beaten out of the qualifying tournament. Luedke also had brilliant success in his own right at Colby High, Colby Community College and the University of Iowa - with a rich history of success in wrestling.

Area wrestling fans know Cormier. He was incredible as a Trojan under head coach Steve Lampe. Cormier, from Louisiana, won national championships as a Trojan. He went on to wrestle at Oklahoma State University, a powerhouse in Division I college wrestling.

Cormier, and Lampe, deserve more credit than they receive for making Colby college wrestling what it is. Purely based on national tournament appearances, Trojan wrestling is easily the best athletic program Colby college has. Easily. Even more reason why Lampe is an excellent coach is considering the conditions his program is under.

Lampe is not afraid to tell anybody he wants his program in better surroundings from a true-practice room and an even better place to hold meetings. Colby college wrestling meets held at Colby Community Center, and occasionally at Colby High, work, but a program of this magnitude deserves a better place to show off.

Cormier will show off to the rest of the world how good of a wrestler he is.

Maybe, just maybe, the broadcaster, or other media outlet reporting on Cormier in August, will make a reference to Colby and people will be curious to know how good Lampe has his program and what our town is like.

Good luck, Daniel.

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press.



"WHAT DO YOU KNOW... SUDDENLY OUR SON HAS BECOME QUITE MOTIVATED.."

## Special people do special things

While driving home earlier this week, I couldn't help but feel like I had been blessed in a certain way.

I didn't win the lottery or score a date with Kim from the Real World (I wish). No, it wasn't that type of blessing at all.

The blessing I'm referring to is the feeling you get after you've seen something your so incredibly thankful you didn't miss. That could mean many different things for many different people.

For me, it was having the good fortune of being able to watch game six of the NBA Finals Tuesday and the U.S. Open last weekend.

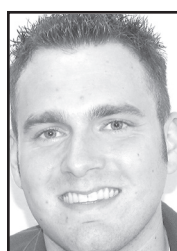
Both events stirred different emotions with me, but they both inspired me in a way sports rarely do anymore. I don't want to sound like it was some sort of religious experience. I just can't remember many other times when I've walked away from my TV feeling so good for other people and knowing I had just watched something so pure.

In other words, something I could only see replays of on ESPN Classic or my old highlight tapes, because it happened in a time when things were different. By different, I mean there was real emotion involved with sports. Emotions that didn't have to be drummed up by announcers, but could be seen in the reactions of athletes and fans and in turn you felt yourself.

Watching Kevin Garnett being interviewed by ABC's Michelle Tafoya after the Celtics 131-92 championship clinching win Tuesday made me laugh at first because it was quite funny how animated he got. In fact, I've never seen an interview quite like that.

"Anything is possible," Garnett screamed before breaking down into tears and then naming off a bunch of places and nicknames I doubt anyone could understand.

It still makes me laugh just thinking about



Joe Falkoff

### • A Sideline View

it right now, but it also still gives me goosebumps. To see a professional athlete of that stature get that emotional in this day and age is so refreshing. It's like, wow, 'This really means a lot to these guys and they really do care.' A lot of times you question how badly these guys really do want to win a championship with as much money as they're making. I knew a championship would have meant the world to Garnett before this series, but getting to see him express it on national TV in such a personal way touches a different chord with you.

Paul Pierce was the same way. He didn't break down like Garnett, but you could just sense his joy. When he walked into the post-game press conference and told the reporters to hurry up because he had some partying to do, I got the hugest smile on my face. I know that's exactly what I would say in that situation.

At that moment, Pierce felt more human to me than ever. When an athlete can do that for you, it's a pretty cool feeling.

Even though I'm not a Celtics fan, it was also great to see the city of Boston erupt like they did, and the way the Celtics dominated that last game only added to it. I'm sure a lot of people would have rather seen a close game, but there's something about seeing a champion dominate their last opponent that makes it a little extra special. You want to save your best

for last and the Celtics certainly did that.

As it turns out, Tiger Woods did the same thing Monday when he won the U.S. Open and his 14th career major. Woods announced Wednesday he will be out for the remainder of the season to have knee surgery, but what a way to go out.

Playing on one good knee, Woods sunk two birdie putts on the 18th hole to stay alive and eventually won the tournament in a sudden-death playoff against 45 year-old journeyman Rocco Mediate. I can honestly say I watched more golf last weekend than at any other time in my life.

Tiger was a huge part of it. I'm one of those people that doesn't usually watch golf unless he's in contention. More than anything, though, you just couldn't stop watching because you knew this was something special. It's so rare these days when something not only lives up to its hype, but exceeds it.

When an event captures you like that, it's almost like a drug. I couldn't stop watching if I wanted to.

And how about that crowd? Man, that was unbelievable. San Diegoans are supposed to be laid back, but they were going absolutely berserk.

You've gotta love it. On back-to-back days we got to witness the greatest golfer of all time win possibly the best golf tournament of all time and the most storied franchise in professional basketball win their 17th NBA Championship and first since 1986.

Most importantly, the passion we thought had evaded modern professional sports was back.

In the midst of everything that's gone wrong in sports recently, we all needed this.

— Joe Falkoff is a reporter for the Colby Free Press.

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## Driving was sure fun while it lasted

By Donald Kaul

Who said that the power of the Press is dead? A few weeks ago I told people to stop whining about the high price of gasoline and do something about it; namely, use less gas.

Almost immediately, the American people responded. In March of this year Americans drove 11 billion fewer miles than they did in March of 2007 and used 4.3 percent less gasoline.

That marks the first time since 1979 that traffic has declined from one March to the next and constitutes the biggest drop since the government started keeping track in 1942. Which means that my advice has had a greater impact on gas consumption than either World War II or the gas lines of the Carter years.

I am so proud. I am well aware, however, that with power comes responsibility. So it is with deep humility that I say to my fellow Americans:

It's not good enough, kids. You have to do better.

You're still spending, on the average, four percent of your disposable income on fuel (in some rural areas, 10-15 percent). That's more than twice as much as you were spending in 1998. In other words, too much.

And you haven't even thought about increasing fuel standards or lowering speed limits. All you've done is complain and cut a measly

4.3 percent from your gas bill.

A Chicago woman, a single mother of two, told the New York Times: "Rising gas prices end up hurting working, lower class people like me, who can't afford it anymore."

So what else is new? All bad things--wars, economic depressions, inflation, George Bush--end up hurting the working classes most. That is the way of the world, folks, particularly when the world is being run by a party whose answer to all problems is tax-cuts for the rich.

So don't think government will help you. Don't wait for the oil companies to give you a hand. And if you're expecting our oil-producing Arab allies to bail you out, forget it.

To repeat what I've said before: If you want to stop spending so much on fuel, use less of it. And I'm not talking about a four percent cut, I'm talking a 20, 30, even 40 percent cut in consumption.

That won't be easy. You can only do so much with car-pooling, driving sensibly and one-trip multiple errands. You're going to have to find alternative modes of transportation.

I don't mean to blow my own horn, but this is what I have done: I got rid of one of my cars, thus making my wife and me a one-car family. I can't tell you that there aren't moments of conflict over who should have the car and when but basically it's working out fine. And it gives one a sense of moral superiority.

## Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

