



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Wayne Bethell of Colby took aim at a target at the Cowboy Shoot on Sunday at the Cactus Creek Shooting Range near Rexford.

Cowboy shooting range inspired by frontier life

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Mike Shubert is old school. He likes old guns, open country and target shooting. He is not too fond of some of the luxuries of today's world.

"We don't own a stereo," he said, talking about himself and his wife Cindy. "We'd rather own guns than electronics."

While walking a visitor through his self-made Cowboy Shoot at the Cactus Creek Cowboy Range, just off of Thomas County Road BB near Rexford, on Sunday afternoon, Shubert said he couldn't think of anything more fun than target shooting out in the country.

"This is just plumb great fun," he said.

Shubert got the idea of creating a shoot while participating in "cowboy shoot" tournaments across the country. In this type of shooting, he said, competitors use reproductions of shotguns, rifles and pistols used in the 1800s when settlers, Native Americans, pioneers, cowboys and lawmen were living on what was then known as the American Frontier or the Wild West.

Shubert spent a lot of time last

winter creating his range. He said Cindy helped him by drawing pictures of the characters that would be the designated targets. These characters included buzzards, sheep, pigs, a bull, a tiger, a horse thief, a coyote, ducks, a woman named Sweet Suzie and two shady men named Dirty Bob and Stinky Willy along with their dog Bad Yeller. In one of the shooting stages, the shooter must shoot Bob, Willy and the dog because they are harassing Suzie.

After Cindy had finished her drawings, they had Wagoner and Sons cut out the pictures from old metal and Shubert welded them together. Cindy and Shubert eventually got the rest of the range completed and held their first shoot in May.

"It was a thrill," said Shubert. "We had made something happen."

The shoot has six stages. In each one, competitors get 10 shots with a rifle, five with a pistol and four with a shotgun. Ten seconds are added every time you miss a target. The stages are designed to simulate problems people had while living on the frontier, Shubert said.

A few of these include horse thievery and buzzards and coyotes

attempting to get into the chicken coop.

Shubert stresses safety to participants. They are only allowed to load their guns at the chicken station. He had to yell at a few people, including a reporter who shall remain nameless, for carrying a loaded gun or for pointing it in the wrong direction.

"With guns, you have to be safe, just like you have to be safe with chainsaws and cars," he said. "You have to have safety rules."

Shubert makes no attempt at hiding how much he enjoys being out in the country.

"This to me is like heaven on earth," he said as he looked out at the pasture just beyond the shoot. "It has been this way for a thousand years. I think of the cowboys, Indians and pioneers who used to occupy this land."

Shubert said the point of the shoot was not who could finish the fastest, though contestants are ranked by time and accuracy.

"It's a family thing," said Shubert. "People can bring their kids out."

He said at some point he plans to build a saloon with a porch by the range so he could cater parties.

Rockies win one of two games, hang on to lead in playoff race

MIAMI (AP) — Jorge De La Rosa spared the Colorado Rockies from another doubleheader sweep.

Two weeks after De La Rosa won the second game of a doubleheader against the New York Mets, the Rockies starter shut down the Florida Marlins 7-3 for a split Sunday night.

The Marlins won the opener 10-3 behind homers from Hanley Ramirez and Chris Coghlan and a two-run single by Chris Volstad in a five-run second inning.

A rainout Saturday night forced Sunday's doubleheader.

De La Rosa got his ninth win in 10 decisions as the Rockies remained 1½ games ahead of San Francisco in the NL wild-card race. Florida fell two games back.

"Every win is very important for us now, especially over this team," De La Rosa said. "They are fighting with us for the wild card."

Clint Barmes and Brad Hawpe each hit two-run homers as De La Rosa benefited from a 4-0 lead after three innings.

Barmes' two-run homer off Rick Vandenhurk gave the Rockies a 3-0 lead in the second. Barmes drove Vandenhurk's pitch over the American League scoreboard in left for his 18th home run of the season.

"Every win we can get is a big win," Barmes said. "There is no game we can give away at this point."

The Rockies increased their lead 4-0 on Carlos Gonzalez's second homer of the doubleheader and sixth of the season in the third. Gonzalez also homered in the first inning of the first game.

"This is a very good baseball club that we just faced," Rockies manager Jim Tracy said. "Their approach, to their credit, was relentless. We had to work really hard in the second game to win the game."

De La Rosa quashed a Marlins rally in the fifth. After surrendering Emilio Bonifacio's one-out RBI single base, De La Rosa struck out Ramirez and Jorge Cantu with two runners on base.

De La Rosa (11-8) left after two outs in the sixth. He allowed seven hits and one unearned run, walked three and struck out nine.

"I felt a little bit tired in the fourth," De La Rosa said. "But I made good pitches when I was in trouble. That helped me."

Hawpe's two-out, two-run homer off Vandenhurk in the sixth increased Colorado's lead to 6-1.

Vandenhurk (2-2) was replaced after walking Garrett Atkins. He allowed six runs, five hits, walked three and struck out nine in 5 2-3 innings.

"I just made mistakes, they swung it hard and hit it out," Vandenhurk said.

Cantu and Wes Helms hit run-scoring singles in the seventh to cut Colorado's lead to 6-3.

The Rockies added an insurance run in the ninth on Yorbit Torrealba's RBI single.

Legendary football coaches compete for state mentors

Kansas State football coach Bill Snyder and former Nebraska coach Tom Osborne are competing once again in the 2009 Coaches' Challenge, a friendly contest to see which state can recruit the most new mentors during the 2009 football season.

"Both on and off the football field, caring role models are making a tremendous difference in the lives of our young people," Snyder said. "That is why I ask every young Kansan to join me in this Challenge by signing up to mentor a young person

today."

The 2009 Coaches' Challenge runs from Aug. 1 to Saturday, Nov. 21, when the winner is announced at the K-State-Nebraska football game in Lincoln.

Snyder said thousands of young Kansans, especially young men, need a caring role model. In as little as an hour a week, a volunteer can offer the support and guidance these youths need to succeed.

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