



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby High School

Colby High junior Brandon Leth got a hold of Goodland's Nathan Deeds in a 145-pound match during the Eagles' dual against Goodland on Thursday night at the high school. Leth lost a 9-1 decision.

## Eagles lose early lead to rival; Goodland beats Colby 40-24

By Andy Heintz

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The Colby High wrestling team started strong, but Goodland was able to erase an early deficit and defeat the Eagles 40-24 on Thursday at the high school gym.

Things looked good early for the boys as they jumped out to an 18-6 lead. Freshman David Mainus got his team off to a positive start by pinning Cy Paxton of Goodland in the 103-pound weight class. The match was tied at 2 after one period, then Mainus got the pin in the second.

Sophomore Dustin Reed won by forfeit at 112 because the Cowboys had no one for him to wrestle against, giving Colby a 12-0 lead. Then Austin Avelar of Goodland pinned Devan Schlageck at 119, cutting the Eagles' lead to 12-6.

Sophomore Macen Shull dominated Cowboy Corey Davis at 125 before pinning him with about five seconds left in the third round. Shull jumped out to an early 5-1 lead after getting a couple of takedowns. He led 10-2 at the end of the second.

Junior Konnor Kriss lost to the Cowboys' Seth Miller 3-1 in a hard-fought match at 130. Fans of

both squads were really into the contest

Then Colby lost its next five matches.

Sophomore Brandon Gaede lost to Scott House 10-3 at 135 and freshman Ryan Moore was pinned by Dax Ruhs at 140.

Junior Brandon Leth lost to Nathan Deeds 9-1 at 145 and junior Andrew Elling lost to Jon Pedin 8-1 at 152.

Freshman Andrew Taylor lost 7-5 to Kayler Reitcheck in a competitive match at 160. The two were tied at 5 at one point.

Senior Andrew Flanagan ended Colby's losing streak by pinning

the Cowboys' Jason Cowan in the first round at 171. Then senior George Smollock lost to Laine Herl of Goodland 4-0 at 189, giving the Cowboys a 31-24 lead.

Sophomore Kurtis Sloan was pinned by Riley Oharah at 215, extending Goodland's lead to 37-24. Sophomore Zell Bieberle got a big takedown on the Cowboys' Mac Purvis early in their match at 285, but Purvis eventually picked up a 5-3 decision.

The team will wrestle in a tournament at Liberal starting at 9 a.m. Saturday.

## Former Chief wants a final shot at ring

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. (AP) — Tony Gonzalez looks at the picture hanging in his locker, an erratic maze of colors resembling nothing in particular, scribbled out in crayon by his young daughter. "Isn't that great?" he asks proudly.

You know what else is great? Playing the 14th season of a stellar career with the NFC's top-seeded Atlanta Falcons, who have this weekend off and won't have to play another game away from the Georgia Dome unless they make it to the Super Bowl.

For a guy who's been to the playoffs only three times and never won a postseason game Gonzalez is almost giddy with anticipation.

"It's like a little kid and Christmas is next week," he said Thursday. "You start anticipating what you're going to get, what can happen, because you don't know what's going to happen. I guess you take the same approach as a little kid. You try to keep your mind busy."

For Gonzalez, that means sticking to the same routine that got

him to the league in the first place and kept him here all these years.

But there's no denying that Gonzalez's quest to win not just a playoff game, but a Super Bowl title before he takes his place in

Canton, is one of the major subplots for the Falcons heading into the postseason.

"We know playoff wins are not guaranteed," running back Michael Turner said. "Some guys go

through their whole career and, no matter how great they are, never win a championship. We want to make sure Tony goes out with a ring on his finger."

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## Denver Broncos search for coach

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP) — Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator Mike Mularkey has canceled his interview with the Denver Broncos to talk about their head coaching vacancy.

"I respect the decision that Mike Mularkey has made to not interview with the Broncos at this time," John Elway, the Broncos' new executive vice president of football operations, who is spearheading the search, said via his official Twitter account. "I wish Coach Mularkey and the Atlanta Falcons the best of luck in the playoffs."

Mularkey was set to interview with the Broncos on Friday night. ESPN reported that Mularkey wants to focus on the playoffs but will still interview with the Cleveland Browns on Saturday because they called him first. The network also said Mularkey would be open to an interview with the Broncos if the job is still open after the Falcons' season is over.

Mularkey's move led to speculation that he wasn't sold on Tim Tebow as the Broncos quarterback.

When talking about coaching candidates during his re-introductory news conference Wednesday, Elway said, "I don't believe that anyone is going to come over and say, 'I don't want Tim Tebow.' If they do, then maybe they are not the right guy for the job."

Also, Elway called Mularkey "Mark" during his news conference Wednesday but later called him "Mike."

With Mularkey scrubbing his interview, the Broncos' search committee that includes general manager Brian Xanders, team president Joe Ellis and owner Pat Bowlen, will remain in Denver preparing to interview New York Giants defensive coordinator Perry Fewell and interim Denver coach Eric Stutesville, both on Sunday.

A team spokesman said Thursday there was nothing scheduled with Stanford coach Jim Harbaugh, whom Elway was hoping to line up for an interview.

Elway said he wanted to hire a coach who already had head coaching experience, preferably in the NFL, and both Fewell, 48, and Stutesville, 43, have been

interim head coaches, Fewell for seven games in Buffalo in 2009.

"I don't believe anybody that's not had that NFL experience can make that jump — other than Harbaugh. There's nobody (else) in the college ranks that we're interested in talking to," Elway said. "And preferably we'd like to have some head coaching background in the NFL, but it's not a must. If there's a guy who's a coordinator that's up and coming and shows that he can be the head coach and understands that, then he'll be the guy."

Two people with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press that Harbaugh is set to meet Miami Dolphins officials in the San Francisco area. Both people spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting was to remain confidential.

Tony Sparano is still the Dolphins' coach, but owner Stephen Ross flew to California to visit Harbaugh on Thursday. A day earlier, Harbaugh met with the San Francisco 49ers about their coaching vacancy.

Harbaugh returned Tuesday to the Bay Area following Stanford's 40-12 Orange Bowl victory over Virginia Tech in Miami. Ross, Dolphins CEO Mike Dee and general manager Jeff Ireland were on the Stanford sideline before the game.

Elway was also in attendance, serving as a captain for the Cardinal, whom he played for before his 16-year career with the Broncos, that landed him in the Hall of Fame in 2004.

Harbaugh is expected to command the highest price tag of any candidate. With the Broncos still on the hook next season for salaries for former coaches Josh McDaniels and Mike Shanahan, economics could prove a factor in who the Broncos end up hiring.

"Well, a little bit, I would guess," Elway said Wednesday.

Stutesville went 1-3 after being promoted from running backs coach upon McDaniels' Dec. 6 ouster. Before Ellis re-introduced Elway on Wednesday, he started out by thanking Stutesville for his work "under some adverse circumstances" and praised him for the positivity he brought to the position.

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