

Summer's officially here



Goodland's American Legion team practiced yesterday in preparation for their first game. The team plays a double-header against Grainfield on Sunday. Photo by Lester Bolen/The Goodland Daily News

Royals win second straight

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Rey Sanchez is no longer the only player hitting for Kansas City. Sanchez extended his career-best hitting streak to 18 games with four hits, and the Royals had 15 Thursday as they beat the Texas Rangers 8-2. "We're all playing good and feel better at the plate. Sooner or later, it had to happen," Sanchez said. "Right now, we're playing well, hitting well and playing together. That's how you get wins."

"Right now, we are hitting. Hopefully, that will equate into wins and hopefully will be contagious and something that sticks with us for a while." Even with consecutive victories, Kansas City was 10-18 in May. The Royals are 20-33, matching their worst record ever after 53 games. "We're trying to just dig out and slowly try to get consistent and win games," Royals manager Tony Muser said. Even more disappointing have been the Rangers, who were 8-19 in May, their most losses in a month since August 1997. Texas is 8-16 since Jerry Narron replaced Johnny Oates, who resigned as manager May 4. "Right now, we're just not playing good baseball," catcher Ivan Rodriguez said. "We have to try to forget and hope to start winning games." Blake Stein (2-4) earned his first win in 1 1/2 months despite throwing 51 balls in 100 pitches. He allowed two runs and three hits in five-plus innings and overcame six walks to win for the first time since April 15 at Toronto.

The Royals trailed 1-0 in the fifth before Sweeney, Jermaine Dye and Joe Randa hit consecutive RBI singles against Doug Davis (2-5). In the seventh, Dave McCarty and A.J. Hinch had two-run doubles after intentional walks to load to the bases. Sanchez led off the eighth with a double and scored on a single by Dye. Stein, 0-2 in three starts and four relief appearances since his last win, left after Alex Rodriguez led off the sixth with a double and Rafael Palmeiro walked. Gabe Kapler hit a sacrifice fly off reliever Kris Wilson to make it 3-2. Wilson, recalled from Triple-A Omaha just two days earlier, pitched the final four innings for his first major league save. Davis, recalled from Triple-A Oklahoma to make the start, gave up three runs and eight hits in 4 1-3 innings. "I've struggled up here, but I do fine down there. I'm frustrated and it's something I have to figure out," said Davis, who was 2-0 in two Triple-A starts, but has lost four straight in the majors.

Avs propelled by veteran's goal

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — After more than 22 years of anticipation, Ray Bourque might not have to wait too much longer to drink from the Stanley Cup. Bourque, who has played more games in NHL history than any player who hasn't won the cup, scored on a power play early in the third period, breaking a tie and leading the Colorado Avalanche to a 3-1 win over the New Jersey Devils on Thursday night. The victory gave the Avalanche a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven series and moved the Avalanche and Bourque within two wins of taking the cup from the defending champions. "You could say it was the biggest goal of my career," said the 40-year-old Bourque, whose bid for a cup has been one of the focal points of the postseason. "Any time you walk into the Colorado locker room, someone seems to be either talking about it or asking a question about it. "If Ray wins, that means we all win," said Colorado captain Joe Sakic, who set up Bourque's goal by beating John Madden on a faceoff deep in the New Jersey end. "That's something we have strived for since the beginning of the year. We still have a ways to go," Sakic said. That's somewhat debatable heading into Game 4 on Saturday night at the Continental Airlines Arena. For the first time in the playoffs, New Jersey is facing a team that is as talented and as physical as it is. The Avs have matched the Devils hit for hit, beaten them at their own game in the neutral zone and taken them out of their game.

"There is always a problem when you don't come to work and you don't stick to the game plan," Devils coach Larry Robinson said. "You are not going to win a lot of games when you only have eight or nine guys playing. We didn't have enough guys competing." Martin Brodeur was one of the few Devils who was outstanding in defeat. But even the Devils goalie was frustrated seeing his team two losses from giving up the cup. The Devils looked very poised in the first period against Colorado, but they didn't play at the same level in the final 40 minutes. Jason Arnott finally got the Devils' A-Line on the scoreboard in the series with a power-play goal 3:16 after the opening faceoff, but Colorado defenseman Martin Skoula tied it with a shot that Brodeur said tipped off the pants of Avs center Stephane Yelle. Colorado took over in the second period, but it had to survive an unbelievable giveaway by goalie Patrick Roy near the sideboards late in the period. Patrik Elias stole the puck from Roy while killing off a penalty, and Elias' shot hit the goalpost with Roy out of position and the net open with less than 20 seconds left in the period. "I don't think he could have scored," said Roy, who was outstanding, stopping 21 shots. "It would have hit my pad if it was on net. But I was not pleased with myself. It was a bad decision." Instead of a 2-1 lead entering the final period, the Devils had 62 seconds of Arnott's penalty still to kill off. They failed to do it. Thirty-one seconds into the final period, Bourque made Arnott pay for

the penalty with a slap shot past Brodeur. "I saw it," said Brodeur, who made 18 saves. "It took me a while to see him because I didn't know where he was. He kept moving with the crowd. When he got out of the crowd, he was stepping into the slap shot. He shot it right at my shoulder. I put my glove there instead of keeping my shoulder there and it went off my glove." Dan Hinote capped a great rush with Chris Drury and Ville Nieminen a little less than three minutes later for a 3-1 lead. After that, the Avalanche shut down the neutral zone, limiting the Devils to just a few good chances in the final 20 minutes. And if the Avs keep doing it well, they and Bourque will do what the Devils did last year — drink from the cup. "I know we are two games away, and we are one step closer," Bourque said. "But we've got a lot of work left."

sports briefs

NFL's pay-per-view plan to change

NEW YORK (AP) — Fans who had been required to buy a full season of games on NFL's Direct Ticket satellite TV package will now be able to purchase them on a week-by-week basis. The new policy is the result of a class-action lawsuit against the NFL that was settled last week.

Sampras denied in French Open

PARIS (AP) — Pete Sampras walked off the clay at the French Open a loser again, beaten by Spanish journeyman Galo Blanco, 7-6 (4), 6-3, 6-2. Dating back to 1989, Sampras is 0-for-12 at the only Grand Slam tournament he has yet to win. Andre Agassi, seeded third, beat Julien Boutter. No. 2 Marat Safin needed 3 1/2 hours to beat Alex Calatrava. In women's play, No. 6 Serena Williams beat qualifier Katarina Srebotnik 6-0, 7-5. No. 1 Martina Hingis and No. 4 Jennifer Capriati remained on course for a semifinal showdown. Hingis needed just 42 minutes to eliminate Catalina Castano 6-1, 6-0. Capriati, bidding for her second Grand Slam in a row, beat Tathiana Garbin 6-2, 6-1. Three-time champion Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario lost to American Amy Frazier.

nhl glance

Table with 4 columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Includes Stanley Cup Finals (Best-of-7) and NHL games for Thursday, Saturday, Monday, and Thursday, June 7 and 9.

baseball scoreboard

Table with columns: American League, Central Division, West Division, National League, East Division. Lists teams like Boston, New York, Toronto, Tampa Bay, Minnesota, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Kansas City, Seattle, Oakland, Anaheim, Texas and their respective records.

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists San Francisco (Rueter 4-6) at Colorado (Chacon 3-1), 9:05 p.m. and various other MLB games.

Lakers are too dominate to stop

MORE ORLESTER Would the real Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant please stand up. If the L.A. Lakers had played this good during the year we might have witnessed the only undefeated regular season in league history. Not to be lost on the Lake show's impressive run has been the play of Derrick Fischer. The point guard, who returned with a month left to go in the season, has given Los Angeles a third scoring option who can hit big shots and play tenacious defense. The winner of the Bucks-76ers series doesn't stand a chance. Top off-season move in the NBA. Look for Gary Payton to be traded to either the Heat or the Spurs. The Heat could offer a package of Anthony Carter, Brain Grant and Tim James for Payton, Vin Baker and Ruben Patterson. The trade would make both teams better, but make the Heat a bonified title contender...The Mariners have the best pitching staff in baseball and are getting good offensive production but will not win the World Series with out a bona fide power threat. Ken Griffey Jr. or Alex Rodriguez would be a great fit in the middle of the order but their gone. So what does the team with baseball's best record do? Jose Cansaco anyone.



lester bolen • more or lester

It's a shame you can't trade college athletes. I bet Kansas State could get some good defensive linemen and a cornerback for the loser of the Marc Dunn vs. Ell Roberson battle. Which ever quarterback establishes himself as the number one guy will have a very successful season in the Wildcats system...Speaking of college football, if KSU happens to stumble my money is on the Hurricanes of Miami. They are clearly the most talented team in the country. Their schedule is difficult though with road games at Penn State, at Florida State, and at Virginia Tech. They also have a first year head coach, Larry Coker. No first year coach has ever won a national championship. Of course no first year coach has inherited the kind of talent that Coker's has. Best off-season move in the NFL this year, Tampa Bay signing Brad Johnson. This is a quarterback that nearly lead Washington to the NFC championship game just two years ago and never got his fair shake last year with the dismal Redskins. If the Bucs can finally live up to expectations they can easily be the best team in the league next season. My NFL sleepers for the upcoming season, the Philadelphia Eagles and the San Diego Chargers. Philly won last season despite no offensive threat other than Donovan McNabb and have a great defense. San Diego had a great draft getting a starting running back in LaDainian Tomlinson and a quarterback with Drew Brees. Yes, they had to give up Michael Vick, but I'm not convinced Vick will be a better pro quarterback than Brees...That's more or less my thoughts for the week... Questions, Comments, Complaints? Send email to moreorlester@fan.com

Advertisement for Sherman County Speedway featuring a movie 'The Mummy Returns' and a subscriber offer for Jay Pettibone.

McDonald's advertisement: Quarter pounder with cheese 2 for \$2.00. Includes the McDonald's logo and address: Goodland, Burlington, Colo., Lamar, Colo., 2325 Enterprise Road, 440 S. Lincoln, 1011 N. Main.

Advertisement for Sherman County Speedway: COME TO THE RACES! SATURDAY, JUNE 2. Includes the Speedway logo and address: (at the fairgrounds north of Goodland).

Advertisement for Jones Land Company Residential Real Estate: Let us light your way... Residential Real Estate Farm and Ranch. Includes a photo of a house and contact information for Joyce Boehme.