

Serving at the Colby Invitational



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press
Rusty Helin served at the Colby Invitational Tennis tournament. Helin and his doubles partner, Joey Melnyk, placed third. The Eagles as a team placed third, and are in Lindsborg today for the regional tournament.

Royals sweep three from Indians

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Mark Quinn wasted no time pumping life into the Kansas City Royals.

Quinn, who missed the first 33 games with a broken rib, returned to the lineup Sunday and hit a two-run double off the right-field wall in a four-run first inning to help beat the Cleveland Indians 4-1.

Quinn was 2-for-14 with five strikeouts off Indians starter Chuck Finley before the double.

“I talked to him this morning about Finley and the numbers he had,” Royals interim manager John Mizerock said. “He didn’t have a whole lot of success against him and said he’d really like to start against somebody else other than Finley, but Mark said he’d take that as a challenge. He won the first battle.”

Neifi Perez doubled and Finley walked Mike Sweeney and Carlos Beltran to load the bases for Quinn.

“I haven’t had a lot of success against him in the past, but the first day I threw that all away and just saw the ball and hit it,” Quinn said. “I knew I hit it good. I didn’t really think it was gone, but I knew it would get over his (right fielder

Matt Lawton) head.

“He threw me a high fastball and I went with the pitch and got it.”

Finley (2-4) said the pitch was not a strike.

“It was off the plate and outside and way up there,” Finley said.

Quinn, who also singled in the eighth, walked only 12 times in 473 plate appearances last year.

“I’m an aggressive hitter and big league pitchers exploited that last year,” Quinn said. “It’s something I have to learn and figure out, exactly what they’re doing in certain counts and situations.

“With the bases loaded, I knew he wasn’t going to pitch around me because they don’t want to walk anybody, so I fed off that and got a pitch to hit.”

The four-run first was enough for Paul Byrd to claim his sixth victory, tying Mark Buehrle of the Chicago White Sox for the most wins in the American League.

“Did I think I would be 6-2?” Byrd said. “I’ve always felt like if I kept this team in the game, they’d score some runs. Not to be arrogant, but I foresaw myself throwing well (this season).

“I thought our team would be a lot better, that’s been a disappointment. I think we’re getting hot now and hopefully we can turn it around.”

The Royals have won three straight and four of five.

Jim Thome accounted for the only run off Byrd with a home run in the sixth, snapping a 16-inning scoreless drought for the Indians.

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Avalanche
on the verge
of elimination

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—With patience, endurance and the occasional booming slap shot, the San Jose Sharks are on the brink of eliminating the defending Stanley Cup champions from the playoffs.

The Colorado Avalanche are within one loss of disaster after San Jose’s surprising 5-3 victory in Game 5 of the Western Conference semifinals.

As it has so often in this series, the Avalanche’s thin defense struggled again in the third period — and once again, the Sharks seized the chance to pound goalie Patrick Roy for an unlikely victory.

On Monday night, the Sharks will go for a clinching victory in Game 6 — one that would stop the Avalanche from reaching the conference finals for just the second time in the last seven seasons.

Not many people outside the Sharks’ locker room expected anything to prevent the Avalanche from facing the league-leading Detroit Red Wings in the conference finals, but San Jose has found weaknesses in Colorado’s star-studded lineup — namely, the names beneath the stars.

“They play fewer players a lot of minutes, and that works into our hands,” Sharks center Vincent Damphousse said Sunday at San Jose’s training complex.

“When you play 25-30 minutes, if you work hard, nobody can be poised for 30 minutes on the ice. That’s when we can win some of those physical battles against their great players in the third period.”

Rockies beat Mets
in extra innings

NEW YORK (AP)—Larry Walker wasn’t sure what was going to happen in his sixth plate appearance Sunday against the New York Mets.

Reliever Kane Davis had no idea how his pitches were going to behave. Walker liked the results of their encounter a lot better.

Walker hit a two-run homer in the 13th inning and the Colorado Rockies beat the Mets 4-3.

“I don’t know what the heck I did,” he said after his eighth homer broke a 2-2 tie.

“All the bad swings I had all day, if you added them up and times it by 10, maybe you get a hit that way.”

Juan Uribe drew a four-pitch walk from Davis (1-1) to start the 13th. Walker followed with his homer, a drive into the Mets bullpen in right field.

Walker had been 0-for-4 with a walk in the game before homering. He got an off-day Saturday.

“I had no idea where the ball was going on any pitch,” said Davis, who didn’t retire a batter.

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