

Runner looks up to down under trip

By John Van Nostrand
Colby Free Press Publisher

Colby High's Kelly Gerstner has ran across Colby.

She has ran at the state high school cross country meet.

Now, she will run across Australia — sort of.

Gerstner, 17, is a member of the Kansas Track and Field that will compete next month at the 10th annual Down Under International Games in Queensland, Australia.

"There will be some amazing athletes there," she said. "I'm just a little Kansas girl who also wants to go to Australia."

Gerstner was selected to go based on her performances in high school cross country and track, both which she has competed in throughout high school. She will be a senior this year. She was invited to the games earlier during her high school years, but declined due to conflicts.

Her trip begins July 1 and includes three days in Hawaii before the 10 days in Australia. She has been practicing for her events, the 1,500 and 3,000-meter runs. Tack on another 359 feet, and 1,500 meters equates to one mile.

"I've been running a lot," she said, "in the mornings and at night."

As far as Gerstner knows, she is the only member of Kansas' team from the west side of the state. She has not met the others on the Kansas team.

She does not specifically know the competition she will face in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Colby High's Kelly Gerstner, far left, ran during a cross country meet. The senior will compete in July at the Down Under International Games in Australia.

Australia, but will compete twice. One time will be against other Americans and the other time will be against people from New Zealand and Australia.

"I'm too scared to look at their times," she laughed.

During her research of the games, Gerstner said the stadium was used for Australia's Olympic team training. She said she is expecting athletes who may eventually try out for

the Olympics.

In addition to being invited, athletes have to raise \$4,000 for expenses for the 13-day trip. Gerstner said she has raised enough money for expenses, and is working for additional money for personal use.

When Gerstner is done running, she will continue to stay in Australia for an extended vacation. She will spend some time with a relative.

"I thank everyone who has helped me with raising the money," she said.

Gerstner plans to join the Eagle cross country and track teams during her senior year. Training for Australia will help her prepare for cross country when practice starts in late August.

"I just want to do well. I want to aim high," she said about Australia.

SportsBriefs

NEW YORK (AP) — Jason Giambi will meet with George Mitchell, agreeing right before baseball commissioner Bud Selig's deadline to cooperate with the steroids investigator.

Giambi, who for the first time publicly admitted he had a "personal history regarding steroids," will become the first active player known to speak with the former Senate majority leader. No date was set for their session.

The New York Yankees star announced his decision after he spoke on the phone with Selig. Lawyers for the players' union and Major League Baseball reached a written agreement that set rules for the meeting.

OAKVILLE, Calif. (AP) — Dale Earnhardt Jr. has signed an endorsement deal with Sony Electronics, but he still isn't saying what role longtime sponsor Budweiser will have with him when he joins Hendrick Motorsports next season.

His deal with Sony is a personal services contract that gives the company use of his name, likeness

and voice for promotions. He also has a similar deal with Budweiser that will continue next year, regardless of what's on his car.

Budweiser has been Earnhardt's primary sponsor since 1999, and the beer manufacturer wants to continue its relationship with him at Hendrick. But car owner Rick Hendrick isn't actively pursuing new sponsors, and it's possible Bud could get shut out.

BOSTON (AP) — Claude Julien was hired as coach of the Bruins, less than a week after Boston fired Dave Lewis and two months after Julien was dismissed by the New Jersey Devils in the season's waning days.

Julien is the Bruins' third coach in a year. He was let go by the first-place Devils in April with three games left in the regular season and the team preparing for the playoffs.

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Goaltender Jean-Sebastien Giguere has decided to stay with the Anaheim Ducks, perhaps passing up more money on the open market to

sign a 4-year, \$24 million contract with the Stanley Cup champions.

The 30-year-old Giguere was acquired by the Ducks from Calgary in 2000 for a second-round draft choice. He had a 13-4 record in the playoffs while appearing in 18 postseason games with a 1.97 goals-against average and a .922 save percentage.

Giguere had a 36-10-8 record, a 2.26 goals-against average and a .918 save percentage in 56 regular-season games. His 36 wins were a career best and set a new franchise record, and his 10 regulation losses were the fewest of any NHL goalie who played in 50 or more games.

CHICAGO (AP) — Canada had a goal in the final minute of stoppage time waved off Thursday night, preserving the Americans' 2-1 victory and their spot in the CONCACAF Gold Cup final.

Frankie Hejduk scored his first goal in almost seven years, and Landon Donovan converted yet another penalty kick for the winner.

The United States will play

Mexico, a 1-0 winner over tiny Guadeloupe, in Sunday's final for a berth in the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup in South Africa. The defending champion Americans will be without Hejduk and Michael Bradley, though. Hejduk picked up his second yellow card in as many games while Bradley, the son of U.S. coach Bob Bradley, was given a red card in the 89th minute for a reckless tackle.

Lake Atwood race takes off July 4

The 27th running of the Lake Atwood County Challenge Race will be held 7:30 a.m., July 4, at Lake Atwood in Atwood.

Men will run four times around the lake for a distance of eight kilometers (five miles). Women will run twice around the lake for a distance of four kilometers (2.5 miles).

Every age division finishes scores points for the county they are from. In nearly every race, the

team having the most participants won the competition. County residence is not a requirement. Participants can bring others to race and represent a county.

There are no awards or entry fees.

The County Challenge Race is the first event of the annual Lake Atwood Day celebration hosted by the Atwood Rotary Club.

For more information, call 785-626-3295

Chief may hold out

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Pro Bowl running back Larry Johnson says he's ready to sit out the Chiefs' training camp to resolve his request for a new contract, The Kansas City Star reported Thursday.

In an interview with Star columnist Jason Whitlock, Johnson said his agent, Alvin Keels, and his family have taken steps to save money in case of a holdout.

"I'm prepared," Johnson said. "They (my agent and father) got me saving money. I'm hustling to get more money to put in the bank. They already started setting aside different accounts, if that would

have to happen."

Johnson said he expects the Chiefs won't immediately settle on new terms.

"He's going to test me," Johnson said of team president Carl Peterson.

Both Peterson and head coach Herm Edwards were traveling Thursday and unavailable for comment, said team spokesman Pete Moris. Johnson is seeking an extension to the seven-year deal he inked in 2003, which he can void down to a five-year deal after the final game of the 2007 season because of playing time incentives.

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