

Crash, boom, bam



Cars churned up dust as they crashed into each other during the demolition derby Wednesday at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Incoming Colby High senior Nathan Quagliano won the mini-derby and Derek Fromholtz won the regular derby.

ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Community College

Kansas coach offers new way

IRVING, Texas (AP) – Turner Gill wanted to get to know his new Kansas team and wanted to make sure they knew each other. So he asked questions like who was the most influential person in their lives and why, then had every player and coach stand up and answer.

Will that matter on fourth-and-goal from the 1 in the closing seconds of a tight game?

It can't hurt, Gill figures. "The whole point of doing it," he said, "was to let everybody understand we're a lot closer than you think."

Gill's soft approach could be just what the Jayhawks need after eight years under Mark Mangino.

Mangino turned Kansas football into the kind of program the basketball team could be proud of, winning as many bowl games (three) as all his predecessors combined. In 2007, the Jayhawks went 12-1 with the offense and defense among the best in the nation, earning a spot in the Orange Bowl.

But things came crashing down late last season. Mangino was accused of physically and verbally abusing players and others around the program. He denied everything, but resigned in December.

Administrators moved quickly to hire Gill, a star quarterback at Nebraska in the early 1980s who'd become a potential coaching star over his four years at Buffalo. He'd been up for several jobs the previous offseason and gladly took this chance to work in a BCS conference.

Gill knows he'll ultimately be judged by wins and losses. But over about a half hour of speaking at Big 12 media day, it was clear his approach is that results are a byproduct of the other ways he runs his program.

"I'm passionate about trying to develop young men," he said. "That's what my purpose (is) here on this earth."

Players have been hearing it for seven months, and they've seen how sincere he is about it.

"He's there as very much a father figure and a mentor for us," offensive lineman Brad Thorson said. "That's not typical for a Division I coach, for a guy that's got his own family. He's got a daughter in college and a daughter in high school. He's got his own family to take care of, and he calls us his sons. He says it; he means it. It's powerful. It means a lot to us. We're willing to go out there and lay it on the line for him."

The image on all their promotional material sums it up pretty nicely: seven players circled around their new coach, all looking up, eyes squarely on him, with Gill standing and leaning back slightly, his arms crossed and the start of a smile on his face.

He's going to lead them, and they're ready to be led – gently.

"We're here to challenge you, we're here to be demanding, we're here to raise your expectation of yourself," Gill said, "but we can do it in a way where you can still feel good about yourself."

Youth leagues end with upsets

The Colby Recreation Department Bambino League championship games both ended in upsets last week.

Tim Huttles' No. 2-seeded gray team defeated Brian Quagliano's undefeated Lime in the boys league for ages 9 to 12 and Tara Schroer's Pink beat Steve Dempewolf's No. 1 Violet in the girls league.

In the Rookie League, ages 6 to 8, Shawn Curry's No. 1-seeded Violet pulled through with a championship win over Bailey Koerperich's Pink. In Rookie Boys play, Andy Lee's No. 1-seeded Lime came out with a win over Lance Krannawitter's Blue.

The games took place from Monday through Thursday during Tournament Week. All teams from each league were awarded medals for their efforts this season.

Men's Softball League teams began their championship single elimination tournament last Thursday. Seven teams competed in the tournament: Colby Fertilizer, Woofter Construction, Sports

Shoppe, Stephens, Image Makers, Unicel and College Drive Assembly of God.

The No. 1-seeded Stephens and No. 2 Image Makers were both knocked out in the second round, and Brian Quagliano's Unicel team and Brent Brooks' Sports Shoppe team landed themselves in the championship.

A home run derby was held before the game, featuring eight sluggers: Pete Stephens, Cris Koerperich, Kevin Cox, Brett Mariman, Dustin Pfeifer, Shane Stupka, Shawn Curry, and Doug Otten. Pfeifer, Mariman, Otten and Koerperich reached the final round. They had to hit at least two home runs each to advance.

Pfeifer took first by smacking 12 total out of the park, with Otten taking second with three home runs, and Koerperich and Mariman tying for third with two each.

The championship game reached the fifth inning before the game was postponed due to rain. It will resume at 7:30 p.m. next Thursday at the Colby Recreation

Fields.

Coed Softball wrapped up its regular season play on Sunday. The league started with 14 teams, although Wark Farms decided to drop out at midseason. The championship tournament will take place next Saturday, featuring 13 teams in a four-pool bracket. The winners of each pool will play again on Sunday in a four-team single elimination round. The semifinal games start at 6 p.m. and the championship will begin at 8 p.m.

Team seedings are, No. 1 McCarty, No. 2 Beckman, No. 3 Colby Recreation Department, No. 4 Sports Shoppe, No. 5 Twisters Bar and Grill, No. 6 Williams, No. 7 Colby Bowl, No. 8 Unicel, No. 9 Basgall, No. 10 Colby Wesleyan, No. 11 Citizens Medical Center, No. 12 Bottle Gallery and No. 13 Colby Motors.

Other upcoming events for the recreation department include the third annual Rec. Run 5K at 6 p.m. Thursday evening on Thursday, Aug. 12.

The third annual competitive one-man Iron Athlete Triathlon that was supposed to take place Saturday has been cancelled due to lack of participation, but will resume next summer, said Recreation Director Stacy Lee.

For other programs, check the Activities Calendar available at the department's office, the Sports Shoppe or City Hall or its web site at www.cityofcolby.com.

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