

# Sluggers' plan to rule the zone as season begins

By R.B. Headley  
Colby Free Press  
rbheadley@nwkansas.com

The Colby Sluggers certainly bring a strong X-factor into their quest for legion baseball state success this summer.

"Probably the best thing is we've got a lot of guys from last year's squad," coach Jarod Hamilton proclaimed. "We'll score our runs because we have a very good experienced lineup. Experience that won't be overmatched like it was at times last year. Defensively, there are questions to be answered."

"But I fully expect us to compete for a zone championship and go on to state," he said.

A more powerful element already slowed the Sluggers as rain washed out Wednesday's season and home opener against rival Goodland. Hamilton's already working to get those key area contests rescheduled.

"Teams like Goodland and Norton, we're very interested in seeing what they have," he observed.

Goodland surprised Colby during last year's zone tournament after the Sluggers had swept through their regular-season matchups.

However, the No. 1 focus will turn to Sunday evening at 6 p.m., when Burlington, Colo., arrives

for a doubleheader in Colby. Game two should begin around 8 p.m.

The Sluggers then play at a Burlington Wood Bat Tournament June 15 and 16.

"They typically have some good athletes," Hamilton said. "You never really know until you see a team. Maybe a couple of new players join the team, or a strong kid moves into town."

Whoever sees Colby will face three horses on the pitching hill: Luke Cox, Mark Bremenkamp and Zack Stones. All three add to Colby's excellent experience and expectations.

"We'll go as far as our pitching goes," the coach confirmed. "Maybe our biggest concern is that all three guys are key position players. So when one of them is pitching, it could create a hole. Especially with Luke being a shortstop."

A roster featuring 14 players should deliver someone to cement that Colby infield defense. Again, there won't be many nervous rookies who haven't been through the summer-long legion season before.

"We introduced a lot of new concepts to them last year. This year is more like a refresher for them," Hamilton said. "A majority of the guys have started us

and are now a year older. They've gained experience and size, which is nice."

The Sluggers will focus on a fundamental, aggressive offense which moves runners around bases. Hamilton called it "not very complicated." Their main goal is keeping everyone healthy while executing properly and efficiently.

After challenging Burlington, the Sluggers will venture into other venues like Hays, Goodland and Norton before that important zone tournament at Pratt Aug. 8 to 12.

"Last year, we went 7-0 against Goodland and Ellis, then lost to both at the zone tournament," Hamilton said. "We'd like to change all that. State is obviously our goal."

A glance at upcoming contests for other Colby legion teams:

Tonight: Colby K-18 at WaKeeney, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday: Burlington, Colo., at Colby Sluggers, 6 p.m.

Monday: Goodland at Colby K-18, 6:30 p.m.

Monday: WaKeeney at Colby 4th-6th Grade team, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday: Hoxie at Colby fourth-sixth grade team, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday: Colby K-18 at Oakley, 6:30 p.m.

June 16: Colby Sluggers at Burlington Wood Bat Tournament.



Kayla Cornett/Colby Free Press

Smooth defense will clearly be crucial to the Colby Sluggers American Legion team corralling a zone championship and state tournament spot this summer. The Sluggers will host a season-opening doubleheader Sunday evening against Burlington Sunday evening (6 p.m.) after rain postponed their official opener with Goodland Wednesday night. An official rescheduled date had not been obtained at press time.

## Speedway racing set to resume Sunday

After an almost three-week hiatus, racing resumes full speed ahead at Thomas County Speedway Sunday evening with several top classes competing.

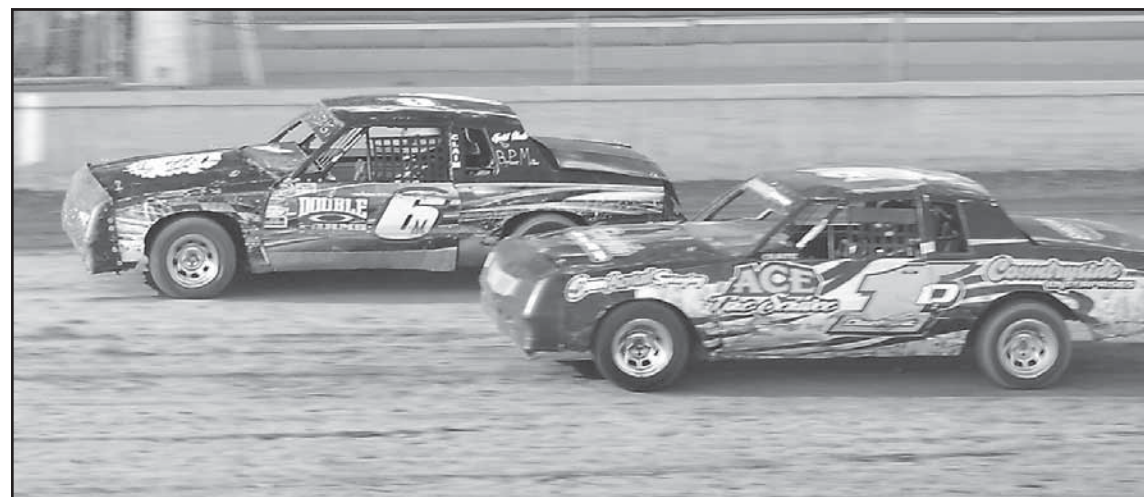
Econos, IMCA Hobby Stocks, IMCA N. SportMods, IMCA Stock Cars and IMCA Modifieds will all be in action along with a visit from the CDM Northern Series Super Late Models.

Grandstands open at 5:30 p.m., hot laps are set for 6 p.m. followed by 7 p.m. races. It will be the first Thomas County Speedway racing since May 19.

A recap of who prevailed that evening:

Modifieds: Michael Wadel won the championship followed by Adam Morris, Jason Schoenberger, Nate Moore and John Fose.

Sport Mods: Clay Sellard captured first place with Jason Brees, Clay Money, Daniel Gottschalk



Kayla Cornett/Colby Free Press

Racing hits full speed again Sunday night at Thomas County Speedway after a three-week break. Several top classes will be in action beginning at 6 p.m.

and Brandon Clough completing the top five.

Stock cars: Jeff Tipton took the title ahead of Tyler Tipton, Perry Misner, Jason Rogers and BJ

Wagoner.

Hobby stocks: Cody Graham conquered the challenge over top contenders Daniel Irwin, Bobby Shield, Jason McIntyre and Mike

Giesenhagen.

Econos: Rocky Baalman ruled this class while Alex West, Ryan Baalman, Bryan Guyer and Levi Jones were other fastest finishers.

## New Eagles coach plans to direct camp

Players will get to know Colby High School's new boys basketball coach during the upcoming Colby Eagles 2013 Summer Basketball Team Camp.

Coach Kevin Brown will direct this camp June 17 to 20 at Colby Elementary School. High school sessions take place each night from 7:30 to 10 p.m. for those who will be freshmen through seniors.

Entry forms should be mailed by Wednesday to Brown at 109 N. Prairie St. in Yates Center, Kan., 66783, or they can be brought on the first day of camp.

If you are bringing the entry form or need information about this camp, please contact Brown at (785) 202-2340 or e-mail the new coach at kbrown5554@hotmail.com.

## Heat likely rules again

By R.B. Headley  
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rbheadley@nwkansas.com

Oh, they've fallen short a time or two, and that's literally been about it during the last four decades.

Just two or three quick thoughts, uhh, make that remarks from a media dude whose vertical leap and minutes spent watching NBA playoffs this spring are remarkably similar.

Honestly, I didn't need six weeks of basketball to determine the Finals would match Miami Heat against somebody. Nothing's changed in pro hoops for decades: the stars always prevail whether it's Michael, Magic, Larry Bird, Kobe, Kareem or whoever else can sell the most shoes.

Wait a second! The San Antonio Spurs almost defy this theme with their biggest star Tim Duncan rarely appearing on TV. But outside of beating LeBron in Cleveland years ago, the Spurs' other three NBA Finals victims were New Jersey, Detroit and a star-free New York Knicks team.

Based on my own star-less stature, I'd love to see the Spurs win one again. Not likely. The Heat have the biggest stars.

Why not drag it out as long as possible? Heat in seven.

## Weather shakes up early diamond schedule

Recent rain postponements have caused some revisions in the Colby Recreation youth leagues this summer. A glance at the new lineups:

**Bambino Boys (games on fields 3 and 4)**  
Wednesday, 6 p.m. Sapphire vs. Lime Green, Purple vs. Orange.  
7:45 p.m. Lime Green vs. Purple, Sapphire vs. Orange.  
Thursday, 6 p.m. Lime Green vs.

Orange, Sapphire vs. Purple. 7:45 p.m. Lime Green vs. Sapphire, Purple vs. Orange.

June 19, 6 p.m. Purple vs. Lime Green, Orange vs. Sapphire. 7:45 p.m. Sapphire vs. Purple, Lime Green vs. Orange.

June 26, 6 p.m. Sapphire vs. Lime Green, Purple vs. Orange. 7:45 p.m. Sapphire vs. Orange, Lime Green vs. Purple.

July 3, 6 p.m. Orange vs. Lime

Green, Purple vs. Sapphire. 7:45 p.m.: Lime Green vs. Sapphire, Orange vs. Purple.

July 10: Single elimination tournament.

**Rookie Girls (games on fields 2 and 5)**

Tonight, 6 p.m. Royal vs. Purple, Lime Green vs. Pink. 7:30 p.m. Purple vs. Lime Green, Royal vs. Pink.

June 12, 6 p.m. Royal vs. Lime Green, Purple vs. Pink. 7:30 p.m. Purple vs. Royal, Lime Green vs. Pink.

June 19, 6 p.m. Lime Green vs. Purple, Pink vs. Royal. 7:30 p.m. Royal vs. Lime Green, Purple vs. Pink.

June 26, 6 p.m. Royal vs. Purple, Lime Green vs. Pink. 7:30 p.m. Purple vs. Lime Green, Royal vs. Pink.

July 3, 6 p.m. Royal vs. Lime Green, Purple vs. Pink. 7:30 p.m. Purple vs. Royal, Lime Green vs. Pink.

July 10: Single elimination tournament will conclude the season.

## Nuggets dismiss NBA coach of year

George Karl is following general manager Masai Ujiri out of Denver, the Associated Press reporting.

Less than a month after winning the NBA's Coach of the Year award, Karl's tenure with the Nuggets is over after 8½ seasons. His departure comes shortly after

Ujiri, the league's executive of the year, left to become GM of the Toronto Raptors.

"So, we lost a GM now and a coach, what's next?" tweeted Nuggets big man Kenneth Faried.

Karl had a year left on his contract and was aiming for a new deal.

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