

# Sluggers blast past Goodland for playoff win

By Kevin Bottrell  
*The Goodland Star-News  
kbottrell@nkwansas.com*

The Colby American Legion baseball team won a hard fought game against rival Goodland 14-8 in their first outing at the Zone 7 Tournament at Goodland's Memorial Field on Wednesday.

Colby and Goodland took the field after Ulysses beat Norton 9-6 in the early game.

With Goodland's Gunner Helton on the mound, Colby got out to an early lead in the top of the first. After Josh Matchell struck out, Luke Cox hit a single up the middle and Todd Kane got on base on an error. Marc Bremenkamp walked to load the bases for Macen Shull, who struck out.

Jake Thompson walked, forcing Cox home for the first run of the inning. Caleb Mazanec brought Kane and Bremenkamp home with a single to make it 3-0. With Keagan Morgan up to bat, Thompson was picked off at second base to end the inning.

In Goodland's first turn at bat, John Hendrich got a lead-off base hit. Ryan Hillmer walked, then Gunner Helton hit a fly ball to second base, which turned into a double play when Hendrich was forced out.

Kelby Smith got a base hit. Hillmer rounded third, tried to get back to the base and slipped, getting into a pickle between the third

baseman and catcher. Colby's third baseman missed a throw and Hillmer was able to make it safely home for Goodland's first run of the game. Tyler Amthor walked, but was left on base when Luke Avila grounded out to shortstop.

Colby added a run to their lead in the top of the third. After Todd Kane flied out, Bremenkamp hit a base hit to center field, then advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt from Shull. Thompson walked, then Mazanec hit a blooper to right field, bringing Bremenkamp home to make it 4-1. Next up was Morgan, who hit it right to Helton on the mound. The ball bounced off his glove, but Helton chased it down and made the throw to first to end the inning.

The Outlaws closed the gap in the bottom of the third. Hillmer got things started with a long fly ball over the left fielder's head for a double. Helton then hit a line drive over the right fielder's head for a second double, scoring Hillmer. Smith grounded out to shortstop, then Amthor was thrown out trying to reach second after his fly ball had been dropped.

Avila hit an RBI single up the third baseline to make it 4-3, then Freeman's line drive to left field was caught for out three.

Colby opened the taps in the top of the fourth, batting through the order and taking a six run lead. Barnum walked and Matchell got on base on an error. He was



Colby catcher Jake Thompson unleashed a throw as pitcher Todd Kane backs the play Wednesday night during the Sluggers' 14-8 Zone 7 tournament win over host Goodland.

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Goodland Star-News

thrown out at second after Cox's fly ball was dropped. Kane hit a base hit to score Barnum from third, then Bremenkamp got a base hit, bringing two runs home to make it 7-3. Shull followed this

up with an RBI triple. After Thompson struck out, Mazanec hit a fly ball that got missed, allowing a run to score. Morgan hit a double, putting runners at second and third for

Barnum, who struck out. Down 9-3, Goodland's Jones struck out. Verlindon walked, then Hendrich got a base hit. Hillmer hit a double, scoring Verlindon from second. Helton grounded

out, but Hendrich scored on the play to make it 9-5. Smith flied out to end the inning.

Matchell got a lead-off double to open the top of the fifth inning. A sacrifice fly from Cox moved him to third and he was able to score when the throw to third was missed.

Kane got a base hit, which turned into a double on an error, but Bremenkamp struck out and Shull grounded out, leaving Kane on base.

Smith hit into a fielder's choice for the first out of the inning. Amthor struck out, but Hillmer made it home on a wild pitch to make it 10-8.

Colby ran up the score in the top of the seventh.

Spencer Barnes and Matchell walked and advanced to scoring position on a wild pitch.

Cox made a sacrifice fly to score Barnes.

A walk for Bremenkamp put runners at the corners for Shull, who hit a sacrifice bunt for another run. Thompson got an RBI base hit to make it 14-8.

With Mazanec up to bat, Thompson was picked off at second base to end the inning.

With the 14-8 win, Colby will move on to face Ellis in the winner's bracket at 6 p.m. (central time) today.

The winner of that game will advance to the championship game at 8 p.m. Friday.

## Colby on dark path at state?

Afternoon heat should not be an issue this weekend since Colby K-18 will play all night games during this week's state tournament in Lucas.

The official pairings with start times are now posted on k18baseball.com.

It was originally thought Colby would play a 6:30 p.m. opener on Saturday against Concordia F&A. Instead, that game will follow a 6:30 p.m. contest between West Region champ Goodland and Republic County.

With wins, Colby and Goodland would meet for a late Sunday semifinal. The championship game on Tuesday is also set for 8:30 p.m.

# New drivers make impact in Speedway races

By John Schmidt

Even though there were repeat names in the winner's circle, the Thomas County Speedway continued to see new drivers check in Sunday evening.

The Econos had their largest field of the season. Bryan "The Hulk" Guyer took the early lead and never really looked back.

The Baalman family had a great night of racing by getting all three cars in the top four. Top four were Guyer, Ryan Baalman, Rocky Baalman and Ron Baalman.

The Hobby Stocks came out of the first set of turns two and three wide back through the pack.

Joey Snethen was the early leader but had several fast cars on his tail. For the first half of the race, the field remained two wide the whole time around the track.

Richard Boon took the lead on lap five and had Curt Kennedy on his bumper the rest of the way.

Collin Heim and Cody "Bam Bam" Graham tried every lane possible to get around the leaders. Finally, Boon took home his second feature win of the season.

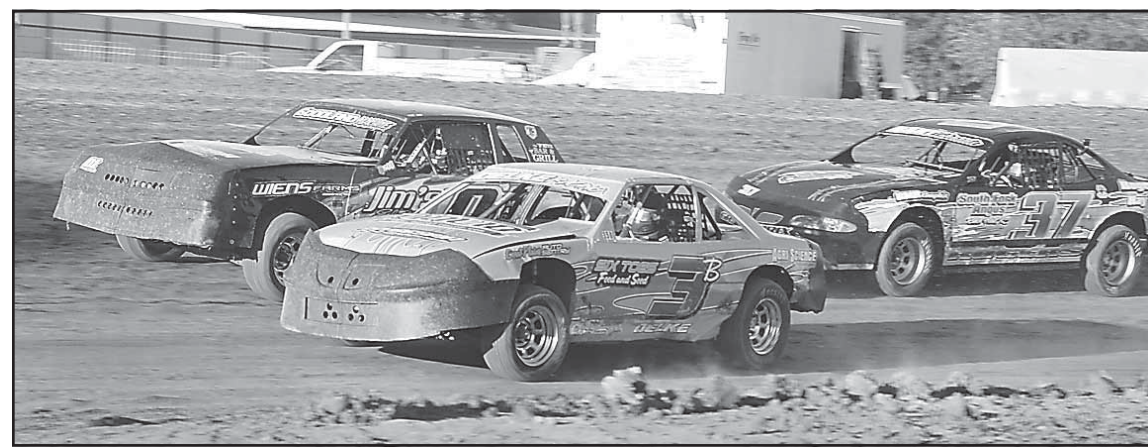
The Imca Sport Mods were the first feature of the night. Dustin Daniels had the lead by lap two and began to pull away. The field was bunched back up on lap five when the race went under a red flag for a nasty roll-over on the back stretch.

This was Daniels' third night in victory lane at Thomas County Speedway.

Bruce "The Moose" Plumisto was the outside pole sitter in the Stockcars.

While in the lead, he had two wide racing behind him through the entire 20-lap feature. "The Flying Farmer" Jason Rogers was on Plumisto's shirt tails from lap three to the end of the race.

Rogers tried to get around Plumisto but was never able to make any of them stick. Tyler



R.B. HEADLEY/Colby Free Press

Brent Moss (3) pulls ahead of Jeff Tubbs (37) and others during Stock Car racing at Thomas County Speedway Sunday evening. Tubbs finished sixth in the main event while Moss took 10th.

Tipton ran in a solid third place the entire race. Mike Meyers and "The Bullet" B.J. Wagoner battled for several laps for the fourth-place spot.

Plumisto was the fifth different feature winner in the Imca Stockcars.

The last race of the night was

the Modifieds and they sure did put on one whale of a show.

"Sweet" Wheat Lippelman and Todd Schwarz led the field to green. Lippelman and Schwarz raced side by side for the first seven laps until the lone caution came out.

Mike "The Natural" Wadel

quickly worked his way up to third from his eighth starting spot.

Wadel claimed his fourth win of the season at the track.

The race season is quickly coming to a close with only two races left. Next races will be at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 4. Hot laps are set for 6 p.m.

# Collision with legend leaves eternal 'scar' on fan

By R.B. HEADLEY

*Colby Free Press  
rbheadley@nkwansas.com*

As NFL training camps kick off this week, I'm suddenly booted back into a collision which clearly scarred this round-bellied sports scribbler for many years to come.

Yet it's a scar that makes one smile and mumble "it was worth it" while others shake their heads. The kind of scar any football and video-game fan would love to own because memories are more vivid than last year's Super Bowl...

"Have you considered a Sumo wrestling career? Did you ever secretly go double-dating with the Denver Broncos' "Barrel Man"? Who styles your hair? Do you even comb your hair? Are there TV jobs available for any other well-rounded, blithering media geeks?"

Those were just a few questions racing through my mind as I sped through another lovely rural town. Forget the silly stop signs. Forget the one stop light or occasional frightened child. I've always admired the friendliness of local residents, but there was no time to exchange an occasional "You're No. 1" sign being flashed in my direction.

Nothing was stopping me from meeting NFL coaching legend, video-game guru and aging rapidly into oblivion just like myself: big John Madden.

Believe it or not, the Emmy award winner almost didn't get the pleasure of meeting me. It was just another typical weekday morning at the old nouth...uhh, newspaper.

News reporters were pursuing hard-hitting stories and trading

insults. Editors created wonderful eye-catching page designs while muttering about something called a deadline.

Meanwhile, I was stuck on some silly transitional phrase and wondering whether anyone brought doughnuts. My concentration was suddenly broken by one of those annoying ringing telephones.

"Hey, honey!" the managing editor said to either his wife or some female fan. "What?! He's really here? I guess that's worth checking out."

Great. The local beer-truck driver had accepted an offer to replace me. Oh well, I already had most of my stolen pens and survival food (Twinkies, etc.) packed in a spare box. Time to head for the door.

"Hey, Deadhead (an old college nickname), someone spotted the Madden Cruiser in the Arby's parking lot. So get out of here."

While hustling/tripping over my shoe strings into this familiar food haven, I expected to see a large crowd hovering around the name behind America's most popular sports video game.

Instead, there was only a small group of rather large men including one super-sized fellow sitting alone in his own personal booth. My reporter's eagle eye spotted a chicken sandwich and some scruffy individual slumped over it, looking like breakfast was at 2 p.m. today.

No Super Bowl rings or Fox-TV apparel were on display. Yet I instantly recognized this companion of any decent couch potato.

"Uhhhh, Mr. Madden? I'm from the local newspaper. I'd like to take your photo. I'll try not to



spokeo.com

Denver, Kansas City and all football fans should recognize the hulking figure of NFL legend John Madden from his Oakland Raiders days.

both you too much."

I politely crouched, whoops, lost my balance while noticing his curly fries. I politely tried to crouch in front of this TV celebrity to take a handsome profile shot. "HEY! What the he#\*%(synonym for Turner Gill's Kansas coaching tenure)!

The legend known as Madden had suddenly revealed a very irritated face. Kind of like the Raiders logo without an eyepatch.

However, my dog-eat-dog journalistic attitude persisted. Plus I'd only gotten out of the office 10

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minutes.

Chicken particles and other unsavory items were nearly dribbling from Big John's mouth. The other large men quietly chuckled, especially when his next line stung worse than a loose hot meatball bouncing off your bare belly...

"You come over here and bother me! Then you say you aren't going to bother me! Then you start bothering me again!"

I promptly retaliated with several seconds of impressive, word-free blank staring. My only thoughts were "Wow, I finally meet one of my favorite people from the world's all-time greatest game and now he's going to dropkick me like a Kansas City Chief."

At that moment, the Super Bowl champion coach must have realized I was crumbling faster than Ryan Braun's fantasy value. He almost smiled and mumbled something like "at least sit down here and let me finish eating."

I offered more blank-stare intimidation as Madden removed the top bun from his sandwich and plopped it on a tray.

Could once-in-a-lifetime meetings get any better than this?

Finally, after noting my disturbing fixation on half-eaten meals,

Big John decided it was time to strike up some conversation.

We began discussing a variety of topics from football to last week's football action to movies about football to whether I excelled at football (yow, had he been drinking something other than Mr. Pibb?).

However, the ice was broken and I even became brave enough to mention how his despicable Raiders had mutilated my beloved Minnesota Vikings in Super Bowl XI.

It turned me into one bawling, blabbering idiot — a process which (of course) has never been repeated during these past 35 years of Yikes! fandom.

"You should have started crying in the second quarter," the fat

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