

Ellis three-run rally steals Colby's state spot

By R.B. Headley
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Gone with the wind was Colby's Zone 7 championship Saturday afternoon, and nobody in Sluggers blue saw it coming.

Who would? A three-run, two-out comeback almost never happens without one ball being hit.

Yet a hit batter, daring steal of home and one wild rundown allowed Ellis to steal the 3-2 title-clinching win over Colby Saturday afternoon in Goodland.

A comeback few would believe without seeing it.

"Stuff gets real weird sometimes in games like this," coach Jared Hamilton admitted. "That steal of home was on me. I didn't see it coming. Just having our pitcher go to the stretch could have changed that."

"The stretch" means pitcher Todd Kane would face third base before he threw. Hamilton opted to keep Kane focused on home plate, where he'd blanked top-seed Ellis through 6 2/3 innings while rarely giving up a solid hit.

Surprisingly cool, windy conditions on a late July Saturday had almost hampered both offenses.

"It was the kind of day where you had to be creative (to score



R.B. HEADLEY/Colby Free Press

Ellis' final runner found his path to home plate and the Zone 7 championship clear after Colby couldn't complete a rundown Saturday afternoon in Goodland. Catcher Jake Thompson, right, awaited the throw while pitcher Todd Kane backs up this decisive play. Colby saw a 2-0 lead with two outs in the final inning slip away.

runs)," Hamilton said. Crazy creation best describes the final Ellis gameplan.

Trailing 2-0 with one out remaining, perhaps Ellis felt momentum turning after Kane grazed two consecutive hitters. His sec-

ond hit batter barely moved the batter's sleeve, but it was enough force in that first run to make it 2-1.

Suddenly, Ellis' Nathan Frame also took off from third while Kane checked signals from catch-

er Jake Thompson.

Kane spotted the move and made quick home which could have clinched Colby's state spot.

Instead, a head-first slide beat the tag and forced this 2-2 tie.

Now momentum was wearing

Ellis orange-and-black. Because the ensuing botched squeeze bunt should have ended this rally and still forced an extra inning.

Yet as that runner retreated to third base, Colby dropped a throw and gave Ellis one more opportu-

nity. The runner raced home without any serious threat to being tagged out.

Leaping Ellis players celebrated what had to be one of the team's all-time most memorable wins.

Meanwhile, Colby could only walk away and try to learn from this tough season ender.

"I got caught up in the moment. Up 2-0 with one out to go, I thought we had it," Hamilton said.

"Our guys played magnificently all through the tournament," he added. "And they played really classy. They have respect for the Legion and for the game of baseball. Most of them are eligible to be back (next summer)."

Colby took a 2-0 lead in the seventh when Keegan Morgan and Spencer Barnes both singled. Barnes' hit was a bunt that caused the Ellis pitcher to slip and fall while fielding it.

Josh Matchell also reached safely to load the bases, and Luke Cox's RBI-grounder made it 2-0.

However, the next two batters were retired to keep Ellis just close enough.

Ellis advances to the Legion state tournament in Pratt starting on Thursday.

Colby finishes its season with a 13-11 record which included two wins over Ellis and a Levi Hayden Memorial Tournament title.



R.B. HEADLEY/Colby Free Press

Colby pitcher Marc Bremenkamp threw an early strike against Ellis during the Zone 7 showdown Friday evening. First baseman Caleb Mazanec, left, is ready if a hit comes his way. Ellis prevailed 5-3 to force a second tournament championship game.

Sluggers fall short in first Zone final

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Colby's bases-loaded line shot flew like a magnet into an Ellis glove and ended the Sluggers' Zone 7 title plans Friday night.

After trouncing Ellis 10-2 Thursday evening, Colby had hoped to eliminate its top challenger and clinch a Legion state tournament spot.

Instead, the 5-3 Ellis victory assured another Zone 7 championship game for Saturday afternoon.

Ellis made virtually all the key plays through six innings while building a 5-2 advantage.

However, Zone 7's No. 1 seed tried its best to handle Colby the championship during a wild seventh.

Macen Shull started the Sluggers' rally when an Ellis pitcher couldn't field his squib hit.

The catcher then dropped Ben Matchell's high foul pop fly just a step or two behind home plate.

One pitch later, Matchell was "plunked" which brought Colby's potential tying run to home plate.

Ellis promptly got two outs, including another foul pop where the catcher made an incredible tumbling catch.

However, another inside pitcher grazed Marc Bremenkamp to load the bases. The Sluggers closed within 5-3 when Ellis' first baseman booted another grounder.

Experienced catcher Jake Thompson stepped up just an inning after his run sliced Colby's deficit down to 5-2. One good hit could completely Ellis' advantage.

Thompson smashed a sharp line drive into center field that had two RBIs written all over it.

However, the ball was hit hard enough to stay up and reach Ellis' center fielder. He made the game-ending catch by barely moving a step.

Colby fell short even though Luke Cox delivered highlights with both the bat and glove.

After his single plated Colby's first run, the shortstop jumped high to catch an Ellis line drive and turn it into a double play — keeping that margin at 5-2.

Ellis reached the finals with a 16-2 win over Ulysses Friday.

Colby K-18 routs opening state foe

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Concordia F & A was probably praying for rain or at least a mighty sprinkler malfunction after one inning Saturday evening.

Neither arrived, just a deluge of Colby K-18 runners rounding bases and completely disdaining the state tournament trend of one-run ballgames.

There were plenty of ones, all right, as they all added up to a resounding 11-1 Colby victory.

"We've preached all year: pitching and defense and the hits will come," coach Brian Quagliano said during a post-game radio interview. "Our guys came out tonight and hit the ball really well."

Numerous Concordia fielding "malfunctions" certainly helped fuel the Colby first inning.

In fact, Colby's first run scored when Casey Quagliano struck out but reached second base on a passed ball and fielding error.

Austin Hart quickly singled home a second round and the rout was on. Brooks Curry, Colyn Gugelman and Brady Holzmeister all delivered sharp hits that led to Colby runs.

Holzmeister's two-RBI single made it 7-0. One hit batter later, Concordia was making an all-ways dreaded first-inning pitching change.

Nothing really changed as Gu-



RITA SHARP/Lucas-Sylvan News

Colby K-18's Casey Quagliano took a big cut as all of his teammates were also ready to cause havoc during their 10-run first inning against state tournament foe Concordia F & A Saturday night at Lucas. Colby was set to play a state semifinal Sunday evening, but rain postponed that game.

gelman, Shevin Martin and Holzmeister scored three more runs for the 10-0 advantage.

Ben Matchell, Hudson Stramel and Rex Branum were other Colby starters who rounded those bases. Courtesy runner Mark Faber also contributed a score.

It was more than enough offense for starting pitcher Casey Quagliano, who blanked Concor-

dia through the first four frames.

League champ Concordia finally scored in the fifth thanks to a rare Colby errant throw.

However, the 15-and-under boys answered when Matchell and Stramel teamed for a double steal.

A Concordia throw to catch Stramel sailed into center field, allowing Matchell's final stroll home.

The 10-run mercy rule was enforced to end a weekend featuring three other first-round games all decided by one run.

"We started the season with two

goals: go to state and reach the state championship game," coach Quagliano concluded. "We took a big step tonight."

Rains did arrive Sunday, which forced a postponement of Colby's semifinal game against Republic County.

Instead, those teams will meet Tuesday evening in Lucas at approximately 8:30 p.m. Defending state champion Victoria plays Osborne to start the semifinal round (6:30 p.m.).

Republic edged West Regional champ Goodland, 2-1, Saturday.

East stops Shrine Bowl losing streak at seven

from kansascity.com

TOPEKA — The streak is over. After seven straight losses in the Kansas Shrine Bowl, the East finally tasted victory at the state's annual all-star football game Saturday at Yager Stadium.

This year's batch of East players wildly celebrated the 22-19 win when it was over.

The West scored first and held a 19-14 lead with 6 minutes, 9 seconds remaining.

Then Austin Moses caught a 20-yard touchdown on a halfback pass from Conley Wilkins with 3:04 remaining to give the East a late lead.

The West drove back inside the East's 20, but an end-zone interception ended their win streak.

FREE Student Sports Physicals

Colby Medical Services
Tuesday, July 30 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

New Frontiers Health Services, Oakley
Thursday, August 1 • 5:30 - 7 p.m.

No Appointment Necessary
Signed parental consent due at time of physical

Any Questions Call:

Colby Medical Services • 785-462-3332 • 1005 S. Range Ste. 200
New Frontiers Health Services, Oakley • 785-672-3261 • 212 Maple Ave.

THOMAS COUNTY FAIR 2013
JULY 29TH - AUG 3RD

F&M BANK NIGHT
Tuesday, July 30th

-1st 100 people that come to our main bank location will receive a 1/2 priced wristband for that night only. (one per person)
(In addition to the wrist band, Dillons will be donating a bag of Twizzlers to each person)

-1st 300 people that come to the ticket booth that purchase 20 tickets will receive 5 free!

F&M Bank of Colby
Member FDIC
For more information please call 785-460-3321

Thomas County Fair Demo Derby
Saturday, August 3, 2013
Sponsored by Cornerstone Ag
Thomas County Fairgrounds, Colby, KS
Track is located 2 miles north of I-70 at exit 53, Colby

Figure 8 race for both classes

FULLSIZE PURSE
Entry Fee for car and driver - \$45 • Pit Passes - \$20

1 st - \$1,200	2 nd - \$800
3 rd - \$600	4 th - \$400
5 th - \$300	6 th - \$200

COMPACT PURSE
Entry Fee for car and driver -- \$45 • Pit Passes --\$20

1 st - \$600	2 nd - \$300
3 rd - \$200	4 th - \$150
5 th - \$125	6 th - \$100

FIGURE 8 PURSE Full size - \$250 • Compact - \$250

EVENT SCHEDULE
Pit Gate will open at 4pm CT • Demo will start at 8pm CT

General Event Information:
Ron Kogler Days: 785-460-3320 • Evenings: 785-443-2844
Tech or Rules: Kirk Friesen 785-443-4007