Royals remain on Cactus League roll

PEORIA, Ariz. (AP) — Cheeseburgers, fist bumps and smiles ruled inside the jovial Kansas City Royals clubhouse after Tuesday's 11-6 win over the Seattle Mariners.

It's almost as if the Royals don't want camp to end. They kept up their prolific offensive production, and in so doing set a club record for spring training wins with 23.

For what it's worth, Kansas City clinched finishing in first place in the Cactus League standings.

"The key to our success this year is going to be our pitching staff, because we can catch the ball," manager Ned Yost said. "If they're throwing strikes, we're going to be able to make plays and I think we're going to be able to score runs."

"It just gives you confidence going into the season knowing that everybody's ready, everybody's playing well," he said.

Kansas City entered the game leading the majors in team batting average, hits, doubles, runs scored and on-base percentage. The Royals recorded 18 hits against Se-

See ROYALS | Page B2

ACC runners hit high gear

Storms don't slow track team at Alabama

By RICHARD LUKEN
richard@iolaregister.com

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — The Allen Community College track and field team battled more than the elements Friday and Saturday.

The Red Devils were the only junior college athletes competing at the Alabama Relays, hosted by the University of Alabama. The rest of the teams were from NCAA Division I schools, including Alabama, Georgia, Iowa and Indiana universities.

"Most of them were running their B squads, however the mid-major Division I schools were there at full strength," Allen coach Vince DeGrado said. "This was a great meet for us."

As has become the norm, a number of Red Devil athletes shined in the spotlight.

Most prominently among them was Chris Donald, who finished second overall in the 400-meter hurdles. Donald's time of 52.81 seconds qualifies him for the NJCAA national meet.

Donald now ranks first in the nation in the 400 hurdles among all NJCAA runners.

Also qualifying for nationals was Josh Whittaker, who ran the 1500 meters in 4 minutes, 1.87 seconds, good for 31st overall. The world record for the 1500 is 3 minutes, 26 seconds set by Hicham LeEl Guerrouj of Morocco set in 1998.

The Allen men's 4x100-meter relay team of Kelvin Gant, Michael Burns, Jethro St. Hubert and Rodrick Simmons teamed to post a national-qualifying time of 41.96 seconds, placing them eighth. Gant, Burns and Simmons were joined by Antonio Duncan to finish 10th in the 4x200-meter relay with a time of 1:31.88.

"Antonio was slowed by a hamstring injury, but was still able to finish the race," DeGrado said.

In addition, the men's distance medley relay team of Josh Whittaker, Tucker Morgan, Dakota Parker and Donald set a school record of 10:21.32. The quartet shaved 17 seconds from a school mark that had stood since 1967.

See ACC | Page B2

Photo by Vince DeGrado

Allen Community College assistant track coach Tony Davis looks over an empty field Saturday at the Alabama Relays. The two-day event was cut short because of storms.

US forges tie with Mexico in World Cup qualifier

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The Americans were clinging to a scoreless tie, seconds away from earning a rare point in Mexico, when Angel Reyna's shot darted perilously close to the goal.

Brad Guzan lunged, smothering the ball with his body.

"It's always going to be a bit hectic and a bit crazy, especially late in the game," Guzan said. "You're never going to come to a place like Azteca and go out and have it nice and easy. So we knew at some point, it was going to come, the pressure was going to come, and we were able to deal with it."

Guzan swatted away shot after shot, young defenders Omar Gonzalez and Matt Besler showed the poise of veterans and the Americans hung on for a 0-0 draw Tuesday night, earning only their second point in a World Cup qualifier at Azteca Stadium.

The tie moved the U.S. (1-1-1) into third place in World Cup qualifying for the North and Central American and Caribbean region after three of 10 matches, one point behind Panama (1-0-2). The Americans and Costa Rica both have four points, but the Ticos are ahead on goal difference.

After playing at Jamaica on June 7, the U.S. will be at home for four of its last six qualifiers.

"We wanted to win, but we are pleased with the result," coach Jurgen Klinsmann said. "They gave us everything they have."

Klinsmann was criticized after the opening 1-0 loss at Honduras in February, with unidentified players and people close to the team questioning his tactics and leadership in a Sporting News report before last week's home win over Costa Rica.

Mexico coach Manuel De la Torre is sure to come under fire after a third straight draw, which dropped El Tri (0-0-3) to second-to-last place in the standings. The top three teams in the group, which also includes Honduras, advance to next year's World Cup in Brazil next year while the No. 4 nation meets New Zealand in a home-and-home playoff for another berth.

Mexico certainly had its chances with a whopping 17-1 advantage in shots and 15 corner kicks, three just in the last two minutes of stoppage time. But El Tri was plagued by poor finishing and dismal execution on set pieces.

Photos by Mile 90 Photography

A runner works his way through the falling snow during Saturday's Prairie Spirit 100.

Race organizer reflects on snowy Prairie Spirit 100

While the Saturday night snowstorm cut short the inaugural Prairie Spirit Trail 100- and 50-mile races, it reinforced what race organizer Eric Steele knew all along: that ultramarathoners are some of the toughest athletes around.

"In nearly 20 years of directing and competing in ultra races, I have never witnessed such relentless intestinal fortitude and raw determination from a group of runners than I did this past weekend," Steele said in an email.

The storm — which blanketed much of eastern Kansas with more than 8 inches of snow — forced organizers to call off the competition early Sunday, with many runners still on the trail.

"In spite of all the chaos and challenges Mother Nature threw our way, I am superelated to have been a part of it all," Steele said. "I was beyond impressed by how nearly

See 100 | Page B2

Spring chill no deterrent for bass

By BRENT FRAZEE
The Kansas City Star

OSAGE BEACH, Mo. — The air temperature had dropped to about 30 degrees, and a strong north wind kicked up whitecaps on Lake of the Ozarks.

So why was Marcus Sykora standing at the bow of his bass boat, saying this was his favorite time of the year to go after big bass?

"Some fishermen think you have to wait until the weather warms up before you can catch bass," said Sykora, who was wearing several layers of clothing and had a hood pulled tight around his face. "But by the time they get out, they've already missed the best time to catch big fish.

"These big bass are the first ones to move up. They'll leave their winter spots and go to the chunk-rock banks and secondary points next to deep water to sun and start feeding. That's when I want to be out here."

Moments later, Sykora provided a demonstration. He launched a long cast with a suspending jerkbait, then cranked it down, jerked it several times, then let it sit for a 12 count. As the bait was sitting motionless in the water, a bass swam up and crushed it.

Sykora set the hook, then watched as the bass wallowed to the surface.

"It's a big one," he said as he fought the fish.

In a matter of seconds, he had the pot-bellied bass in the boat and was celebrating another cold-water catch.

Sykora placed the bass on a scale and found that it weighed 5 pounds, 6 ounces. After posing for a few pictures, he slid it back into the water and he was casting for more.

See BASS | Page B2

Spoonbill season opens

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks reminds fishermen that spoonbill snagging is allowed along a small portion of the Neosho River west of Iola through May 15.

Spoonbill snagging is allowed along city property near the U.S. 54 bridge spanning the Neosho.

Spoonbill, or paddlefish, can be pulled from the water south of the dam and north of the city limits.

Signs are posted setting the boundaries for the spoonbill fishermen.

Red Devils drop doubleheader

COFFEYVILLE — A 10-day layoff ended with two more losses for Allen Community College's baseball team.

The Red Devils dropped a pair of contests to host Coffeyville Community College Tuesday, 8-1 and 7-0.

The defeats drop Allen's record to 3-18 overall. The Red Devils are mired in a 15-game losing streak.

Tuesday's games were the first for the Red Devils since March 16. Four other days were canceled or postponed.

A weekend series against Independence has been moved to Independence because of snow on the Allen baseball diamond.

Allen returns to action next Tuesday with another doubleheader at Coffeyville.

★ Royals

Continued from B1

attle, including seven doubles.

All nine players in the starting lineup got at least one hit, with Brett Hayes getting four hits and driving in two runs.

Hayes boosted his case for the Royals' backup catcher spot on the major league roster. He's competing with George Kottaras for the job.

"Really swung the bat well and handled the pitchers nicely," Yost said of Hayes, who played 39 games for the Marlins in 2012 and hit .202.

Miguel Tejada helped his cause for a utility infielder spot on the roster with his two doubles. He scored two runs, drove in two and started a double play.

Sports Calendar

Iola

High School Baseball/Softball

Friday, JV vs. BURLINGTON, 4:30 p.m.

Monday, JV vs. OSAWATOMIE, 4:30 p.m.

High School Track

Thursday, at Labette Co., 2 p.m.

High School Tennis

Thursday, at Coffeyville, 3 p.m.

Saturday, at Neodesha Invitational, 9 a.m.

High School Track

Thursday, at Labette Co., 2 p.m.

High School Golf

Thursday, at Independence, 1 p.m.

Middle School Golf

Thursday, at Pittsburg, 3 p.m.

Humboldt

High School Baseball/Softball

Thursday, at Erie

High School Track

Thursday, at Central Heights

Yates Center

High School Baseball/Softball

Thursday, at Eureka

Monday, at Neodesha

High School Track

Thursday, at Lyndon

Allen

Baseball

Friday, at Independence, 3 p.m.

Saturday, at Independence, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, at Coffeyville, 3 p.m.

Softball

Thursday, at Coffeyville, 2 p.m.

Friday, at Hutchinson, 3 p.m.

Saturday, at Hesston, 11 a.m.

Kansas

Basketball

NCAA Tournament at Arlington, Texas

Friday, vs. Michigan, 6:37 p.m.

TV: TBS (Ch 29)

★ 100

Continued from B1

all individuals handled themselves under conditions like we experienced."

And while the race didn't go off as planned, "there will be a next time. Count on it," Steele said.

Of the 54 100-mile racers who ran the trail from Ottawa to Iola and back, five completed the race before it was called off.

Brandon Purdeu, 25, of Lawton, Okla., was by far the quickest, besting his nearest pursuer by nearly seven hours.

Purdeu navigated the 100-mile trek in 16 hours, 9 minutes and 10 seconds.

The other finishers were Randy Ellis, 61, Sapulpa, Okla., 23:07:40; John Nobles, 28, Cleveland, Okla., 23:24:36; Rene Villalobos, 54, Fort Worth, Texas, 23:44:02; and Jason Ryan, 38, Tacoma, Wash., 24:57:33.

In addition, Steele said a portion of the proceeds from the weekend race will go to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society ($450) and the Prairie Spirit Friends of the Trail ($250).

"Massive congratulations to everyone who was gutsy enough to toe the starting line, in either race," Steele said. "I am very grateful to have been a part of it. What I witnessed from runners and staff was nothing short of miraculous, and pushed my belief in the overall drive and capacity of the human spirit to an entirely new level."

Plans already are in the works for next year, Steele said.

Registration for the March 29, 2014, race should begin in the few weeks.

Thank You
To John Taylor & Ron Schomaker for all you have done to help Seth Sanford with his wrestling!

★ Bass

Continued from B1

And there were more to be caught. Fishing solely with the Mega-Bass jerkbait, he caught and released eight other keepers Wednesday on the first day of spring, including several others in the 4-pound range.

An outstanding day? Well ... let's just say he's done it before. Many times.

The biggest bass, he ever caught _ a monster that weighed 9 pounds, 4 ounces _ came on a suspending jerkbait fished at this time of the year in 1996 at Lake of the Ozarks. And he routinely does well in tournaments in March at the big lake. Consider an FLW EverStart tournament on March 14-16. In three days, he weighed in 14 bass totaling 51 pounds, 9 ounces, good for third in the prestigious event.

So what's his secret? He leaves little to chance. He doesn't simply drop his trolling motor and start fishing down a likely looking rock bank. Instead, he says, "I fish a specific spot on a spot. I fish targets."

Sykora put those targets there. He works tirelessly to sink brush and trees along the banks where he thinks the bass will move up first.

He has those locations marked on his GPS, and uses the satellite technology to guide him to the brush and trees he has put out.

Lure selection is a given. In the cold water of early spring, suspending stickbaits are the only way to go, he said. He makes sure the baits he is using will suspend perfectly in the water when he pauses his retrieve. If they rise slowly, he will wrap wire on the hooks until they work the way he wants them to.

"These suspending jerkbaits are ideal imitators of what is going on right now," said Sykora, who lives in Osage Beach and has an insurance business there. "You can watch struggling shad in the water. They take one kick, then they just there for a while.

"You can do the same thing with these baits. In this cold water, bass aren't going to chase anything. But if something suspends right in front of them, they'll take it."

Sykora will retrieve the bait with several jerks, then he will pause the lure for up to 12 seconds. The hits always come when the bait is sitting still.

"Sometimes they'll hit like a freight train," he said. "Other times, you'll just feel weight on the end of your line."

That brings us back to the brush and trees that Sykora puts out. He casts beyond those targets and pulls his bait down to the point where he can suspend it just over the top of that cover. That's often when he will get a strike.

"A lot of times, these bass will be inactive and just sit down there in a brush pile," Sykora said. "But if an easy meal comes past, they'll come up and take it."

Other tricks of the trade? Sykora will use 8-pound test line to get better action from the lure than if he would use heavier line. And he is careful not to fish too quickly in the cold water. With the fish sluggish, he wants his baits to imitate how the baitfish are reacting to the cold water.

Sykora will fish the suspending stickbaits from December through the middle of April. Once the bass show signs that they are willing to chase baits, he will often go to large spinnerbait. But until that happens, he knows there will be plenty of opportunities to catch a huge bass.

"Lake of the Ozarks is in tremendous shape right now," Sykora said. "It has a great population of bass, and lots of big ones, too.

"It's just a fun place to fish right now."

Even when the weather is downright nasty.

Brent Frazee/Kansas City Star/MCT

Veteran tournament fisherman Marcus Sykora uses a suspending jerkbait to get sluggish bass to hit in Osage Beach, Mo.

★ ACC

Continued from B1

"We competed very well in some areas," DeGrado said. "When you go to a meet of this caliber, and travel as long as we did, you sometimes wonder how they'll react. For the most part, they stepped up nicely. Friday's weather wasn't ideal for short sprint races, but for the middle- to long-distances races, it was perfect. Our athletes weren't intimidated at all by the competition. This was a great meet for us."

The meet was canceled midway through Saturday's events because of rain and lightning, preventing two Allen runners, Tegan Michael (800-meter run) and Terika Henry (400-meter dash), from competing in their signature events, as well as the Red Devil 4x400-meter relay team.

"That was unfortunate, because those two were racing as invites," DeGrado said. "They were guaranteed to be fast races."

The Red Devils resume action April 6 at the Emporia State Relays.

Allen's full results follow:

100-Meter Dash

15. Rodrick Simmons, 11.28 seconds

23. Jethro St. Hubert, 11.46

24. Michael Burns, 11.47

400-Meter Dash

19. Rickcardo Bailey, 50.97 seconds

20. Kyle Smith, 51.52

1500-Meter Run

31. Josh Whittaker, 4:01.87 (Q)

36. Tucker Morgan, 4:04.58

40. Dakota Parker, 4:11.41

5000-Meter Run

27. Ryan Pulsifer, 15:39.88

29. Kyle Schauvliege, 15:49.54

30. Patrick Rachford, 15:55.92

400-Meter Hurdles

2. Chris Donald, 52.81 seconds (Q)

110-Meter Hurdles

14. Bruce Barclay, 14.89 seconds

4x100-Meter Relay

8. Allen (Gant, Burns, St. Hubert, Simmons), 41.96 seconds (Q)

Distance Medley Relay

8. Allen (Whittaker, Morgan, Parker, Donald), 10:21.32 (SR)

(Q) — National qualifying mark

(SR) — School Record

USMTS KING of AMERICA MODIFIED NATIONALS III
MARCH 21-23 2013 HUMBOLDT SPEEDWAY
THE SUMMER HUMBOLDT SPEEDWAY The Track That Action Built
$10,000 To Win!
$1,000 To Start!
Wednesday-Saturday, March 27-30
USMTS Modifieds Plus Iron Man Challenge featuring USRA B-Mods
Easter Egg Hunt Saturday @ 11 a.m.
Three-Day Reserved Ticket $50
Thursday & Friday
Adults - $20; Teens (13-16) - $10; Youth (6-12) - $5; 5 & Under - FREE; Pit Passes - $35
Saturday
Adults - $25; Teens (13-16) - $10; Youth (6-12) - $5; 5 & Under - FREE; Pit Passes - $40
Wed. Practice from 6-9 p.m.; Free Admission in Grandstands
Thur. & Fri. Gates Open at 5 p.m.; Racing at 7 p.m.
Sat. Gates Open at 4 p.m.; Racing at 6 p.m.
Track 473-3694 • www.humboldtspeedway.com

JOCK'S NITCH
SPORTS LIQUIDATION SALE
IOLA NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY
3 BIG DAYS ONLY
THURSDAY•FRIDAY•SATURDAY
March 28, 29: 10am-8pm
March 30: 10am-5pm
SAVE 25% to 75%
$250,000 OF INVENTORY
UNDER ARMOUR asics new balance NFL
COLLEGE & NFL SPORTSWEAR
BASEBALL-SOFTBALL CLEATS & PANTS & EQUIPMENT
NIKE SAVE UP TO $50 ON SHOES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY! adidas
2,500 PAIRS OF NAME BRAND ATHLETIC SHOES FROM OUR 10 AREA SPORTING GOODS STORES TO LIQUIDATE!
SAVE SPECIAL SALE TO THE PUBLIC
FAMOUS BRAND SHOES & APPAREL
OUR LOSS YOUR GAIN
IOLA NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY
1021 N. STATE IOLA, KS
JOCK'S NITCH SPORTING GOODS
We accept all Credit Cards, Debit Cards and Cash.
Present this coupon to receive:
$5 OFF A PURCHASE OVER $50 OR $10 OFF A PURCHASE OVER $100
Coupon redeemable during the sale dates at the Iola National Guard Armory

STILL COOLING YOUR HOME WITH AN OLD AIR CONDITIONER?
THEN YOU'RE JUST BLOWING MONEY.
Dales Sheet Metal Incorporated can help you live smarter with a new Lennox® air conditioner.
RECEIVE UP TO A
$1,200 Rebate*
When you buy a qualifying Lennox® Home Comfort System.
AND Up to $500 in Federal Tax Credits**
Dave Lennox PREMIER DEALER LENNOX
Dale's Sheet Metal, Inc.
620-365-3534
211 N. Jefferson • Iola, KS
Offer expires June 14, 2013
LENNOX
*Rebate offer is valid only with the purchase of qualifying Lennox® products. System rebate offers range from $300 - $1,200. **See dealer for details and visit www.energystar.gov for more information on the credit guidelines.
© 2013 Lennox Industries, Inc.