

SPORTS

Annual THS Elementary Volleyball Skills Camp a success

By GAY LEE MASSAROTTI
The Chronicle-News

The annual THS Elementary Volleyball Skills Camp was a huge success according to Coach Geneva Villegas. Former and present players assist with running the three-day camp during June. The \$25 fee per attendee covers the cost of the camp and a t-shirt. The remaining profit helps to send the THS volleyball girls to summer team camps, and provide meals and hotels when funding is available.

During the 2 and half hour days of camp young players are taught the fundamentals of the game. The 4th-6th grade girls are taught passing, setting, hitting, digging, serving and blocking. The younger girls are taught the same with the exception of blocking. To begin the camp the young ath-

letes start with beach balls that are used to help develop success in younger players. On the second day they move on to using regular volleyballs for group as well as individual drills. Teaching the importance of communication as well as court position and fundamentals are key focuses during the camp.

"They are all encouraged to develop a good work ethic for playing this game and being in a gym that takes this game very seriously. We had fun!"

Coach Villegas says that her favorite part of hosting the camp is the young girls who attend. "The age group (K-6th grade) is a blessing! These young girls come in so excited just to learn the game. By the end of the week you can truly see the improvement in each girl. They are excited and

willing to do just about anything when it comes to playing this game. These girls reaffirm my passion and love for this game."

Villegas started the camp in 1994 when she first arrived to the Trinidad area because, "I wanted people to know who I was and what my intentions were when it came to coaching." She feels that it is a way to find young talent at an early age, which is "an advantage to our program because of the difficult league we participate in. Developing the young talent helps in the long run by the time they get to high school." Coach Villegas and her players/camp staff are excited about this years success and are looking forward to next year's season and camp! Go Lady Miners!



Holly Stevens



Kelsey Apodaca

Trojans named Academic All-American

By MIKE SALBATO
Special to the Chronicle

Trinidad State Junior College softball standouts Kelsey Apodaca and Holly Stevens have been named Academic All-American's by the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

The honor of NJCAA Academic All-American is bestowed upon student-athletes who maintain a grade point average of 3.60 to 3.79 while earning a minimum of 45 credit hours. Students who earn a

3.8 or higher are named Distinguished All-American.

Pitcher Kelsey Apodaca received the Distinguished Award via her 3.95 GPA. Besides excelling in the classroom she had a great sophomore season finishing the season with seven wins. She was also named to the Region IX All-Tournament Team.

First baseman Holly Stevens finished with a 3.75 GPA. On the field she finished with a .295 batting average with three homeruns and 25 RBI's.



AP Photo/David Banks

Fans cross a street outside Wrigley Field before a baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and the Chicago Cubs on Monday, July 6, 2009, in Chicago. A person close to Cubs sale negotiations says Tribune Co. has reached a written agreement to sell the team, Wrigley Field and other assets to the Ricketts family for about \$900 million.

Tribune, Ricketts reach Cubs sale deal

DON BABWIN
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO (AP) - The Tribune Co. has reached a written agreement to sell the Chicago Cubs, Wrigley Field and other assets to the family of TD Ameritrade founder Joe Ricketts for about \$900 million, a person close to the negotiations said Monday.

The agreement was reached over the weekend and a document outlining the deal — called a term sheet — was sent to Major League Baseball for review, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement had not been announced.

The term sheet is not a final agreement, according to the person, who added that it contains details on how the Ricketts family will finance the deal. The deal also would give the Ricketts family a 25 percent interest in a regional cable television sports network.

Tribune Co. would not confirm an agreement had been reached.

"We continue an active dialogue with

the Ricketts family with an eye toward reaching a definitive agreement," spokesman Gary Weitman said in an e-mail. "We don't intend to comment on the specifics of any potential transaction."

The team has been on the market since 2007, when real estate mogul Sam Zell announced his \$8.2 billion purchase of Tribune Co. The financially troubled media giant filed for bankruptcy last December but the Cubs were not included in the filing.

Tribune Co. announced in January that the Ricketts family, which founded the Omaha, Neb.-based brokerage that became TD Ameritrade, had been selected over two other bidders for the team.

Cubs fans have greeted the news enthusiastically, in part because the Ricketts family in general, and the family point man in the bid in particular, are viewed as loyal Cubs fans.

Tom Ricketts has figured prominently in the selection process, from his days living across the street from Wrigley Field to the day he met his wife in the bleachers of the

storied park. Ricketts fueled the perception that he is among the loyal with his initial public statement about the plan to purchase the team.

"We share the goal of Cubs fans everywhere to win a World Series and build the consistent championship tradition that the fans deserve," Ricketts said at the time.

But negotiations lasted longer than expected, complicated by factors such as Tribune Co.'s financial straits as well as the Ricketts' efforts to secure financing during the recession.

On Monday, though, Cubs manager Lou Piniella expressed optimism about the deal.

"I'm glad to see that things are progressing," he said. "Yeah it's a positive thing for this organization. It's been a while. It was good news. I heard it when I came to the ball park and I was very pleased."

Piniella said he has not met Tom Ricketts, but "I heard he's a fine gentleman and will be a really nice owner."

Associated Press Sports Writer Rick Gano contributed to this report.

Ghosts pitcher is happy for second chance

ERIC SCHMOLDT
Casper Star-Tribune

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) — Kyle Hancock was looking forward to starting on the Fourth of July.

When wet weather relegated him to another day of charting pitches in street clothes, he simply shrugged it off.

Four years ago, Hancock spent less than a week with the Casper Rockies before leaving, forfeiting a six-figure signing bonus and nearly throwing away his chance at his lifelong dream.

Now, just over a month away from turning 22 years old, he hopes he's back on track to achieve that goal, starting with a stint right back where everything fell apart.

"I've got a uniform on and all I wanted was another opportunity

and they've given me that," Hancock said before Saturday's scheduled game between Casper and Ogden. "It's going good. Most of all, I'm enjoying it. I'm having fun."

Hancock's first stop with the Colorado Rockies' rookie-level team was a far less enjoyable experience.

In fact, he never even made it to Casper.

The Rockies drafted him in the third round of the 2005 draft and signed him in late July. Hancock joined the then-Casper Rockies during a road trip to Idaho Falls, Idaho, and Orem, Utah, and was so miserable he turned right back around and went home.

"Looking back on it, it wasn't that bad," Hancock said. "Nothing was ultimately that bad

to make me want to leave. Mentally, I just wasn't ready to play pro baseball."

So he forfeited his signing bonus of nearly \$500,000 and returned to Texas without any semblance of a plan for his future.

Eventually, he petitioned the NCAA to reinstate his amateur status — Hancock pointed out that he never earned a professional paycheck or pitched a professional inning — but his bid to play at Arkansas was denied.

"I played in a couple leagues, just area leagues with former pros and former college guys," said Hancock, who is about a year away from a degree after attending North Texas. "The rigorous day-to-day throwing wasn't there, but I was still throwing and staying in shape."

Had Colorado released the right-handed hurler, he could have played at the junior college level.

Instead, the Rockies put him on the restricted list, keeping his rights through 2012.

And when Hancock petitioned the commissioner's office this past winter to return to the professional ranks, the Rockies then reinstated him.

"I think they were pretty excited and wanted to get me back on the field," Hancock said. "And (they probably) wanted to see if I could still play the game. And that was my biggest thing: I still wanted to get people out and compete at this level."

After a couple of troublesome innings in his first few starts, he's still working to prove that.

Hancock was the Ghosts' opening day starter and gave up eight runs in less than five innings of work. He gave up six

first-inning runs in his second start before settling in for four solid innings.

"He's coming back from a lay-off and he's progressing fine," Casper pitching coach Craig Bjornson said. "He had a rough deal in Ogden, six runs in the first inning off two cheap home runs that were wind-blown, but then he shuts him down after that."

"(The numbers) don't make him look too good, but he's coming along well."

And while nobody is expecting a rapid ascent, Colorado and its fans are certainly keeping an eye on their former third-round-

er. "My fastball is still there — I was up to 94 the other night," Hancock said. "The main thing I think I've improved on is being smart and learning how to pitch."

"Everybody's really happy

with what we're seeing out of him right now, this early in his comeback," Bjornson said. "I don't see any reasons why everything doesn't come together for him throughout this season and the future."

Hancock admits that he has no idea what the future holds for him in the Rockies organization.

But he's working as hard as he can and looking in that direction instead of dwelling on the past.

"It's definitely hard to look at it now and see what it could have been," Hancock said. "But ultimately I'm still content with what I did. I wasn't ready for it and I would have been here for all the wrong reasons."

"The bottom line is, I have a uniform on. I still get to come play baseball every day."

Information from: Casper Star-Tribune - Casper; http://www.trib.com