

SPORTS



Who is...
Evan Wimmer, L-BF boys hoops team senior forward, is featured

B2

QUICK HITS

Friday's boys hoops results posted online

Friday's season-opening boys basketball games involving Littlefork-Big Falls hosting Northome and International Falls playing at Deer River took place after the production deadline for today's edition.

Results from those games are posted on the ifallsjournal.com website and will also be published in next Wednesday's paper.

Falls girls hockey edges Park Rapids

A third-period goal by Tessa Walls turned out to be the game-winner Tuesday night when the International Falls girls hockey team won its first road game of the season over Park Rapids Area, 3-2.

Park Rapids scored first 12 minutes into the first period on a goal by Lexi Hinkley Smith.

The Broncos tied the game 21 seconds into the second period when Lexi Edwards scored on an assist by Ashley Jonson.

Park Rapids went back in front at 4:53 of the second period on a goal by Jessie O'Hern.

The Falls made it a 2-2 tie game with just over 10 minutes left in the second period when Amber Tilander scored assisted by Edwards and Walls.

Walls put in the deciding goal on an assist by Edwards at 5:28 of the third period.

Drew Fisher tallies 2 assists in 50 loss

Tulsa Oilers forward Drew Fisher of International Falls was back in the lineup Wednesday when he recorded two assists in the East Coast Hockey League team's 4-3 shootout road loss to the Quad Cities Mallards.

Fisher, who didn't appear in Tulsa's two previous games after sustaining a lower-body injury Nov. 14 when the Oilers won 6-4 at home over Rapid City, was unsuccessful in his shootout attempt against Quad Cities, which made two of five shootout shots compared to only one for Tulsa.

Koerbitz, Rasmussen named All-Section

Two International Falls football players – seniors Kameron Koerbitz, an offense/defensive tackle, and Riley Rasmussen, an offense/defensive end – are among the 22 players named to this year's All-Section 7AAA team.

Broncos junior offensive/defensive lineman Max Vergeldt received All-Sea Range Conference honors, while Rasmussen and sophomore running back/linebacker Nick Hedtke received honorable mention in the conference.

GIRLS HOCKEY

Broncos fall 2-1 to Lumberjacks

FHS now 2-2

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

After giving up two goals in the first 5 minutes Thursday night, the International Falls girls hockey team wasn't scored on again, but could only muster one goal of its own and lost at home to Bemidji, 2-1.

"I thought after the first period we played our best hockey we played all year," said Broncos head coach Gerald Bolstad. "We played really good. We moved our feet. We took it to them. Their goalie just stood on her head, and we couldn't score."

The Lumberjacks got on the scoreboard on a goal from Megan Dondelinger assisted by Jacie Lalli and Sylvia Grimm. Bemidji pulled in front 2-0 when Paige De La Hunt scored assisted by Ra-

chael Holm and Madison Schultz.

Bemidji had registered four shots on goal to none for the Broncos upon taking the two-goal lead. The Falls then began to control the game on offense and had a 22-12 advantage in shots on goal after the scoreless second period.

"The kids knew they just had to get moving," Bolstad said. "They were a little flatfooted, I thought, the first 5-6 minutes. We slowly started moving our feet that period. Then after the first period, we just kept coming at them. We just couldn't finish."

The Broncos finally got on the scoreboard with just over 11 minutes left in the game on a goal from Ashley Jonson assisted by Lexi Erickson and Lexi Edwards.

Still trailing by a goal with 1:35 left to play, the Falls called timeout and pulled Taylor Fish out of the net for an extra skater on the ice. However,



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

From right, the Broncos' Jenna Anderson (17) and Lexi Erickson (10) battle in front of the net with Bemidji's Leighton Rockensock (30) and Mackenzie Hietala (15) as the puck heads toward the post in Thursday night's game at Bronco Arena.

the Broncos then found themselves with only five skaters with 1:02 left when Amber Tilander received a high-sticking penalty.

Bemidji lost a skater to a tripping penalty with 6.7 seconds left to play,

but the Falls wasn't able to put the puck in the net again before time expired.

Leighton Rockensock recorded the victory in goal for the Lumberjacks, while Fish picked up the loss for the Broncos.

The Falls' season record now stands at 2-2 going into this afternoon's home game against Detroit Lakes.

Bemidji 2, Int'l Falls 1
Bemidji 2 0 0 - 2
Int'l Falls 0 0 1 - 1

BOYS HOCKEY PREVIEW

Broncos to seek Iron Range, Section 7A titles



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

At right, International Falls boys hockey head coach Ross Johnson points out strategy on the ice during Wednesday's practice at Bronco Arena.

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

After finishing 8-18-1 last season, the International Falls boys hockey team has its sights set on winning the Iron Range Conference and Section 7A titles in 2014-15.

The Broncos, who ended the 2013-14 campaign with a loss in the Section 7A playoffs to the eventual State Class A runner-up, Hermantown, were outscored 130-50 last season by their opponents.

Ross Johnson, who returns for his second season as Falls' head coach, lists goalie Wyatt Ulrich among the team's key player losses from 2013-14. Over 27 games, Ulrich had a save percentage of .878 and goals-against average of 4.74.

The Broncos' other graduation losses include forwards Luke Spilde and Brady Walls along with Jakob Ettestad, who saw playing time as a defenseman. Spilde led the Falls in scoring last season with 13 goals and 12 assists for 25 points. Walls added eight goals and three assists.

Johnson's list of top returning players includes senior forwards Jackson Vollom and Clay Bergstrom, senior defenseman Riley Rasmussen, junior forwards Jakob Eide and Jordan Tilander and junior defensemen Wyatt Boyum and Nathan Hauke.

Tilander is the top returning scorer with nine goals and eight assists in 2013-14. Vollom had eight

goals and eight assists last season.

The strengths of the 2014-15 team, Johnson said, include returning four of five defensemen from last season.

Following the departure of Ulrich, the Broncos' 20-player varsity roster has three goalies. They include juniors Lane Skallman and Austin Kalar and sophomore Kyle Sjoblom.

In the Falls' pursuit of conference and section titles, Johnson noted the teams to watch out for this season include Hermantown, Duluth Marshall, Grand Rapids and Hibbing/Chisholm.

The Broncos open the season next Friday when they host Little Falls.

VIKINGS-PACKERS PREVIEW

Green Bay bringing offensive arsenal to Minnesota

BY KEVIN CHROUST
AP STATS Writer

An arsenal of offensive weapons has the Green Bay Packers putting up the most points in the NFL, and lately it's resulted in plenty of garbage-time rest for Aaron Rodgers.

The Minnesota Vikings might feel as though their noses are being rubbed in it when watching tape of the former MVP after learning theirs must sit out the rest of the season.

The NFC North rivals meet Sunday, and the Vikings should at least be grateful it won't be played in Green Bay, even if they'll remain without suspended running back Adrian Peterson.

After a 53-20 home win over Philadelphia in Week 11, the Packers (7-3) have reached the 50-point mark in back-to-back contests for the first time in franchise history on their way to an NFL-best 33.0 points per game. Six teams in league history have scored 50 in consecutive games, including one in each of the last three seasons, though none

of the previous five have done it in three straight.

The Packers have made it look almost effortless at times, but Rodgers says it's quite the opposite.

"This is not easy. There's a lot of preparation that goes into it," he said. "It takes 11 guys to win, to do the job to make something like that happen."

Just ask the Vikings (4-6). They've fallen one point short of Green Bay's two-game mark of 108 in their last 6 1/2 games.

They learned Tuesday that Peterson has been suspended for at least the remainder of 2014 after pleading no contest on Nov. 4 to misdemeanor reckless assault for injuries to his 4-year-old son.

Whether the presence of Peterson would have allowed Minnesota's offense to keep pace with Rodgers seems unlikely.

The Green Bay quarterback has thrown nine touchdowns without an interception in the last two games and totaled 656 yards, despite ceding plenty of late-game responsibility to backup Matt Flynn. His 120.1 rating leads the NFL



FILE PHOTO

From left, Vikings cornerback Xavier Rhodes (29) knocks the ball away from Packers wide receiver Jordy Nelson (87) in the Oct. 2 game at Lambeau Field. Green Bay won that matchup over Minnesota, 42-10.

and his 28 TDs are tied for second even though Flynn has played in four straight games and five of six. Rodgers' 1.0 interception percentage is tops among qualifying quarterbacks.

"Obviously Aaron is having a great season and has done so many things, but I think you can't lose sight of the fact that this is a team sport," coach Mike McCarthy said. "I just think it's a group that's a year better and has hit its stride a little bit."

Jordy Nelson and Randall Cobb have been a big part of it, totaling 15 touchdown catches during Green Bay's current 6-1 stretch, but running back Eddie Lacy has also become a preferred target for Rodgers. Lacy has 14 catches for 236 yards and two TDs in three games after totaling 13 receptions for 86 yards in the season's first seven.

The only game of the past seven that Nelson or Cobb hasn't reached the 100-yard

mark was against the Vikings, though the Packers won 42-10 on Oct. 2 as Lacy ran for 105 yards and two scores while Rodgers threw three TD passes.

Rodgers has been outstanding in his last four trips to Minnesota with 13 TDs and no INTs, completing 75.4 percent of his passes for an average of 321.5 yards.

The Packers have been pedestrian on the road this year, going 2-3 with a 22.2 scoring average compared to 5-0 at home and 43.8 points per game. However, they're 8-1-1 against Minnesota, including a playoff win, since the start of 2010.

Since last month's loss in Green Bay, the Vikings have limited opponents to 18.8 points per game, but it's resulted in a 2-3 record. In last Sunday's 21-13 defeat at Chicago, the Vikings allowed 468 yards of offense and a 10-of-17 third-down conversion mark.

Coach Mike Zimmer heads into this week less concerned with the Peterson situation than he is with solving defensive issues that could be magnified against the explosive Packers.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

- Today's games**
Women's/men's basketball
RRCC at Vermilion Tourney, TBA
Girls hockey
Detroit Lakes at I. Falls, 3 p.m.
Women's hockey
RRCC at NDSU, 7 p.m.
- Sunday's games**
Women's hockey
RRCC at NDSU, 9 a.m.
- Monday's games**
Boys basketball
L-BF at Northland, 7:15 p.m.
- Tuesday's games**
Boys basketball
Cloquet at I. Falls, 7:15 p.m.