

SPORTS

Renovated Vikings defense ready to play for real

EDEN PRAIRIE (AP) — The Minnesota Vikings will have seven new starters in their base defense this season. The scheme itself is a lot different, too, using more man-to-man coverage, blitzing and disguises than in the past. After giving up the most points in the NFL last year, the Vikings have been busy undertaking a renovation project that began when Mike Zimmer was hired as head coach. Players showed some progress during training camp, winning all four exhibition games, and now it's time to gauge improvement for real. "Keep doing the things that we've done in the pre-season, we can go out and

beat anybody," Zimmer said. "But we have to go out and do them. We can't talk about it." Three positions were still open as August ended. One, strong safety, has remained that way after the relatively surprising release of veterans Chris Crocker and Kurt Coleman. Robert Blanton has been listed first on the depth chart, with Andrew Sendejo behind him, but Zimmer declined to declare a winner. "We'll see how it goes in



Mike Zimmer

practice this week," Zimmer said. Cutting Crocker and Coleman, like so many roster moves in the NFL, came down to special teams. Blanton and Sendejo are two of the team's best players on those units. "They had a tough decision upstairs, and I just tried to come in and do my job," Blanton said. As for the middle linebacker, with Jasper Brinkley ahead of Audie Cole, Zimmer said he's decided, without revealing the starter following practice on Monday. Same for nickel cornerback, between Josh Robinson and Marcus Sherels. Those announcements will come on Sunday

before kickoff at St. Louis, Zimmer said. The 53-man roster decisions were relatively easier on offense, with a few backup spots left up for grabs after the final exhibition game. The NFL's expected suspension of wide receiver Jerome Simpson created an opportunity for both Adam Thielen and Rodney Smith, undrafted rookies who spent last year on the practice squad. For Thielen, the native of Detroit Lakes and product of Minnesota State University, this was a happy weekend. Most of the celebrating was by his friends and family, though. He said between 10 and 15 of his buddies drafted him in their fantasy football

league. "I was like, 'That's a bad pick for them,'" Thielen said. No player's place is ever guaranteed, but even the NFL minimum salary of \$420,000 will be a nice living for now. "You never know, no matter who you are. Around the league there were a lot of veterans who I would think people didn't think were going to get cut," Thielen said. "So you never know, and it's a good feeling to be here." His work on the kickoff coverage and punt return units helped solidify his spot. "If you're not a starter in the NFL you have to have that special teams

background," Thielen said. "There's just not enough roster spots to waste on someone who's not going to play on special teams, so that was a big emphasis for me." Another familiar face for Minnesota fans on the final roster was tight end MarQueis Gray, the former quarterback and wide receiver for the Gophers. He spent last season with Cleveland, making an impression on offensive coordinator Norv Turner. "He's trusting me a lot to be here, obviously, because he wants me to be here," Gray said. "So I've just got to make sure I do my part and uphold all the great things he's said about me."

FOOTBALL

► continued from B1

Falls finished with 34 passing yards and 124 total yards. Anderson said he took responsibility for how the Broncos played on offense. "Did I run a good enough, tight enough offensive game plan? Apparently not," he said. "I didn't make the adjustments that I needed to make. The kids worked their tails off (Friday night)." A turnover set up the the final touchdown of the first half for Eveleth-Gilbert, which started its drive on Falls' 16-yard line. The Golden Bears faced a fourth-and-four play on the 10-yard line, where Tikkanen found Roberts for a scoring strike with 3:56 left in the second quarter. Roberts then threw to Tikkanen for the two-point conversion to extend the lead to 22-7. The rain went away for the second half. After a scoreless third period, a botched snap on a punt set up the final Eveleth-Gilbert touchdown. The Broncos' Ben Humbert set up to punt in the end zone, where he picked up the ball off the ground and advanced it 14 yards past the line of scrimmage, ending up about a yard short of making a first down and providing the Golden Bears with excellent field position on Falls' 19-yard yard. Eveleth-Gilbert capped off the scoring drive with a one-yard touchdown run by Roberts with 3:20 left to play

to extend the lead to 28-7. The extra point failed. The Falls will seek its first win of the season next Friday when the Broncos open Sea Range Conference action at home against Cloquet, which won its non-conference season opener over Esko, 30-8. "I know our guys aren't afraid to hit," Anderson said. "In the past, I've worried about how they've come out against people that they see that are larger than them, that they perceive to be stronger, but definitely this team, they're not afraid to stick their nose in there and hit with anybody. "Eveleth has some pretty big guys along their line there, and in their backfield as well, as we stuck it to them for the most part."

E-G 28, IF 0
E-G 8 14 0 6-28
IF 0 7 0 0-7
Scoring: E-G: Charlie Ryan, 14-yard pass from Sam Roberts (Mark Tikkanen pass from Roberts); IF: Lane Skallman, 1-yard run (Riley Nemec kick); E-G: Cooper Dosan, 37-yard run (Conversion failed); E-G: Roberts, 10-yard pass from Tikkanen (Tikkanen pass from Roberts); E-G: Roberts, 1-yard run (Kick failed).
Team statistics: IF: 90 yards rushing, 34 passing, 124 total. E-G: 198 yards rushing, 54 passing, 252 total.
Rushing: IF: Tyler Coffield, 11-50; Nick Hedtke, 7-24; Ben Humbert 1-14; Shane Nicholson, 2-9; Wyatt Helgeson, 2-7; Lane Skallman, 2-4, 1 TD; Jakob Eide, 6-(-18).
Passing: IF: Eide, 4-14, 34 yards, 1 INT.
Receiving: IF: Riley Rasmussen, 1-21; Hedtke, 1-14; Humbert, 2-(-1).



STAFF PHOTOS BY KEVIN BONESKE

In front from right, Eveleth-Gilbert's Sam Roberts (10) runs with the ball and a block from Austin Erickson (88) on the Broncos' Wyatt Helgeson (35) in Friday's season opener at Sports Stadium.



The Broncos' Lane Skallman (44) runs into the end zone for a touchdown in Friday night's home game against Eveleth-Gilbert.



The Broncos' Ethan Phung (13) begins an 84-yard kickoff return that he advanced to Eveleth-Gilbert's six-yard line in Friday's game at Sports Stadium.

HIRING Project Manager/Engineer

BendTec, Inc. a steel pipe fabricator located in Duluth, MN is looking for a Project Manager/Engineer in the pipeline/power industries. Engineer or engineer tech degree preferred. Please send resume to: applications@bendtec.com www.bendtec.com

CITY OF RANIER
NOTICE OF OPEN FORUM
RANIER COMMUNITY HALL
9/11/14 @ 6:30 PM
PROPOSED LAND USE/ZONING
ORDINANCE

PRIOR TO THE OPEN FORUM,
PLEASE REVIEW THE DRAFT LAND
USE ORDINANCE ON
THE CITY'S WEBSITE @ raniermn.govoffice2.com.
WRITTEN COMMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED
AND CAN BE PROVIDED TO THE CITY
BY E-MAIL @ cityofranier@frontiernet.net
OR DELIVERED TO THE CITY OFFICE.

Perryn looks forward to meeting all community members. Everyone Welcome!

ALL FUNDS RAISED WILL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Perryn Hedlund.
Treasurer Andy Hedlund • 1402 16th St., Int'l Falls, MN

Join us for the

PERRYN HEDLUND
Campaign Fundraiser

FISH FRY
Thursday, September 4th • 6-8pm
at **THE ELK'S CLUB**

ELECT

Perryn

HEDLUND

KOOCHICHING COUNTY SHERIFF