

SPORTS

HOF

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“I am so proud to say I come from International Falls,” he said. “I walk a little taller today because of you, and thank you so much.”

Following his hockey career, which also included playing for the Green Bay Bobcats in the United States Hockey League and being a coach and player in France, Amidon was an elementary school teacher for 25 years. He currently is retired and lives in Bozeman, Mont.

MISTY BAHR

Bahr, who had passed away in December 2003 at the age of 28, was represented at Saturday’s induction ceremony by her family. Her father, Warren, mother, Judy, and sister, Hollie, spoke on her behalf.

“As you all know, this is where it all started out for Misty – a well-structured school system, an academic sports program that was instrumental in shaping the rest of her future as a Hamline University Sports Hall of Fame inductee and graduate,” Judy Kielczewski said. “To Misty, it was more than just being an International Falls Bronco or a Hamline Piper. It was all about her ability as a person to succeed in anything she tried her hand at.”

Bahr, who graduated in 1994 from Falls High School, where she competed in both volleyball and track and field, was a state qualifier in both the shot put and discus in 1993 and 1994.

She also competed in volleyball and track and field at Hamline University, where she was a six-time All-American. Bahr, who was the 1998 NCAA Division III national indoor champion in the shot put, remains the school’s indoor record holder in that event with a toss of 48 feet, 3.75 inches.

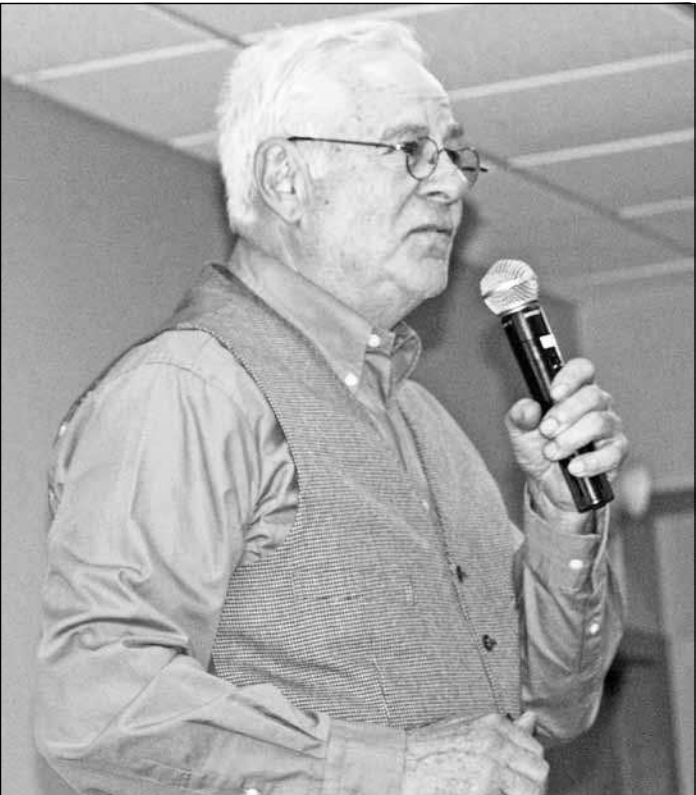
The annual award for Hamline University’s top senior female athlete is named after Bahr, who was inducted into the school’s Athletic Hall of Fame in 2004. In addition, in the annual Hamline Elite Meet for the best high school track and field athletes in the state, the girls shot put is named in Bahr’s honor and memory.

ALDO DE MARCHI

DeMarchi, who had passed away in April of last year at the age of 87, was also represented at the induction ceremony by family members. His son, Pat, spoke on his behalf.

“My dad passed away almost a year ago and he would have been thrilled with his honor,” Pat DeMarchi said.

He said his father didn’t talk much about playing high school football for the Falls in



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

Jim Amidon speaks at Saturday night’s Bronco Athletic Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the AmericInn in International Falls.

the 1940s, when he received All-Conference honors in 1943 and All-Range and All-State honors in 1946.

After being drafted in 1944 into the United States Army during World War II, Aldo DeMarchi returned home to resume his senior year of education in 1946, when the Falls went 6-0-1 as the first undefeated football team in school history and he was named to the All-State football team as an end.

After graduating from FHS, he was offered a scholarship to play football at the University of Minnesota Duluth. His son noted his father decided to come home after the first year of playing football at UMD and started a family.

Aldo DeMarchi is best known for his involvement with youth sports in the Falls and worked 25 years for Falls’ recreation department, where he was the assistant recreation director and worked with Howard.

“(My dad) continued to get letters and phone calls from people that told him how he influenced them, which is quite nice,” Pat DeMarchi said.

BILL HOWARD

Howard was present for the induction ceremony. His son, Bill Howard Jr., spoke on his behalf.

Bill Howard Jr. said one of the happiest days of his father’s life was in 1951, when the family was living in Chicago, where his father was working as a geologist, and he was invited to return to International Falls to become the recreation director and work with youths in sports.

“I think that has to be one of the top days of his life, because that really became his calling,” Bill Howard Jr. said.

A 1939 FHS graduate, Bill

Howard Sr. participated in high school sports and then attended Carleton College, where he was a captain on the basketball team and a first baseman and pitcher on the baseball team. He earned a bachelor’s degree in geology from Carleton and then served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II.

He returned briefly to the Falls following the war when he coached Falls’ American Legion baseball team and played semipro baseball. After post-graduate studies in geology at the University of Minnesota and playing baseball for the Faribault Lakers in the Southern Minnesota League, he spent several years outside of Minnesota as a field geologist with oil companies.

While working for an oil company in Chicago, Bill Howard Sr. was contacted by Falls Athletic Director Walt Scheela, who asked him to come back to the Falls and become the city’s recreation director. He was in that position from 1951-81 and developed the community’s athletic and other recreational programs while working with Aldo DeMarchi and several volunteers and seasonal staff.

“Do any of you know that ‘Bill and Aldo’ is one word?” Bill Howard Jr. quipped. “When I was a kid growing up, all the kids knew they were two different people, but they always referred to ‘Bill and Aldo.’”

When he speaks to people about how his father influenced them, Bill Howard Jr. said many remember his father for holding their hand on the playground, “which is the original anti-bullying campaign, because everyone felt comfortable on the playground back then.”

1972 FHS GIRLS TRACK

Members of the 1972 Falls girls track and field team, which tied White Bear Lake for the state title that year, were on hand for the induction ceremony with Sue Alstrom and Deb Krats (Johansen) speaking on behalf of the team. They began by recognizing their head coach, Peg Johnson, who passed away last year.

“The team was barrier breakers – they got the girls sports started and we started on a high note,” said Alstrom, who was the 1972 girls state champion in both the shot put and discus. “We didn’t know if we were good or not, and we didn’t care. We got to participate and we were just excited to compete.”

The Broncos, who went undefeated that season when they also won the district championship, have not won another girls state track and field team title since 1972 when there was only one class in Minnesota to compete in before the current two-class system began in 1976.

“The girls track team was actually the first state championship team in girls sports of any kind in Minnesota, not just at Falls High School,” said Johansen, who who finished third at state in both the 50- and 80-yard hurdles.

Others who placed at state for the Falls that year included Roxanne Heibel, who finished fourth in the 100- and 220-yard dashes, and Chris Drinkwine, who came in sixth in the 440-yard dash.

“Our track program was a humble start with one sport, and now the girls have so many opportunities,” Johansen said. “It’s great to see where sports for women has come.”

SILENT AUCTION

A silent auction of various sports memorabilia was held just prior to the induction ceremony.

Hall of Fame selection committee member Timm Ringhofer, who was also the master of ceremonies for Saturday’s banquet, said the auction raised \$950 for the Bronco Athletic Hall of Fame.

The selection committee is planning to vote in subsequent years on other nominees for possible induction.

In addition to those previously nominated but not inducted remaining in consideration for future years, Bronco sports fans will be able to submit additional nominations of a player, coach/director/advisor, at-large member or team.

The nomination form was available at Saturday’s induction banquet and is also posted on Falls’ school website.

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NBA

Flip Saunders: ‘I’m the coach until I say I’m not’

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — As president, coach and part owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves, Flip Saunders holds as much influence with the franchise as any coach in the NBA.

So it will largely be up to Saunders to decide how long he wants to hold the dual roles of coach and executive that so few of his brethren do in the league.

At his end-of-the-season news conference on Monday following an NBA-worst 16-66 season that was filled with injuries, disappointment and the development of a new young star, Saunders gave no indication that he will be relinquishing the coaching duties this summer.

“I’ll coach until I feel we need to move in a different direction,” Saunders said.

Last summer Saunders had conversations with several coaches, including Michigan State’s Tom Izzo and Dave Joergel of the Memphis Grizzlies before selecting himself to succeed the retired Rick Adelman.

The Wolves entered the season with hopes of emerging as a surprise team in the rugged Western Conference, much the way the Phoenix Suns did the previous year. But injuries in November to Ricky Rubio, Nikola Pekovic and Kevin Martin quickly short-circuited that plan.

The Wolves shifted course, trading veterans Corey Brewer and Mo Williams to open up more playing time for youngsters Andrew Wiggins, Zach LaVine, Shabazz Muhammad and Gorgui Dieng.

The short-handed team quickly sunk to the bottom of the league, but Wiggins established himself as the heavy favorite for rookie of the year while LaVine, Muhammad and Dieng all made big strides as the season went on.

Saunders said the development shown by the young players working with his staff, including assistants Sam Mitchell, Sidney Lowe, Ryan Saunders, David Adelman and Mike Penberthy, convinced him that “it was the right thing to do.”

Saunders did not completely rule out hiring a different coach this summer. But as the season wound down he did say

that he would like the opportunity to coach a fully healthy team and establish some continuity with an impressionable roster.

“You have to keep on developing those players,” Saunders said. “When they get to their third and fourth years, usually that’s kind of what they are and they can make huge jumps these first and second years.”

The Timberwolves will have the best odds at the No. 1 overall draft pick in the lottery on May 19. They can fall no further than No. 4, leaving Saunders with confidence that they will add another impact player to team with Wiggins, the No. 1 overall pick last year who came to Minnesota in the trade that sent Kevin Love to Cleveland.

He said the two biggest priorities this summer will be to improve defensively and 3-point shooting. The Wolves were last in the league in points allowed, opponent field goal percentage, 3-pointers made and 3s attempted.

“The difficult thing you have right now with us is we’re a combination,” Saunders said. “We need defensive players, and we need 3-point shooting. Many times, those guys don’t go hand-in-hand.”

Rubio and Pekovic both had surgeries near the end of the season. Rubio’s ankle will keep him from playing for the Spanish national team this summer, but won’t stop him from being ready for training camp.

Pekovic’s foot is much more problematic. He had surgery on the Achilles tendon to try to ease some of the chronic pain that has limited him the past two seasons, but his recovery is expected to take six months or more.

Saunders reiterated that he believes Kevin Garnett will play next season, and the Wolves can begin negotiating a new contract with the free agent-to-be on July 1.

“I don’t want to get to the playoffs; I want to build a team that can win in the playoffs,” Saunders said. “That’s what we’re trying to do. If you’re going to try to do quick fixes just to get there, you might get there, but you might be back out of it soon. That’s not what our goal is.”

SOFTBALL

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Of RRCC’s 14 hits, Sondergard recorded three of them with a home run and two singles with 3 RBI. DyAna Imhof also had three hits with a single, double and triple. Jaimie Shaw added a double and a single, while Ramirez picked up a pair of singles.

Imhof, who batted .688 (11-16) in four games last week with a double, triple and home run with 8 RBI, now has a season batting average

of .455 and has been named the MCAC North Player of the Week.

Ramirez pitched all seven innings in game two against Vermilion to record the victory, allowing three runs, one earned, on four hits with three walks and a hit batter while striking out seven.

“(Ramirez) gave us a great game,” said Humbert, who noted Ramirez had been experiencing shoulder trouble recently when she hadn’t been pitching until the second game of Saturday’s doubleheader.


Vermilion’s Erin Muhvich, who was named the MCAC North’s Pitcher of the Week, pitched all 14 innings in both games to record a win and a loss.

The Voyageurs also had been scheduled last weekend to play a road doubleheader Sunday against Mesabi Range, but that twin bill was postponed because of rainy weather.


RRCC’s season record now stands at 3-1 in the MCAC North and 13-11 overall going into today’s home doubleheader against Hibbing.

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