

# SPORTS



**Girls basketball**  
Broncos can't stay within MI-B's range  
**B2**

QUICK HITS

Hawks hammer the Bronco boys hockey team in quarterfinals

Top-seeded Hermantown was too much for the International Falls boys hockey team to handle Friday night in the playoffs.

The No. 8-seeded Broncos gave up three goals in each period when they lost their Section 7A quarterfinal road game to the Hawks, 9-0.

Scott Wasbotten recorded a hat trick for Hermantown with six other players scoring a goal apiece for the Hawks.

Hermantown outshot the Falls, 70-10, with Jace Thomas picking up a shutout victory and Wyatt Ulrich recording the loss in goal.

The Broncos' season ended at 8-18-1 in Ross Johnson's first year as head coach.

Ben Gordon nets another hat trick

Scoring three or more goals in a single game is becoming commonplace in February for Ben Gordon, who has been named the Central Hockey League's Player of the Week for the second week in a row and the fourth time this season.

Gordon once again lifted the Tulsa Oilers to victory on Friday night when the 29-year-old center from International Falls recorded his third hat trick of the month and second in three games. He also chipped in an assist on the decisive goal of a 4-3 Tulsa win over the Quad City Mallards.

At 4:39 of the first period, Gordon slipped a shot through the legs of Mallards goalie Thomas Heemskerk to give the Oilers a 1-0 lead.

On the power play just over a minute into the second period, Gordon squeezed a wrist shot past the pad of Heemskerk to give the Oilers a 2-0 advantage. At 10:41 of the second period, Gordon scored his third goal of the game.

FHS boys hoops team tops DM

The International Falls boys basketball team closed out the regular season on the road Friday night with a 69-61 victory over Duluth Marshall.

Ben Humbert led the Broncos with 18 points and 24 rebounds. Cole Miggins added 14 points and Cory Netland scored 11 more.

The win snapped a three-game losing streak and improved the Falls' season record to 12-13 going into the Section 7AA Tournament, for which the Broncos have received a No. 2 seed and open at home 7 p.m. today against No. 7-seeded Mesabi East.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# RRCC Voyageurs silence Thunder in the regular-season finale

RRCC heads to region tourney

BY KEVIN BONESKE  
Sports Editor

Needing a win and the luck of the draw to advance to the Region 13 North Tournament, the Rainy River Community College women's basketball team accomplished both last weekend.

On Saturday afternoon in the RRCC gym, the Voyageurs overcame an early seven-point deficit and won their regular-season finale over Fond du Lac, 75-68.

"It was a great game," said RRCC head coach Dieter Humbert. "Both teams shot the ball well (and) moved the ball well. "There's a lot of good athletes on the floor. It's a tribute to both programs how they continue to improve. It was a great basketball game, and I'm just happy we came out on the right side of the score."

The lead changed hands eight times with three ties in the first half.

The Voyageurs trailed by three points with less than 8 minutes left in the first half before taking the lead at 32-27 by going on an 8-0 scoring run with a pair of 3-pointers by Sarina Phratrep and a layup off of a steal by Kurstyn Gordon.

The Thunder regained the lead with 2:14 left in the first half when Claudia Turner completed a 3-point play from the charity stripe. Gordon then made a 3-pointer behind the arc to give RRCC a 37-36 lead at halftime.

The Voyageurs were able to hold the lead for the final 20 minutes and pulled in front by as much as 22 points, 67-45, with less than 9 minutes to play on a layup by Gordon.

"We're really starting to move the ball better," Humbert said. "We're starting to run the offense – more patience on it, finding the open player, and shot selection is everything. We're getting good shots, and we're getting shots that are a higher percentage for us to make, and I think that's the difference why we keep improving offensively."

RRCC outshot Fond du Lac from the field overall, 29-78 (37.2 percent) to 22-60 (36.7 percent).

The Thunder began to whittle away at the Voyageurs' lead in the final minutes and pulled within seven points at 71-64 with less than a minute to play when Turner made a 3-pointer.

Fond du Lac then pulled within a single possession at 71-68 when Haley Psyck made two free throws with 17.5 seconds left, but the Thunder could score no more and ended up committing three more fouls before time expired.

Roneisha Jordan recorded a double-double for RRCC by scoring 26 points and hauling in 17 rebounds.

"She's a great go-to player," Humbert said. "You get the ball down low and it takes two people to try to stop her."

Phratrep added 20 points, including six 3-pointers, while Casey-Lynn Fulton and Alisha Brinker also scored in double figures for the Voyageurs with 10 points apiece.

Turner led Fond du Lac in scoring with a game-high 30 points, followed by Shaelyn Halverson with 11 and Kami Diver with 10.

The win improved RRCC's season record to 4-8 in the Minnesota College Athletic Conference's Northern Division and 10-14 overall, ending up in a three-way tie for fourth in the MCAC North with Hibbing and Itasca.

To determine which

**Basketball to B2 ➤**

STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

From left, Fond du Lac's Claudia Turner (24) dribbles the ball while being guarded by Rainy River's Sarina Phratrep (3) in Saturday afternoon's game in the RRCC gym.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

# Voyageurs thumped by Thunder in season finale



From left, Rainy River's Demetrius Murphy (34) dribbles the ball while being guarded by Fond du Lac's Nicholas Brown (3) in Saturday afternoon's game in the RRCC gym.

RRCC ends up 1-13 in MCAC

BY KEVIN BONESKE  
Sports Editor

The Rainy River Community College men's basketball team ended the season on a losing note Saturday afternoon by falling to Fond du Lac, 85-76, in the RRCC gym.

The Voyageurs tied the game at 14-14 early in the first half on a field goal by Demetrius Murphy, then gave up 13 unanswered points to the Thunder and trailed the rest of the game.

"The first half killed us," said RRCC head coach Jack Cook. "We just didn't play with intensity and we were selfish – only one assist for the first half – that's what puts us out of the game."

"We outscored them in the second half – I was proud of the way we came back – but a little too late."

Fond du Lac, which primarily worked the ball inside and ended up with only two 3-point baskets for the game, closed out the first half with its largest lead in the first 20 minutes at 45-26. At halftime, the Thunder had outshot the Voyageurs from the field overall, 18-37 (48.6 percent) to 11-44 (25 percent).

After giving up the opening field goal of the second half, the Voyageurs narrowed the deficit and pulled within 10 points, 53-43, with 14:54 remaining when Andrew Nichols completed a 3-point play from the charity stripe.

However, RRCC continued to trail by double digits for most of the second half

as Nichols closed out the scoring with a 3-pointer behind the arc to lose by nine points.

Ahmad Poche, who accounted for half of the Voyageurs' 26 first-half points, led RRCC in scoring with a game-high 21 points, including five 3-pointers. Murphy and Harold Jenkins each added 11 points, while Nichols and Fedner Fleurant scored 10 points apiece.

Fond du Lac also had five players score in double figures led by Danny Alston with 15 points. Deandre Bell and Kevin Gutter each added 14 points, while Nicholas Brown and Michael Hall scored 10 points apiece.

The Voyageurs closed out the season at 1-13 in

**Hoops to B2 ➤**

SPORTS SCHEDULE

**Today's games**  
**Boys basketball**  
Mesabi East at I. Falls in Section 7AA Tournament, 7 p.m.

**Thursday's games**  
**Girls basketball**  
L-BF at Fond du Lac Ojibwe, 5:45 p.m.  
**Boys basketball**  
L-BF vs. Bigfork in Section 7A Tournament at Greenway, 5:45 p.m.

**Friday's games**  
**Girls basketball**  
Deer River at I. Falls, 7:15 p.m.

**Saturday's games**  
**Boys basketball**  
Section 7A quarterfinals at Hibbing Lincoln, 1 p.m.  
Section 7AA quarterfinals at UMD, 5:45 p.m.  
**Women's basketball**  
RRCC at Northland in Region 13 North Tournament, 2 p.m.

BOYS SWIMMING AND DIVING

# International Falls ends season in Section 6A finals

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The International Falls boys swimming and diving team had five top-eight finishes in Saturday's Section 6A finals in Hibbing, but no state qualifiers, as the Broncos' season came to an end.

"I think the team did very, very well," said Falls head coach Dawnn Taylor, who noted the Broncos had several personal bests at the section meet, improving from the beginning of the season when a lot of the team members had

not swam competitively before.

While the top-three finishers in each event advanced to the Class A State Meet, Falls' best finish in the finals was in the diving competition, where junior Cole Tatsak placed fifth with 250.85 points.

Hibbing sophomore Grayden Philbrick had the top diving score of 417.15.

Broncos senior Levi Lucy won two medals with a pair of top-eight individual finishes. He placed sixth in the 200-yard individual medley (2 min-

utes, 24.16 seconds) and eighth in the 100 butterfly (1:06.83).

"Levi did awesome this year," Taylor said.

Grand Rapids freshman Kaleb Bissonette won the 200 individual medley (2:09.57), while Mesabi East senior Evan Kalb was the top finisher in the 100 butterfly (52.99).

Lucy was also part of the Broncos' two relay teams that competed in the championship finals.

Lucy, junior Ian Ducharme, eighth-grader John Cowman and seventh-

grader Ed Serrano placed seventh in the 200 medley relay (2:08.2), while Lucy, Ducharme and Serrano teamed up with eighth-grader Joey Griffith for a seventh-place finish in the 200 freestyle relay (1:48.97).

Mesabi East won the 200 medley relay (1:44.15), while Grand Rapids placed first in the 200 freestyle relay (1:31.21).

Ducharme also competed in the consolation finals in the 100 freestyle, where he placed 12th in 57.69.

Cowman placed 14th in the consolation finals

in the 100 breaststroke (1:18.4).

In the team standings, the Broncos finished eighth out of nine teams with 94 points. Grand Rapids had the top team score at 507, followed by Hibbing (297) and Mesabi East (292) rounding out the top three.

Taylor wrapped up her first season as Falls' head coach with a dozen team members on the roster and Lucy being the only graduation loss.

"I think the future (for the team) is very bright," Taylor said.