

# SPORTS

## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS

# Mustangs stampede Vikings in nine-man quarterfinals

## FHS loses in 7AAA to Two Harbors

BY KEVIN BONESKE  
Sports Editor

The high school football season came to an end for Littlefork-Big Falls in the opening round of the Section 7 nine-man playoffs Tuesday night.

The No. 6-seeded Vikings trailed 36-0 at halftime and went on to lose their quarterfinal playoff game on the road to No. 3-seeded Kelliher/Northome, 52-14.

The Mustangs scored their first touchdown with 5:28 left in the first quarter on a 13-yard run by Cal Roosdett. Quarterback Gizhik Wagner then ran in the two-point conversion to extend K/N's lead to 8-0.

The first of four second-quarter touchdowns by the Mustangs came with 9:19 left in the first half when Wagner threw an 18-yard scoring strike to Dylan Villaran. Less than 2 minutes later, Eli Rahier scored on a 65-yard touchdown run. Wagner called his own number with less than 2 minutes left in the half on a 2-yard touchdown run. K/N's final touchdown of the half came with 7.3 seconds remaining when Jonathan Weidenborner intercepted a Quin Vork pass near midfield and ran it into the end zone.

After the Mustangs returned the opening kickoff of the second half to their

10-yard run, Roosdett ran 90 yards for a touchdown on the first play from scrimmage.

L-BF scored both of its touchdowns in the third quarter on runs of 26 yards by Darian Erickson and 15 yards by Jaydon Thompson.

K/N added a fourth-quarter touchdown on a one-yard run by Mitchell Nistler.

L-BF ended the season at 3-6, while the Mustangs advance to today's semifinals at No. 2-seeded Ely.

### TWO HARBORS 35, FHS 6

In the Section 7AAA quarterfinals Tuesday night, No. 7-seeded International Falls trailed by only a point after the first quarter, but ended up losing at No. 2-seeded Two Harbors, 35-6.

The Agates scored first on a 35-yard touchdown run by Ricky Hietala. Jessie Juenemann added the extra point to give Two Harbors a 7-0 lead.

The Broncos' only touchdown was set up on a punt that touched a Two Harbors player and the Falls recovered on the Agates' 43-yard line. Tyler Coffield then caught an 18-yard scoring strike from Jakob Eide. The Broncos continued to trail, 7-6, after the extra point failed.

Two Harbors' only touchdown of the second quarter came on a four-yard run by Lucas Kempffer. Juene-



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

At right, the Vikings' Darian Erickson (8) runs with the football in Tuesday night's Section 7 nine-man quarterfinal playoff game at Kelliher.

mann's extra point extended the lead to 14-6 at halftime.

The Agates then did all the scoring in the second half with three touchdowns.

Two Harbors gained most of its yardage on the ground, rushing for more than 300

yards, compared to less than 100 yards rushing for the Falls. Nick Hedtke led the Broncos in rushing with 57 yards on 18 carries.

Eide ended up completing eight of 20 passes for 66 yards and a touchdown.

Coffield caught five passes for 34 yards, while Aaron Bennett had two receptions for 32 yards.

The Falls closed out the season without a win at 0-9, while Two Harbors hosts today's semifinal game against

No. 3-seeded Proctor.

K/N 52, L-BF 14
L-BF 0 0 14 0 - 14
K/N 8 28 8 8 - 52

Two Harbors 35, Int'l Falls 6
Int'l Falls 6 0 0 0 - 6
Two Harbors 7 7 14 7 - 35

## NBA SEASON PREVIEW

# A new era begins in Minnesota basketball

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Minnesota Timberwolves know the story.

They know that no one expects them to be very good this season. After all, they just traded the face of their franchise and remade their core around some very dynamic and very young players.

Yes, Kevin Love is in Cleveland, teaming up with LeBron James to try to win a championship. And the Wolves are left to build around 19-year-old Andrew Wiggins, the centerpiece of the three-team trade that sent Love to the Cavs.

But Flip Saunders believes the step back from last season's 40-42 mark won't be that dramatic at all. For as young as they are with Wiggins, 19-year-old Zach LaVine, and 21-year-old Anthony Bennett, there remains some seasoned veterans all around them.

Point guard Ricky Rubio is entering his fourth season. Big man Nikola Pekovic is entering his fifth, shooting guard Kevin Martin is in his 11th season, and another important piece of the trade — power forward Thaddeus Young

— is 26 years old. They also have veterans Corey Brewer, Mo Williams and Chase Budinger coming off the bench, so the Wolves aren't as green as they might initially appear.

"The national media has a total misconception of our team," said Saunders, a part-owner, president of basketball operations, and now the head coach, as well. "They feel we're in a rebuild because we traded Kevin Love. Now Kevin's a great player, but when you have 11 of your top 13 guys back and basically you're looking at a situation where that team won 40 games in a tough Western Conference, it's not a rebuild. We're building with those guys.

"So we're adding pieces to those guys. We're hoping that some of the pieces we already had continue to get better and better."

Still, there are going to be bumps in the road early while Wiggins and LaVine get their bearings, starting with the season opener on Wednesday in Memphis. And when you play in the West, learning on the job isn't conducive to immediate success.

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

# First-place Gophers trying to stay grounded

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Resiliency will be as important for Minnesota the rest of the season as its most tangible strength of running the ball.

Last week's win over Purdue provided plenty of time to polish both of those attributes.

The comeback victory that left the Gophers (6-1, 3-0) alone in first place in the Big Ten's West Division also set them up for another test, of their ability to maintain a narrow focus and a relentless pursuit of improvement amid increasing recognition of this program's progress.

"It's great to be excited, all those kind of things. Gaining confidence, that's good. Finding ways to win, sometimes you've just got to find a way win, and we did that," coach Jerry Kill said Tuesday. "But as coaches, the only thing that matters is at the end of the season where you're at, really. You've got to keep your players grounded."

Lose today at struggling Illinois and, well, the

buzz will be quickly quieted.

"You don't want to be a team that peaks early, and that's not to say you don't want to be a team that doesn't perform well in the early games, but if we're playing our best football in mid-October then we're in trouble," defensive tackle Cameron Botticelli said.

Favored by nearly two touchdowns to beat the Boilermakers, the Gophers won the hard way after an 11-point halftime deficit.

"I think that's maturity. A mature team says, 'OK, these are the adjustments we need to make from the coaching staff,' and then makes those on the field," Botticelli said. "Who knows if we could've done that last year? This year we did it."

The Gophers have won



Jerry Kill

four straight games at Illinois, last losing there in the 2001 season when the Illini played in the Sugar Bowl. The Illini (3-4, 0-3) will be the underdogs, too, a role the Gophers are more accustomed to. They even shout that word sometimes when they break up a huddle in practice.

"People always overlooked us, and that's what gave us the motivation," wide receiver K.J. Maye said.

The final four games are daunting: Iowa and Ohio State at home, followed by trips to Nebraska and Wisconsin. But if the Gophers beat Illinois, they'll be undefeated halfway through conference play and still in sole possession of first place as late as mid-November. That's when the lessons learned and confidence gained from these mid-season games will truly become valuable.

With a spot in the conference championship game remaining a realistic goal, particularly given the likelihood that the

West winner will have one or two losses, the stakes have increased for the Gophers. Not that the coaches would make a point of mentioning that.

"But they're smart enough to know all that. I don't have to tell them," Kill said.

All four of Mitch Leidner's longest completions (all greater than 35 yards) have come in the last two games, a sign of an offense growing into more than just running back David Cobb.

The Gophers, too, have had a conference player of the week winner on both defense and special teams after each of the last two games. Safety Cedric Thompson and kicker Ryan Santos were the honorees this time. But those are relatively modest reflections of a team's prowess.

"Are we close to being as good as we can be? No. No, we're not. So we have a lot of room for improvement. You can see that on film in all three phases," Kill said.

www.ifallsjournal.com • www.ifallsjournal.com • www.ifallsjournal.com

## Re-Elect Cynthia Jaksa

The "We Can Build A Bright Future" Candidate

Your Full-Time, Hard Working Public Servant



Union Endorsed and Connected with Community

- Treasurer for Friends Against Abuse
- Board Member of Koochiching Aging Options
- Member of Northland Koochiching County Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Member of KOOTASCA Housing Issues Advisory Committee
- Board Officer of Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities



Paid for by Committee to Re-elect Cynthia Jaksa • Joel Hase, Treasurer, 501 Shorewood Dr.

**Bigfork Valley**  
Hospital • Clinics • Communities  
*Where skill meets compassion.*

**Orthopaedic Clinic**  
at the  
**Littlefork Medical Center**  
912 Main Street  
and  
**Bigfork Valley Specialty Clinic**  
Dr. Daniel Baker  
No referral needed, call  
**1-866-776-0262**  
for an appointment.

☒ **VOTE**  
**BOB PETERSON**



County  
Auditor-Treasurer  
November 4th  
.....

Your support is  
greatly appreciated.

Advertisement paid for by the candidate on his own behalf. International Falls