

SPORTS



SIJHL hockey
Lakers defeat Dryden, win Bill Salonen Cup
B3

QUICK HITS

Board backs head boys swim coach

A volunteer assistant boys swimming coach from this past season was approved Monday by the International Falls Board of Education as the Bronco boys head swimming coach for 2015-16.

Greg Thorstad will be replacing Hailey Silvers, who is not returning next season, said Falls superintendent Kevin Grover.

Silvers filled in this past season as the head coach following the departure of Dawnn Taylor, whose head coaching contract was terminated by the board in January because of the number of the days she planned to be away from coaching during the season.

The board Monday agreed to provide Silvers a “retro-payment” of more than \$2,000 to increase the amount she will receive for coaching this past season to \$4,772.03, or 83.5 percent of the coaching salary of \$5,715.

L-BF baseball 0-3

The Littlefork-Big Falls baseball team has dropped to 0-3 for the season after losing two road games in two days.

L-BF, which had the April 14 game at Northland suspended because of darkness, lost Thursday at Northeast Range, 3-2.

The Vikings’ Rylan Henrickson recorded the pitching loss in six innings of work, allowing three runs, one earned, on four hits while striking out five.

At the plate for L-BF, Henrickson and Darian Erickson were both 1-3 with a run scored.

The Vikings then lost Friday at Ely, 11-1, in five innings. Henrickson batted 1-3 and drove in the team’s only run.

FHS girls golf team first at Babbitt meet

The International Falls girls golf team competed in its first meet of the season Thursday when the Broncos placed first at a nine-hole tournament at the Babbitt Golf Course.

The Falls had the top team score of 183, followed by Hibbing (189), Eveleth-Gilbert (211), Virginia (244), Mesabi East (260) and Ely/Northeast Range (266). North Woods also competed, but didn’t have four golfers finish to score in the team standings.

Broncos senior Jenna Anderson had the top individual score for nine holes at 40, four strokes ahead of sophomore teammate Olivia Besch and Hibbing’s Vanessa Yeager, who both carded a 44.

Falls’ other two golfers whose scores counted toward the team total included Kaitlin Stallard (49) and eighth-grader Maggie Roeder (50).

BRONCO ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

‘Class of 2015’ inductees get their honors

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

Close to 200 people were on hand Saturday night when the latest group of inductees into the Bronco Athletic Hall of Fame was honored during the fourth annual banquet held at the AmericInn in International Falls.

The Hall of Fame’s “Class of 2015” includes hockey player Jim Amidon, shot putter and discus thrower Misty Bahr, football player and assistant recreation director Aldo DeMarchi, baseball player and recreation director Bill Howard and the 1972 state-champion Falls girls track and field team.

JIM AMIDON

Amidon, a 1963 FHS graduate, played forward on the Bronco boys hockey team from 1960-63, which included being on the teams that won the state championship in 1962 and placed runner-up at the state tournament in 1963.

“Fifty-four years and 30 pounds ago, what a great exciting time it was,” Amidon quipped. “Strange thoughts go through your head when informed of this honor, like ‘Well, it’s about time...’

“I thought about all the

others who are equally deserving – a selfish tribute, yes, humility, yes – but in the end you are just happy to be selected.”

Amidon, who was ranked in 2011 by the Minnesota Hockey Hub as the 75th greatest high school player in the state’s history, said it was possible for him to have “some measure of success” growing up the Falls because “so many great hockey players came before me.”

“So many, like gods to an impressionable young boy,” he said. “To be accepted as one of them was all a young man could hope for – like an elusive dream.”

Amidon went on to play college hockey at Colorado College, where he got to play with another forward from the Falls, Glen Blumer, who graduated from FHS after the Broncos won the 1962 state title.

“Without my strong right wing Glen Blumer, whose line always seemed to be in sync with mine, I was just another player,” he said. “He deserves to be up here just as much as I do.”

The 1962 state championship team that Amidon was part of went 27-0-1 and also included forward Keith “Huffer” Christiansen and



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

From left, 1972 Bronco girls track and field team members Marilyn Engleking (Kostiuk), Adele Smith, Deb Krats (Johansen), Sue Alstrom, Connie Olson, Roxie Heibel (Roberts) and trainer Jeff Gookins pose for pictures with a replica of the state championship trophy following Saturday’s Bronco Athletic Hall of Fame banquet at the AmericInn in International Falls.

goalie Mike “Lefty” Curran, both of whom have previously been inducted into the Bronco Athletic Hall of Fame. The head coach, Larry Ross, is also a previous inductee.

“Larry had a gift of getting the best out of all of us – certainly me,” Amidon said. “What a trip. I can’t thank him enough.”

As wonderful as the honor is of being inducted into the Hall of Fame, Amidon said “the games themselves were the thrill of our young lives.”

When the Broncos played

their home games at the Fort Frances Arena from 1961-63, he noted the team never lost.

Absent Christiansen, Curran and others his senior season, Amidon was one of only three seniors on the team that also entered that state tournament without a loss. In the 1963 championship game against St. Paul Johnson, Amidon scored a goal in the final minute of regulation to send the game into overtime, before the Falls lost, 4-3.

“With a little luck, we would have had five

straight Minnesota state hockey championships,” Amidon said in reference to the Broncos winning the state title the next three seasons when all the teams in the state competed in a single class. “I am proud we dominated the big city teams and competed on an even par with them.”

Amidon said the amount of pride and support the community of International Falls had for the hockey team “made us feel like conquering heroes.”

HOFF to B2 ➤

WOMEN’S SOFTBALL



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

From right, the Voyageurs’ Karen Sondergard (22) jumps onto home plate where she is greeted by her teammates after hitting a three-run homer in the second game of Saturday’s doubleheader against Vermilion.

Voyageurs split twin bill with Vermilion College

RRCC now 3-1 in MCAC North

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

The Rainy River Community College softball team recorded its first Minnesota College Athletic Conference Northern Division loss of the season Saturday after splitting a home doubleheader with Vermilion Community College.

In game one, the Voyageurs gave up eight runs in the third inning and lost to Vermilion, 10-4.

“We played a good Vermilion team,” said RRCC head coach Dieter Humbert, who noted Vermilion had strong pitching and defense. “It wasn’t our best pitching game or defensive

game of the year.”

In the field, the Voyageurs committed seven errors, compared to two for Vermilion.

After two scoreless innings to start the game, Vermilion took the lead with eighth runs in the top of the third when the Voyageurs’ starting pitcher, Deven Chandler, was relieved by Beth Austad. Chandler was charged for six of those runs with Austad giving up two earned runs on four hits.

After RRCC got on the scoreboard with three runs in the bottom of the third, Chandler returned to pitch the final four innings. She recorded the pitching loss after giving up eight runs, four earned, on five hits with 10 walks and a hit batter while striking out five.

Of RRCC’s 11 hits, Maris-

sa Lindblad recorded three singles with Austad adding a pair of singles. Chandler doubled and drove in two runs, while Sierra Ramirez and Karen Sondergard also doubled.

RRCC 7, VCC 3

In game two, the Voyageurs trailed by a run after first inning before the Sondergard hit a three-run homer with two outs in the top of the second and RRCC went on to defeat Vermilion, 7-3.

“We got some timely hits,” Humbert said. “It was a very, very important win for us.”

Vermilion picked up its final run in the bottom of the second to trail 4-3, before the Voyageurs added a run in the top of the six and scored two more times in the seventh inning.

Softball to B2 ➤

MEN’S BASEBALL

Voyageurs split the doubleheader with Mesabi Range CTC

RRCC now 1-3 in MCAC North

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The Rainy River Community College baseball team picked up its first Minnesota College Athletic Conference Northern Division victory of the season after splitting a road doubleheader Saturday against Mesabi Range Community and Technical College.

In game one, the Voyageurs jumped out to a five-run lead and held on to defeat the Norsemen, 5-2.

“Talon (Kunkel) pitched a great game and we played some good defense behind him,” said RRCC head coach Josh Koenig.

Kunkel pitched the first six innings to record the victory, allowing two unearned runs on two hits with four walks while striking out eight. Tanner Helms threw in the seventh inning and picked up a save, giving up two hits while striking out a batter.

The Voyageurs tallied all five runs and six of their seven hits off Mesabi Range starting pitcher Tyler Francis, who also gave up a home run and walked three in 4 1/3 innings.

RRCC’s T.J. Trifoli hit a two-run homer in the second inning. Kunkel and Tanner Helms each picked up a pair of singles, while Jaymon Cervantes added a double.

MRCTC 6, RRCC 3

In game two, the Voyageurs fell behind by six runs after five innings before losing to the Norse-



Sam Pelechaty



Talon Kunkel

men, 6-3.

“I was really happy with how we rebounded and responded, but we couldn’t come up with a key hit,” Koenig said.

RRCC’s Landon Freeman pitched the first 4 1/3 innings and recorded the loss, allowing six earned runs on eight hits with a walk and two hit batters while striking out two.

Connor McGuinness throw the final 3 2/3 innings in relief without allowing a run or hit when he walked two, hit a batter and struck out three.

Mesabi Range starter Matt Hanson recorded the pitching victory in 6 1/3 innings of work, allowing an unearned run on four hits with six walks while striking out eight.

The Norsemen’s Zach Parfitt pitched 1 1/3 innings in relief and gave up two earned runs on two hits with a walk and two hit batters while striking out one. Jacob Bruner recorded a save pitching the final 1 1/3 innings.

Of the Voyageurs’ seven hits, Sam Pelechaty had three singles with 2 RBI.

RRCC’s season record now stands at 1-3 in the MCAC North and 14-18 overall going into this afternoon’s home doubleheader against Hibbing.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Today’s games

Men’s baseball

Hibbing at RRCC (DH), 2 p.m.

Women’s softball

Hibbing at RRCC (DH), 3 p.m.

Thursday’s games

Boys golf

I. Falls hosting meet at FCC, TBD

Girls golf

I. Falls at Virginia, TBD

Boys baseball

Greenway at I. Falls, 4:30 p.m.

Hill City at L-BF, 4:30 p.m.

Girls softball

Hill City at L-BF, 4:30 p.m.

Boys track and field

I. Falls at Warroad K of C Invite, 4:30 p.m.