

# SPORTS



**Voyageurs softball**  
Dobie named the MCAC North ‘Pitcher of the Week’  
**B2**

## QUICK HITS

### Local girls softball games postponed

The Littlefork-Big Falls and International Falls softball teams had their games scheduled for early this week postponed amid the lingering winter weather.

L-BF, which played its first game of the season last Thursday at Cherry, had games postponed Monday on the road against Nashwauk-Keewatin and Tuesday at home against North Woods. The Vikings’ next game is scheduled for today at home against Eveleth-Gilbert.

The Broncos, who have yet a to play a game this season, had a home game Monday against Lake of the Woods and a road game Tuesday at Hibbing postponed. In addition, their road game that was scheduled for this Thursday at Greenway has also been postponed.

### Cramer, Fisher both score in Oilers’ win

Tulsa Oilers forwards Ryan Cramer and Drew Fisher of International Falls accounted for Tulsa’s first two goals Friday night when the No. 7-seeded Oilers defeated the No. 2-seeded Denver Cutthroats, 6-2, in game 4 of their opening-round Central Hockey League playoff series at Denver.

Cramer added an assist on what turned out to be the game-winning goal when Tulsa evened the best-of-seven series with the Cutthroats at two games apiece.

However, in game 5 Saturday night at Denver, the Oilers were unable to score in 52 shots on goal and lost to the Cutthroats, 1-0.

The other Tulsa forward from the Falls, Ben Gordon, had a CHL playoff-high 11 shots on goal in game 5.

Trailing 3-2 in the series, the Oilers faced a must-win situation Tuesday night when they hosted Denver in game 6.

### FHS Alumni hoops tourney April 18-19

Eleven teams in three divisions will take to the court this weekend for Falls High School’s 2014 Alumni Basketball Tournament that will be held Friday and Saturday in the FHS gymnasium.

This year’s tournament, which is a fund-raiser for the Bronco basketball program, includes two teams in the women’s Open Division, four teams in the men’s Masters Division (35 and older) and five teams in the men’s Open Division. All three divisions are open to FHS Alumni or their relatives.

The games start at 6 p.m. Friday and at 9 a.m. Saturday.

## GIRLS SOFTBALL

# Vikings lose season opener to Cherry

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The 2014 season began Thursday for the Littlefork-Big Falls softball team the same way last year ended for the Vikings – with a loss to Cherry.

L-BF stayed even with the defending Section 7A champion Tigers through two innings before losing at Cherry, 7-2, in the first game of the season for both teams.

The Vikings scored first in the top of the first inning when DyAna Imhof doubled with two outs to drive in Amanda Nelson, who reached base on a walk and then stole second.

The Tigers tied the game at 1-1 in the bottom of the second with a sacrifice bunt by Devon Bjerklie.

L-BF regained the lead in the top of the third when Brooke Millerbernd hit a solo home run off of Cherry pitcher Kacey Herring. However, that turned out to be the last time the Vikings scored and held the lead.

Cherry rallied for four runs in the bottom of the third off of Nelson, L-BF’s starting pitcher.

The Tigers tied the game at 2-2 when Abby Mayre doubled to drive in



Brooke Millerbernd



DyAna Imhof

Joely Roberts. Then with the based loaded and two outs, Bjerklie doubled to drive in three runs and put Cherry in front for good.

Millerbernd switched from third base to pitcher in the fourth inning, keeping the Vikings’ deficit at three runs until Mayre connected on a two-run homer in the bottom of the sixth.

Herring pitched a complete-game victory by scattering three hits and striking out 14, while Nelson recorded the loss

in three innings pitched with three hits and four walks.

L-BF’s games that had been scheduled for Monday on the road against Nashwauk-Keewatin and Tuesday at home against North Woods were postponed. The next game on the Vikings’ schedule is today at home against Eveleth-Gilbert.

**Cherry 7, L-BF 2**  
**L-BF** 1-0-1 0-0-0 0-2  
**Cherry** 0-1-4 0-0-2 x-7  
**WP—Kacey Herring;**  
**LP—Amanda Nelson**

## SIJHL HOCKEY

# FF Lakers split 1-1 with Iron Rangers to open the finals

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The Superior International Junior Hockey League playoff finals are now deadlocked at a game apiece after the best-of-seven series opened with two games separated by a single goal last weekend at Ice for Kids Arena in Fort Frances.

After more than 80 scoreless minutes Friday night, Miles Nolan’s 10th goal of the playoffs, 10:37 into the second overtime, was the game-winner when the Fort Frances Lakers edged the Minnesota Iron Rangers, 1-0, in game 1 of the Bill Salonen Cup finals.

The opening game of the finals featured goaltenders Devin Tappenden of Fort Frances and Alex Reichle of Minnesota combining to stop 84 of 85 shots fired their way.

Each team had scoring opportunities through 60 minutes of regulation time, only to be stopped by the goalies.

After the score remained 0-0 through the first 10-minute overtime, the Lakers would eventually win it midway through the second extra session when Nolan put in the game-winner from the left of Reichle as bodies jammed the front of the net and the defensive

battle came to an end.

Tappenden made 39 saves to record his second shutout of the postseason. Reichle recorded the loss in goal for the Iron Rangers after finishing the night with 45 saves on 46 attempts.

**MINNESOTA 3, FORT FRANCES 2**

Matt O’Dea’s redirection goal from close range with 6:33 remaining in the third period turned out to be the game-winner Saturday night when the Iron Rangers edged the Lakers, 3-2, in game 2 of the SIJHL championship.

With the victory, the Iron Rangers even the best-of-seven series at 1-1 as it now shifts to Hoyt Lakes Arena for games 3 and 4 today and Thursday at 7 p.m.

Fort Frances got on the scoreboard first when Kevin Kurm put in his second goal of the postseason at 4:55 of the opening period.

Minnesota tied the game when Sam Mancini snapped off a low shot from the right side that eluded Tappenden in the Lakers’ net.

The Lakers answered back to restore their lead as Donovan Cousineau slid a shot past Reichle in the Iron Rangers’ net with an assist from International Falls native Lucas DeBenedet, who used his speed to generate the scoring opportunity.



STAFF PHOTOS BY KEVIN BONESKE

At right, Lakers forward Lucas DeBenedet (16) of International Falls looks to work the puck inside while the Iron Rangers’ Eric Madison (14) sets up on defense in Friday’s SIJHL playoff finals opener at Ice for Kids Arena in Fort Frances.

Fort Frances remained in front at 2-1 until the latter stages of the second period. Minnesota tied the game when Mancini’s sharp-angle shot got past Tappenden.

The Iron Rangers scored the game-winner in the final period when Evan Erickson relayed the puck to O’Dea.

Shots on goal favored the Lakers, 34-27, with Reichle picking up the win and Tappenden recording the loss.

The Bill Salonen Cup winner will advance to represent the league at the Dudley-Hewitt Cup Central Canada Junior A championship April 29-May 3 in Wellington, Ontario.

The SIJHL playoff champion will join the title holders from the Northern Ontario Junior Hockey League and the Ontario Junior Hockey League along



At center, Lakers forward Mason Meyer (9) of International Falls works the puck near the net between the Iron Rangers’ T.J. Samec (37) and Austin Frank (21) in Friday’s SIJHL playoff finals opener at Ice for Kids Arena in Fort Frances.

with the host Wellington Dukes (OJHL) at the five-day event.

**Game 1**  
**Fort Frances 1, Minnesota 0 (2 OT)**

**Minnesota** 0 0 0 0 0 – 0  
**Fort Frances** 0 0 0 0 1 – 1

**Game 2**  
**Minnesota 3, Fort Frances 2**  
**Minnesota** 1 1 1 – 3  
**Fort Frances** 2 0 0 – 2

## MEN’S BASEBALL

# Rainy River Voyageurs down Fond du Lac, Vermilion

### RRCC now 8-12

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

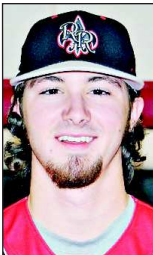
Amid last weekend’s rainfall, the Rainy River Community College men’s baseball team was able to get in a couple of games the Voyageurs won while playing in La Crescent.

On Saturday, RRCC erupted for 10 runs in the opening inning and defeated Fond du Lac, 11-1, in six innings.

Of the Voyageurs’ five hits, Tanner Helms had a pair of doubles with 3 RBI and a run scored. He also

reached base by being hit by a pitch and stole a base. Gino Strebing doubled with two runs scored and a stolen base. Makana Canda singled with 2 RBI and a run scored with a stolen base, while Victor Rodriguez singled with an RBI and a run scored.

Kris Barber started on the mound for the RRCC, working two innings and allowing the only Thunder run on four walks with a hit batter while striking out four. Stephen Rivera recorded the pitching victory in two innings of work, allowing a hit and two walks while striking out two. Joey



Tanner Helms



Colten Boudreau

Hudson also pitched two innings for the Voyageurs, giving up a hit and a walk while striking out five.

**RRCC 7, VERMILION 0**

In a rain-shortened game Sunday, the Voyageurs shut out Vermilion, 7-0, in five innings.

Colten Boudreau accounted for two of RRCC’s three hits with a double, an RBI and two runs scored. He also reached base on a walk and stole a base. Drew Birss doubled with 2 RBI, also walking once and adding a sacrifice.

Talon Kunkel recorded the pitching victory working five scoreless innings, allowing two hits and two walks while striking out nine.

With the two wins over the weekend, the Voyageurs improved their overall season record to 8-12.

RRCC is next scheduled to face Itasca in a non-

conference doubleheader starting at 2 p.m. Friday in Grand Rapids. The Voyageurs are also slated to open conference action Saturday with a doubleheader against Fond du Lac at a site and time to be determined.

**Saturday’s game**  
**Rainy River 11, Fond du Lac 1**  
**Fond du Lac** 0-1-0 0-0-0 – 12 1  
**RRCC** 10-0-0 0-0-1 – 115 1  
**WP—Stephen Rivera**

**Sunday’s game**  
**Rainy River 7, Vermilion 0**  
**RRCC** 0-2-0 0-5 – 73 2  
**Vermilion** 0-0-0 0-0 – 02 2  
**WP—Talon Kunkel**

## SPORTS SCHEDULE

### Today’s games

**Girls softball**  
Eveleth-Gilbert at L-BF, 4:30 p.m.

### Women’s softball

RRCC vs. Hibbing at Grand Rapids, 5:30/7:30 p.m.

### Thursday’s games

**Track and field**  
I. Falls at BSU Beaver Relays, 11 a.m.

### Girls golf

I. Falls vs. Northeast Range at Babbitt Golf Course, 4:15 p.m.

### Boys baseball

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

### Friday’s games

#### Men’s baseball

RRCC vs. Itasca at Grand Rapids (DH), 2 p.m.

### Saturday’s games

#### Men’s baseball

RRCC vs. Fond du Lac (DH), TBA

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