

SPORTS

GIRLS SWIMMING AND DIVING

Broncos fifth at Taconite Invitational

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Runner-up finishes in a relay and one individual event highlighted the International Falls girls swimming and diving team's fifth-placing showing out of nine teams at Saturday's Taconite Invitational hosted by Mesabi East.

Duluth East topped the team standings at 352 points, followed by Two Harbors (223), Mesabi East (166), Cloquet/Esko/Carlton (153) and the Falls (135) rounding out the top five.

Points were awarded to the top-12 finishers in each individual event with first place receiving 16 points. The fastest relay on each of the nine teams was also



Emily Saari



Emma Misner

awarded points with first place worth 32 points.

The Broncos' 200-yard medley relay team comprised of junior Abby Kostiuik, and sophomores Emily Saari, Emma Misner and Claire Herzig finished second in 2 minutes, 3.13 seconds – 4 seconds behind Duluth East's winning time. Misner added an individ-

ual runner-up finish in the 100 butterfly (1:08.04). Two Harbors senior Mara Boulanger won in 1:06.41. Falls' school record holder in the 100 butterfly, Kostiuik, was disqualified in that event.

Falls' top freestyle relay teams finished in the top five.

Kostiuk, Misner, Herzig and senior Tayler Hebner placed fourth in the 200 freestyle relay (1:52.35). Cloquet/Esko/Carlton won in 1:49.69.

Kostiuk, Hebner, Misner and sophomore Carolann Stone placed fifth in the 400 freestyle relay (4:15.92). Duluth East had the top time of 3:57.48.

The Broncos recorded a pair of top-five finishes in

the 100 breaststroke with Saari placing fourth in 1:15.83 and Herzig coming in fifth in 1:18.14. Herzig added a seventh-place finish in the 50 freestyle (28.18).

All three of the Broncos' divers contributed to the team score by finishing in the top 12. Senior Jessie Hell placed sixth with 289.3 points. Senior Kylie Skallman came in 10th at 251.3. Sophomore Josie Bates finished 12th at 220.

Other top-12 individual finishers for the Falls included, by name, place, event and time: Stone, eighth in 200 freestyle (2:21.78) and ninth in 100 backstroke (1:14.2); Saari, 11th in 200 individual medley (2:45.6); and Hebner, 12th in 50 free-

style (28.81) and 12th in 100 freestyle (1:05.37).

The Broncos return to action Thursday for a meet at Grand Rapids. The Falls isn't slated to have another home meet until Oct. 28 when they host Virginia for a dual meet that was initially set for last week, but has been rescheduled.

Taconite Invitational

**Team scores:** Duluth East 352, Two Harbors 223, Mesabi East 166, Cloquet/Esko/Carlton 153, International Falls 135, Virginia 126, Chisholm 88, Eveleth-Gilbert 72, Northeast Range/Ely 44.

International Falls finishers:

**1-meter diving** – 6. Jessie Hell, 289.3; 10. Kylie Skallman, 251.3; Josie Bates, 220.  
**200-yard medley relay** – 2. Abby

Kostiuk, Emily Saari, Emma Misner, Claire Herzig, 2:03.13.

**200 freestyle** – 8. Carolann Stone, 2:21.78; 14. Megan Herly, 2:28.37; 29. Reina Goulet, 2:51.9.

**200 individual medley** – 11. Saari, 2:45.6.

**50 freestyle** – 7. Herzig, 28.18; 12. Tayler Hebner, 28.81; 18. Anna Earley, 29.75; 22. Hannah Kruse, 30.41.

**100 butterfly** – 2. Misner, 1:08.04.

**100 freestyle** – 12. Hebner, 1:05.37; 22. Jayde Hall, 1:11.17; 29. Reina Goulet, 1:16.19.

**500 freestyle** – 13. Herly, 6:42.48.

**200 freestyle relay** – 4. Kostiuik, Hebner, Misner, Herzig, 1:52.35.

**100 backstroke** – 9. Stone, 1:14.2; 17. Kruse, 1:17.48.

**100 breaststroke** – 4. Saari, 1:15.83; 5. Herzig, 1:18.14; 16. Earley, 1:25.69.

**400 freestyle relay** – 5. Stone, Kostiuik, Hebner, Misner, 4:15.92.

SIJHL HOCKEY

North Stars fall in the final minute to Lakers

Meyer records goal, assist

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Colton Spicer's third goal of the game, coming with 42 seconds to play, helped lift the Fort Frances Lakers to a 6-5 victory Saturday night over the visiting Thunder Bay North Stars in Superior International Junior Hockey League action at Ice for Kids Arena.

Avery Siau opened the scoring for Thunder Bay just under 5 minutes into contest when he notched his first SIJHL goal.

Fort Frances then tied the game before the first period was over on Jarred Taylor's first league goal.

The North Stars took a 4-3 lead after 40 minutes on goals by Nicholas Nigro, Brett Wolframe and Joe Newhouse, while Mason Meyer and Spicer scored for the Lakers.

A Matt Vela power-play goal 39 seconds into the final period tied the game at 4-4, less than 40 seconds before Spicer put Fort Frances in front.

A power-play goal by the North Stars' Bran-



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

**From right, Lakers forward Mason Meyer of International Falls advances the puck while being pursued by North Stars defenseman Chase Stewart (2) in Saturday night's game at Ice for Kids Arena in Fort Frances. Meyer scored a goal and added an assist in the Lakers' 6-5 victory over the North Stars.**

don Kaarela with 1:13 to play tied the game, before Spicer won it for Fort Frances when he finished off his hat trick with an assist by Meyer.

Lakers goalie Ryan Ferguson stopped 14 of 15 shots he faced in 22 and a half minutes of relief of starter Devin Tappenden

to pick up the win for for Fort Frances.

Nathaniel Dupuis made 30 stops in the loss for Thunder Bay.

The Lakers improved to 3-1 on the season going into Tuesday night's game against the English River Miners at Red Lake Arena.

Twins fire manager Ron Gardenhire after 13 seasons

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Minnesota Twins fired manager Ron Gardenhire on Monday, saying it was time for a new voice after his 13-season tenure concluded with at least 92 losses in each of the last four years.

The move was made with one season left on Gardenhire's contract, ending the second-longest active tenure in the major leagues behind Mike Scioscia of the Angels.

"The reason for this change, I think it's safe to say, the last couple years we have not won enough games," Twins general manager Terry Ryan said. "That's what it comes down to. It's nothing more, nothing less than that."

Gardenhire played an integral role in the franchise's renaissance, guiding the Twins to their first of six American League Central division titles in 2002 in his first year on the job. But Gardenhire's teams only got out of the first round once, and his postseason record was 6-21 with the last win coming in 2004.

The Twins have long been the model of stability in not only baseball but major professional sports, with only two managers over the last 28 years and two general managers over the last 20 seasons.

But all the losing of late became too much to overcome. Over the last four years, the Twins went 78-148 from Aug. 1 on for an abysmal .345 winning percentage.

"I'm gone, I'm outta here because we didn't win," Gardenhire said. "That's what it gets down to in baseball. That's what it should get down to. You have to win on the field and these last four years have been tough for all of us."

The Twins finished this season at 70-92, making Gardenhire just the fourth manager in the game's history to preside over at least four straight 90-loss seasons with the same team, joining Connie Mack of the Philadelphia Athletics (nine), Zach Taylor of the St. Louis Browns (four) and his predecessor with the Twins, Tom Kelly (four). Kelly returned for one more season after his streak, and he retired after an 85-77 finish in 2001.

In an era when job security for managers is seemingly measured in months, Gardenhire's longevity has been truly unique. The outspoken and fiery Gardenhire quickly became one of the faces of the franchise, as synonymous with the Twins as the interlocking T and C on their caps. He took over for the revered Kelly, who won two World Series championships, just as the organization was starting to regain its footing after years of bad baseball.

"I feel like he's my brother, not my manager," said a glassy-eyed Ryan, who has known Gardenhire dating back to their days together in the New York Mets system in the 1980s.

Ryan spent some time away from the organization this year to get treatment for cancer. He said Monday that a recent physical came back favorable and that he will return to the Twins next season. Shortly after getting the good news on his health, he turned his attention to



Ron Gardenhire

Gardenhire's job status.

Ryan offered Gardenhire a chance to remain in the organization. Gardenhire lauded the Twins organization during the news conference, saying he "was grateful to be a part of it." But he said he wanted to take some time to evaluate his options and still feels he has the competitive fire to be a manager.

"I would have loved to have won a World Series, but that didn't happen," Gardenhire said. "Maybe it's still to come."

Gardenhire clashed with some players over the years, but there was expectation and hope among the players that he would return.

"We as players had a responsibility to the organization, fans, and coaches to win this season," starting pitcher Phil Hughes tweeted. "We failed."

Gardenhire joined the organization in 1987 and was added to Kelly's staff in 1991. His record as Twins manager was 1,068-1,039. He won the American League Manager of the Year award in 2010, the last time the Twins not only made the playoffs but had a winning record.

"As good as it gets in my opinion. Comes to the park ready to win each and every day. Kind of a players' manager," second baseman Brian Dozier said last week. "Always in good spirits. He knows the game better than anybody I've been around. I 100 percent want him back."

The contracts of Gardenhire's coaches were expiring, but some of them could be brought back. Bench coach Paul Molitor is sure to be considered as Gardenhire's replacement, but Ryan's search will spread outside the organization, too.

Ryan gave Gardenhire a two-year contract after last season, blaming himself for the roster he assembled. But this winter, the Twins spent big on Hughes and fellow right-hander Ricky Nolasco in an attempt to upgrade the rotation. Veteran catcher Kurt Suzuki was added.

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