

SPORTS



L-BF football
Vikings prepare for
Aug. 29 season opener

B2

QUICK HITS

Johnson backed for head hockey coach

An assistant coach the past two seasons for the International Falls boys hockey team is being recommended as the next head coach.

The hiring of Ross Johnson for the head coaching position is on Monday's school board agenda.

Falls athletic director Kevin Grover said Johnson has received the unanimous recommendation of a four-person interview committee.

If approved by the board, Johnson would replace Bruce Elson, who did not have his head coaching contract renewed by the board last month after two seasons in the position. Johnson and Tom Biondich were Elson's assistants for both seasons.

The Bronco boys hockey team compiled a 27-23-4 overall record over the past two seasons and finished 12-11-4 last season.

Though Elson's non-renewal as the head boys hockey coach did not affect him being able to return as a physical education teacher at Falls High School, he has requested an unpaid leave of absence for up to five years to take care of his father. That request is on Monday's board agenda.

Coca-Cola repeats as slowpitch champs

Coca-Cola has repeated as the International Falls men's slowpitch champion after winning Tuesday night's deciding title game over Super One/Hardee's, 17-7.

In the five-team, double-elimination playoffs, Super One/Hardee's had previously lost to Coca-Cola, but forced the final game with a 22-14 victory Tuesday.

Super One/Hardee's ended up playing three games Tuesday evening and first won an elimination game over Up North Builders/City Cab, 14-7, to face Coca-Cola for the championship.

Coca-Cola, the top seed in the playoffs, ended up with a 3-1 playoff record and finished 15-1 during the regular season.

This year's championship team members included Jordan Christianson (captain), Ames Bryant, Mike Menard, Matt MacKenzie, Chris Heibel, Christian Kittelson, Chris Little, Danny Eldien, Willie Corrin, Kyle Potter, Ryan Tomevi, Jace Baldwin, Bill Bright and Billy Boyd.

Bass Dash 5K Run/Walk set for Aug. 24

The third annual "Bass Dash 5K Run/Walk" will be held at Smokey Bear Park starting at 9 a.m. Aug. 24, the Saturday of the ninth annual International Falls Bass Championship.

The 5-kilometer course, which will finish inside the main tent at the park, is the same as last year.

Medals will be awarded to the top-three males and females in seven age divisions.

The run/walk entry fee is now \$25. Registration forms are available at www.ifallsbass.com and at the Chamber of Commerce and Stride Fitness.

Registrations may be mailed with checks payable to: International Falls Bass Dash, P. O. Box 906, International Falls, MN 56649.

Registration/shirt pick-up will take place at the Smokey Bear Park Pavilion from 6-8 p.m. on Aug. 23 and from 7:30-8:30 a.m. on race day.

For more information, contact Betsy Brokaw at 324-0665, or email ifbassdash@yahoo.com.

FCC MEN'S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

Cocanour wins his second title

2013 champ overcomes penalty after hitting the wrong ball

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

Despite incurring a two-stroke penalty for hitting the wrong ball, Mike Cocanour golfed well enough on the final nine holes Tuesday to win the Falls Country Club Men's Club Championship.

Cocanour, 24, now a two-time club champion, finished with an even-par 109 for 27 holes, a stroke ahead of two runners-up, Derek Riley and Brady Walls.

"I played a really good round out there and ran into a little trouble on No. 3 hitting the wrong ball (during the final nine holes)," Cocanour said. "But contrary to what I thought, I didn't get angry, and that's kind of what kept me grounded."

Cocanour, who grew up in Arizona and the Falls, carded a one-over 73 after the first 18 holes and had been two strokes off the lead behind Riley, a 2011 Falls High School graduate who was a state qualifier on the Bronco boys golf team.

Current FHS golfer Eric Cann was in second place a stroke behind Riley with a 72, while another current FHS golfer, Walls, was tied with Cocanour as they made up the top foursome to play the final nine holes.

The four other golfers who qualified to play the final nine holes for the club championship — Travis Blais, Jeff Shermoen, Mike



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

Mike Cocanour putts on hole No. 5 en route to winning Tuesday's Falls Country Club Men's Club Championship. Cocanour, who won the tournament for the second time, finished with a 27-hole score of 109.

Katrin and Rick Anderson — each carded a 77 after the first 18 holes.

Cocanour and the fourth-place finisher, Blais, each had the top score for the final nine holes at 36. Blais, last year's club champion with an even-par 109, ended up this year with a 113 for 27 holes.

The two-stroke penalty

Cocanour received on hole No. 3 occurred when he hit Riley's ball on the second shot, initially believing that the shorter tee shot was his ball.

"(Riley) usually hits (tee shots) a little longer than I do and it ended up costing me two strokes," Cocanour said. "But I gathered my emotions and hit a good shot

and made the putts."

The 2013 men's club tournament attracted 43 golfers, who were divided into six flights. The first flight that included the championship was based on the gross score, while flights 2-6 used the net score to determine the top-three finishers, who received gift certificates from the Falls Country Club.

2013 FCC Men's Club Championship

- August 13 — 43 players
- Champion**
Mike Cocanour 73-36 - 109
- Senior Champion**
Bill Hughes 76
- First Flight**
1. Mike Cocanour
2. (tie) Derek Riley
Brady Walls
4. Travis Blais
- Second Flight**
1. Mike Katrin
2. Bart Vollmer
3. Chris Raboin
- Third Flight**
1. Eric Cann
2. Rick Anderson
3. Brian Youso
- Fourth Flight**
1. Poncho Krantz
2. Bob Davis
3. (tie) Ken Moss
Brian Werner
Bob Rostie
- Fifth Flight**
1. Ryan Tomevi
2. Jordan Christianson
3. Terry Burns
- Sixth Flight**
1. Wayne Kasich
2. Bob Ewald
3. Merlin Holm

Among golfers age 50 and older who played 18 holes, Bill Hughes repeated as the senior champion after carding a 76. Hughes had also won the Pete Peterson Senior Tournament on Aug. 1.

Falls Country Club PGA professional Tom O'Connell said the final event of the season will be the Frostbite Falls Scramble on Sept. 7 when more than 100 golfers are expected to participate in the 18-hole, four-person scramble.

L-BF spikers prepare for 2013 season

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

About 35 girls in grades 7-12 began practicing this week when the Littlefork-Big Falls volleyball team officially started organized practices for the 2013 season.

The Vikings, who advanced to the Section 7A semifinals in 2012 when they finished with an overall match record of 20-4-1, have only lost two players to graduation.

Sarah Bradley enters her third year as L-BF's head coach. The Vikings open the season at home Thursday against Mesabi East and host nearby rival International Falls on Aug. 29.



Brooke Millerbernd digs out the ball in Wednesday morning's practice.

A detailed season preview will be published in The Journal's Aug. 21 edition.



STAFF PHOTOS BY KEVIN BONESKE

Abby Thompson spikes the ball during Wednesday morning's volleyball practice in the Littlefork-Big Falls High School gym.



Littlefork-Big Falls volleyball players give each other ball massages as head coach Sarah Bradley looks on in back at right during Wednesday morning's practice.