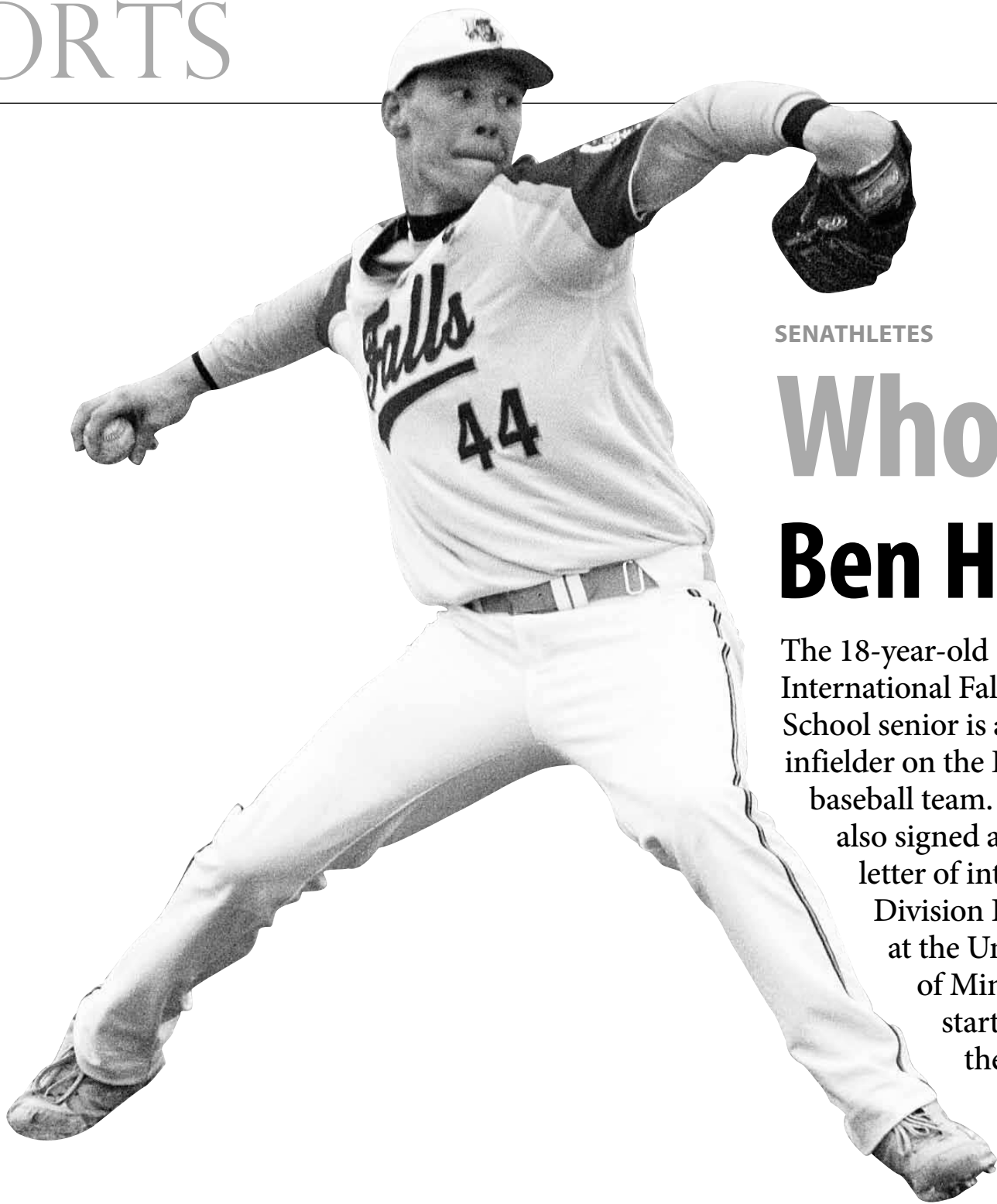


SPORTS



SENATHLETES

Who is...
Ben Humbert

The 18-year-old International Falls High School senior is a pitcher/infielder on the Bronco boys baseball team. He has also signed a national letter of intent to play Division I baseball at the University of Minnesota starting in the 2015-16 season.

Birthday: January 10, 1997	Favorite meal: Steak and potatoes	Favorite team as a kid: Minnesota Twins	Your motto: Look good, feel good, play good.
Future plans: Play Major League Baseball	Worst habit: Cutting myself shaving	Favorite city to visit: San Diego	Favorite memory about your high school career: Playing for and with the people I did and being able to put on a jersey.
What's on TV: That '70s Show	Biggest pet peeve: Jealousy	Favorite holiday: Christmas	Favorite thing to do that has nothing to do with sports: Eat food
Favorite music: Wiz Khalifa	Talent I'd most like to have: To be wise	Your hero: Molly Pavleck	Dream job: To not have one
Favorite movies: Lone Survivor, The Town	Favorite athlete to watch: Blake Griffin	Top-three things on your bucket list: Own a bar and grill. Bull ride. Have my own statue outside a stadium.	
What do you drive: 1997 Ford F-150	Dream date: Madison Filipiak		

Baseball careers often start with winter grunt work

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — Long before any of that major league money starts landing in their bank accounts, most players are in a similar predicament as everyone else in the regular workforce.

Between baseball seasons there are no paychecks and bills don't stop for the winter. So they need to find some other income.

"Especially the guys who got picked in the 10th round and above," Minnesota Twins reliever Casey Fien said. "I signed for \$500 and a plane ticket. So I had to go out and earn my money."

He went to Costco.

The right arm that would eventually fetch Fien a \$1.38 million salary from the Twins for 2015 was once used for stacking crates, pallets and boxes at the bulk retail giant's location in San Luis Obispo, California. Drafted in the 20th round in 2006 by Detroit, Fien showed up for five-hour night shifts at the store during his off-seasons until making his major league debut in 2009 with the Tigers.

First-round draft picks receive multi-million-dollar signing bonuses, but by the 10th round, players get around \$140,000 in guarantees. The bonuses drop sharply further down the board.

Minor league living is hardly large. Meal money, for one, is tough to stretch beyond Pizza Hut and pales in comparison to the majors. The minimum salary for a player in Class A is \$1,100 per month over a five-month season. In Triple-A, it's \$2,150 per month. Prospects on the 40-man roster make at least \$41,400 annually while they're still in the minors, but that's a category that covers only up to 15 of the 150-plus minor leaguers in most organizations.

Unglamorous jobs outside the game can be important, humbling reminders for aspiring major leaguers to appreciate their athletic talent and opportunity. After all, this placeholder work can be a career for others.

Twins bullpen coach Eddie Guardado gained that perspective at a bait shop in his Stockton, California, hometown during the 1994-95 strike, when his major league career was just beginning.

"Spring training drags, absolutely, but guess what? It beats coming to the bait shop and shelling clams," Guardado said.

Being hired can be another matter, though. Players are typically only available from October through February, if they're not invited to instructional league or Latin American winter ball. They need time to train, too, so hours can be tricky.

"I interviewed about 15 places and heard back from one," said Twins prospect Taylor Rogers, recalling his 2013-14 offseason with a Denver-area substance abuse counseling service for offenders on probation.

An internship was offered, but he couldn't make himself available enough. So he was assigned to supervise urinalysis testing instead.

"To make sure they weren't doing any drugs. So I would watch them do that. I didn't have to handle the samples. I just made sure they weren't tampering with it," Rogers said. "It just kind of happened where I couldn't find anything else. It's tough to get a seasonal part-time job."

Rogers, an 11th-round pick in 2012 out of Kentucky who pitched last year for Minnesota's Double-A affiliate, considered joining relatives who are firefighters and carpenters, but the occupations aren't ideal for a guy trying to stay healthy and fit for baseball.

"That kind of takes down the percentage of jobs you can find where you're not going to wear yourself out or risk putting a nail into your finger," Rogers said.

There's less risk at the grocery store, but makes for amusing encounters. Working one winter at the Rainbow Foods in his hometown of Shoreview, Minnesota, Twins pitching prospect Mark Hamburger noticed the team's minor league director in the next line.

"I was wearing my apron and everything," Hamburger said, smiling. "He was like, 'Mark Hamburger! What are you doing here?' Then I said, 'Well, you know I didn't really get too big of a signing bonus, so I've got to do stuff,' and he was like, 'Oh, nice to see you.'"

Former pitcher Garrett Broshius, who spent six seasons in the San Francisco Giants system, dabbled in personal training while making minor league money, and spent a couple winters with a cognitive psychologist on memory research. His ballplayer friends varied widely on work. One sold women's shoes at Macy's over the holidays. Another worked for a dog-walking service. Then there was the Jimmy John's sandwich delivery guy.

"On a bike he bought off of Craigslist," Broshius said. "Apparently the brakes didn't work too well, so it didn't seem too safe."

Sometimes, staying in the sport is best. Fien dabbled in pitching lessons to supplement the warehouse work, for example. Others try to plant the seeds of a sustainable second career.

Miami Marlins pitching prospect Pat Urckfitz started his own hunting calls business three years ago. Yep, just like the bearded Robertson family on the reality show "Duck Dynasty."

Beaver Creek Game Calls sells handmade (by Urckfitz himself), hand-tuned callers for duck, goose, deer and turkey hunters. The shop is open four months a year between baseball seasons. His partners take the calls to trade shows around the country.

TUESDAY MUSICALE & BACKUS COMMUNITY CENTER

Present
The Sixth Annual
BORDERLAND
MUSICAL SHOWCASE

Featuring
Borderland Students, Local Musicians
and
Summer Music Camp Scholarship Recipients

SUNDAY MARCH 29, 2015
3:00 P.M.
BACKUS COMMUNITY CENTER
Admission: Free Will Offering

Proceeds Benefit
Tuesday Musicale Music Camp
Scholarship Fund and
Backus Community Center

BACKUS Community Center
1324 N. 9th St., Int'l Falls, MN 56641
(218) 283-8642

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"Backus is fully accessible to persons with disabilities -
Please call our office for specific accommodations"

This activity is made possible in part with funds from the
NORTHLAND FOUNDATION

TEAM GRACIE BENEFIT

GRACIE'S STORY:

A precious girl, named Gracie Bahr, has recently been diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma. Her friends in International Falls have gathered to support Gracie and her family in this journey, and would like to invite you to the Team Gracie "Fight Like a Girl" Benefit. We hope you will join us.

WHEN: THURSDAY, APRIL 16th
TIME: 4:30PM TO 8:00PM
LOCATION: EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH - 1631 1ST AVE. E, INT'L FALLS

*Sloppy Joes, Chips, Uncle Frankie's Famous Beans, Desserts & Beverages

FREE WILL DONATION

TABLE RAFFLE ~ PRIZES ~ RAFFLE TICKETS

If you are unable to attend and would like to donate, you can mail or drop off your donations at TruStar - The Gracie Bahr Fund.

~Supplemental Funding Provided by Kootasca Thriving Financial
~Mann Carriage Rides

Holy Week Schedule

In solemn remembrance of the Lord Jesus' Passion, and in joyful celebration of His resurrection, you are invited to join us for Holy Week services at St. Paul Lutheran Church - LCMS
1324 Ninth Street - Int'l Falls. MN 218-283-8642

Mauudy Thursday Service: 5:00 pm.
Good Friday Service: 7:00 pm.
Easter Morning: Breakfast 9:00 am.
Worship Service: 10:45 am.