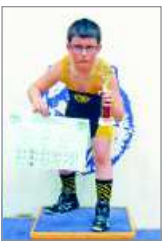


SPORTS



Mighty Mustang Youth Wrestling

Hudson Mann first at south state meet

B2

QUICK HITS

FHS track meet at UWS postponed

The International Falls boys and girls track and field teams' indoor meet that was scheduled last Friday at the University of Wisconsin-Superior was postponed amid the snowy weather.

As a result, the Broncos didn't open the season until Tuesday at the Paul Bunyan Invite, an indoor meet at Bemidji State University.

Results from that meet, which finished after the production deadline for today's paper, will be published in Saturday's edition of The Journal.

Ben Gordon 3 assists in playoff-clinching win over St. Charles

Tulsa Oilers forward Ben Gordon of International Falls recorded three assists Sunday when Tulsa clinched a spot in the Central Hockey League playoffs for the first time in three years with a 6-3 home victory over the St. Charles Chill.

Gordon is presently on a six-game point streak for the Oilers, who are 32-28-3 with three games left in the regular season and could finish anywhere from fifth to eighth in the final CHL standings.

Another Tulsa player from the Falls, Drew Fisher, is one of four on the Oilers' roster to have played in all 63 games this season.

Tulsa closes out the regular season this coming weekend with road games Friday and Saturday at Missouri and then hosts the finale Sunday against the Denver Cutthroats.

FHS Alumni hoops tourney April 18-19

Teams are now forming for Falls High School's 2014 Alumni Basketball Tournament that will be held April 18-19 in the FHS gymnasium.

This year's tournament, which is a fund-raiser for the Bronco basketball program, includes three divisions — a women's Open Division, a men's Masters Division (35 and older) and a men's Open Division — and is open to FHS Alumni or their relatives.

The goal this year is to have at least six teams in the men's Open Division, four teams in the men's Masters Division and three teams in the women's Open Division.

The entrance fee for players, who will receive a jersey/T-shirt, is \$25. The entrance fee for spectators is \$5 for adults and \$2 for students.

The games start at 7 p.m. April 18 and at 9 a.m. April 19.

For more information, contact Charlie Anderson (canderson@isd361.k12.mn.us) or Chris Oustad (chrisoustad@yahoo.com). Registration forms may be obtained on the school district's website at: www.isd361.k12.mn.us.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Friday's games

Women's softball

RRCC vs. Fergus Falls/Rochester in Crossover Tourney at Rosemount Irish Dome, 2/6 p.m.

Saturday's games

Women's softball

RRCC vs. Riverland/Dawson in Crossover Tourney at Rosemount Irish Dome, 8/10 a.m.

Men's baseball

RRCC at Dakota Wesleyan JV (DH), 1/3 p.m.

BOYS BASEBALL PREVIEW

Broncos seek Arrowhead, 7AA titles

Falls experienced from last year's tournament play

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

After finishing runner-up last year in Section 7AA, the International Falls boys baseball team will be seeking a trip to state in 2014.

The Broncos finished 17-6 overall last year after losing the Section 7AA title game to Hermantown and were Arrowhead Conference champions during the regular season.

The team's individual honors in 2013 included infielder/outfielder/pitcher Gunnar Anderson, infielder/pitcher Caleb Dahlin, infielder/pitcher Ben Humbert and pitcher/catcher Wyatt Ulrich being named to the All-Section 7AA Team. Anderson, Humbert and Ulrich also received All-Arrowhead Conference honors.

Eric Walls enters his second season as Falls' head coach with his list of key returning players from last season including:

■ Ulrich, a senior who had a .481 batting average and a 4-1 pitching record with a 2.44 ERA.

■ Humbert, a junior who had .378 batting average and a 6-1 pitching



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

Broncos infielder Jackson Vollom relays a throw during a baseball practice last week in the Falls High School gym.

record with a 1.40 ERA.

■ Infielder Luke Spilde, a senior who had a .383 batting average.

The Broncos' key losses from last year include Anderson and Dahlin,

who have both graduated, and pitcher/catcher Jack Mellstrom, who has moved to Windom.

Walls, who was also the head coach last summer of Falls' VFW baseball

team, for which many of the Broncos played and qualified for the state tournament, said the strengths of this year's team include experience and team defense.

He said the 2013 team had been "fairly young" and "gained valuable experience last season with our Section 7AA run, and our state tournament appearance in VFW last August."

However, Walls said this year's team is lacking "experienced pitching depth."

He said the team goals in 2014 include winning both the Arrowhead Conference and Section 7AA championships.

Walls said the lingering wintry weather could once again affect the team's schedule.

"I am concerned with the weather causing us to have multiple games a week like last season, and not having enough pitching depth to handle the quantity of games in a short period of time," he said.

The Broncos' first game, weather permitting, is scheduled for April 8 at Hibbing. The first home game is set for April 10 against Cherry.

Walls said he is looking forward this season to "watching our team improve during the season, and peak come playoff time to make a push for a Section 7AA title."

He said the teams to watch out for in 2014 include Hermantown, which "is always a threat in 7AA as well as Cloquet, Esko and Mora."

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

Voyageurs 6-3 after opening week at Irish Dome

RRCC back inside for four more games this weekend

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

After nine games in three days last week inside the Rosemount Irish Dome, the Rainy River Community College softball team is now 6-3 for the season, winning two out of three games each day.

"Nine games in three days is a lot of softball," said RRCC head coach Dieter Humbert, who also noted the team has a "lot of reasons for optimism" this season after last week.

The Voyageurs' final six games late last week were

all against Minnesota College Athletic Conference teams — three games against MCAC North opponents they are scheduled to face outside later this season and another three games against Southern Division teams.

RRCC opened play Thursday morning with a 6-3 victory over Minnesota West.

Oashaja Dobie pitched all seven innings for the Voyageurs, allowing three runs, one earned, on two hits with six walks while striking out nine.

In the field, the Voyageurs committed two errors.



Oashaja Dobie



Andrea Barylksi



Rachel Clark



Alisha Brinker

"Oashaja did a good job pitching," Humbert said. "We played pretty good defense."

RRCC tallied 11 hits for the game with Dobie batting 3-3 and picking up three singles. Alisha Brinker added a double and a triple with 4 RBI, Andrea Barylksi had two singles and Megan Johnson doubled

with an RBI.

RRCC 4, ITASCA 0

The Voyageurs shut out Itasca, 4-0, in their second game Thursday morning.

Dobie pitched the complete-game shutout victory, allowing only two hits with a walk and a hit batter while striking out eight over seven innings.

"Oashaja pitched really

well," Humbert said.

RRCC's defense went error free for the game.

At the plate, nine different players accounted for the Voyageurs' 10 hits with Rachel Clark recording a pair of singles. Dobie and Brinker each doubled.

RIDGEWATER 4, RRCC 1

The Voyageurs lost their final game Thursday against Ridgewater, 4-1.

Dobie, who pitched all three of Thursday's games for RRCC in their entirety, gave up three of the four earned runs in the opening inning. She also allowed eight hits while ending up with 10 strikeouts over seven innings.

Voyageurs to B2 ►

SIJHL HOCKEY

Lakers down North Stars, next face English River

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

A Kyle Lipinski power-play goal midway through the second period turned out to be the game-winner Friday when the Fort Frances Lakers shut out the Thunder Bay North Stars, 3-0, in the finale of the No. 1 vs. No. 2 Showdown in opening-round Superior International Junior Hockey League playoff action at Ice for Kids Arena.

With the victory, the Lakers win the two-game, total-goal series, 6-4, and earned the right to choose their semifinal opponent in round two.

After Lipinski's five-on-three advantage goal, Lucas DeBenedet of International Falls scored assisted by fellow Falls

native Mason Meyer to give Fort Frances a 2-0 lead with 2:01 to go in the second period.

The score stayed that way until the final minute of the final period when Bryce Lipinski iced the game with an empty-net goal at 19:26.

Lakers goalie Devin Tappenden turned aside all 25 shots he faced to record the shutout victory, while Eric Mann stopped 35 of 37 shots fired his way in defeat for Thunder Bay. **LAKERS TO FACE MINERS**

After winning the No. 1 vs. No. 2 Showdown series over the North Stars, the Lakers have opted to go up against the No. 4 English River Miners, who won their opening-round series over the No. 5 Dryden Ice Dogs, 4-2.



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

From left, Lakers forward Mason Meyer (9) of the Falls works the puck along the boards while being pursued by North Stars defenseman Bryce Martyn (21) in Friday's SIJHL playoff game at Ice for Kids Arena in Fort Frances.

The league's other semifinal match-up will feature the No. 2 North Stars taking on the No. 3 Minnesota Iron Rangers.

Both semifinals will be best-of-seven series with Fort Frances and Thunder Bay having home ice for Games 1 and 2 and, if neces-

sary, Games 5 and 7.

The game schedule for each semifinal series will be announced once finalized.