

# SPORTS



**Gophers football**  
Can Minnesota take next step?  
**B2**

FCC MEN'S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

## Travis Blais wins his 3rd men's club title



Travis Blais, shown teeing off on hole No. 6, won the men's club championship Tuesday at the Falls Country Club with a 27-hole score of 103.

STAFF PHOTOS BY KEVIN BONESKE

### Stormy weather temporarily halts final nine

BY KEVIN BONESKE  
Sports Editor

A burst of strong wind and heavy rain on the final nine Tuesday couldn't stop Travis Blais from winning his third men's club championship at the Falls Country Club. Blais, a 2009 Falls High School graduate who last won the tournament in 2012, led by four strokes after the first 18 holes when he was the only player to shoot under par with a 70. His 33 on the final nine also topped the leaderboard as he finished with a 27-hole total of 103, seven strokes ahead of runner-up Derek Riley, a 2011 FHS graduate, at 110. "I played better than the other times (I won the men's club championship)," Blais said. "It was a really good round (Tuesday), a really good final nine." Blais was in the same foursome on the final nine that included Riley and the third-place finisher, Mike Katrin, a senior golfer who was tied with Riley for second after the first 18 holes at 74 and carded a 39 on the final nine to finish at 113. After the first 18 holes featured sunny playing conditions, the top foursome in the championship flight encountered stormy weather on hole No. 2, where they temporarily halted play before the rain subsided. Weather conditions improved as the final nine resumed with the rain going away and wind calming down as the sun poked through the clouds to close out the tournament. "That happens sometimes, but rain comes and you've just got to wait it out," Blais said. "Luckily this passed over, and we had clear sailing for the last six holes." Blais also caught a break



Mike Katrin lines up a putt on hole No. 9 at the Falls Country Club while competing Tuesday in the men's club championship, in which he finished third with a 27-hole score of 113.



Glenn Walls tees off on hole No. 3 while competing Tuesday in the men's club championship at the Falls Country Club. Walls placed fourth with a 27-hole score of 115.

on hole No. 7, where his tee shot headed toward the tall grass next to a water hazard. He was awarded a drop because of how the ball landed and then ended up with a birdie after chipping on the green and one-putting. "I was just out of a hazard, plugged and in casual water, so I got a drop from that," Blais said. "I just had enough room to get it over the weeds in the pond." Glenn Walls, a 2011 FHS

Golf to B2 >

## L-BF fall practices begin with returning head coaches

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Players as well as previous head coaches returned this week to begin formal practices for Littlefork-Big Falls' fall sports. Kim Wimmer has returned as L-BF's head volleyball coach, a position held the past three seasons by Sarah Bradley. Wimmer, who previously was in charge of the team from 2005-2010, opens her seventh season as head coach on Aug. 21 at Mesabi East. The Vikings' first home match is Aug. 26 against Cherry. Derek Bilben is back as the head coach of L-BF's football team. Bilben last coached the team in 2011 in his seventh season in charge of the football program and now replaces John Larson, who held the position the past two seasons and left the district for a teaching position in Warroad. Bilben, who noted 18 players have come out for the Vikings' nine-man team in 2014, will coach the season opener Aug. 28 at South Ridge. L-BF's first home game is Sept. 5 against Bigfork. L-BF also is at home Sept. 12 against Ely.



From front, the Vikings' Darian Erickson runs with the football while Rylan Henrickson looks on in Wednesday morning's practice.



In front from left, the Vikings' Amanda Nelson and Karly Swenson battle at the net during Wednesday's volleyball practice in the Littlefork-Big Falls new gym.

STAFF PHOTOS BY KEVIN BONESKE