

SPORTS

Falls hockey trio returning to Tulsa Oilers

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

A trio of hockey players from International Falls will be back together for a third consecutive season with the Tulsa Oilers.

The Central Hockey League team on Wednesday announced the re-signing of forwards Ben Gordon, Drew Fisher and Ryan Cramer.

Gordon led the Oilers in goals (36) and points (89) for 2013-14 and was named to the All-CHL Team. The 29-year-old Gordon last season recorded five hat tricks and 22 multi-point games.

He grabbed CHL Player of the Week honors three times last season and was selected as the CHL Player of the Month for February. The 5-foot-10, 180-pound center also recorded a team-high four goals in the postseason.

For his efforts on and off the ice, Gordon was chosen as the team's Most Valuable Player, Offensive Player of the Year and also received the Oilers' Community Service Award. In two full seasons in Tulsa, Gordon has appeared in 113 games and has registered 155 points (62 goals, 93 assists).

"Tulsa is really starting to feel like home for me and my family and I'm looking forward to the challenge of helping push this team to a championship," said Gordon, who is entering his seventh season of pro hockey. "This organiza-

tion has really taken care of me, they've treated me extremely well and I want to do whatever I can to show my appreciation and give these fans the kind of hockey they deserve. With a lot of guys back from last season and some new pieces in place, I think we're in for an exciting season."

Oilers head coach Bruce Ramsay said re-signing Gordon was a "huge priority for us during the offseason."

"There is no question that Ben is one of the best players in our league and one of the top players in minor pro hockey," Ramsay said. "His leadership and his talent on the ice make everyone around him a better player and that's exactly the kind of guy every team needs. We feel very fortunate to have Ben around for another year."

Fisher, another Falls native who also happens to be Gordon's brother-in-law, suited up for all 66 games last season and tallied 10 goals with 22 assists and 30 penalty minutes.

Fisher, who closed out his collegiate hockey career at Bemidji State University, began playing pro hockey with the Oilers at the end of the 2011-12 season. In the two years since his debut, the 27-year-old Fisher has played in 144 consecutive games as an Oiler.

The 6-foot-3, 215-pound winger finished seventh in the CHL in rookie scoring



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY KYLE PYLE OF WWW.PHOTOPLYE.COM

Tulsa Oilers forward Ben Gordon of International Falls has re-signed with the Central Hockey League team for 2014-15, his third consecutive season on the Oilers, who will also have Falls natives Drew Fisher and Ryan Cramer back on the team.

for 2012-13 with 40 points (16 goals, 24 assists).

"My wife and I really love it here in Tulsa, we have family and great friends here, so it's definitely special to be able to keep coming back to the same place and the same team," Fisher said. "So many players in minor league hockey bounce around from city to city and I feel very lucky to be able to stay in the same place. The fans in Tulsa are incredible and I hope this team can take another big step this season."

The third member of the Falls trio, Cramer, like

Fisher, has played every game of his pro career in an Oilers sweater. A 6-foot-2, 210-pound center or right wing, Cramer arrived in Tulsa for the Oilers' 2011 playoff run and has gone on to record 85 points (41 goals, 46 assists) over the course of 178 total games.

In 2011-12, his first full season as a pro, Cramer posted career highs in goals (17), assists (21) and points (38). After putting up 33 points in 2012-13, the 28-year old registered 16 points last season.

"I grew up playing hockey alongside Ben and Drew

and to have those guys as teammates for another season is a big part of why I wanted to come back," Cramer said. "You don't see it too much at this level of hockey where three guys from the same small town can play on the same team and it's something I don't take for granted. It's going to be another fun season for all of us and I'm excited to get it started."

The Oilers open training camp Oct. 13 and begin the 2014-15 CHL season Oct. 24 on the road against the defending champion Allen Americans.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

- Tuesday's games**
Girls volleyball
Bigfork at L-BF, 7 p.m.
I. Falls at North Woods, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday's games**
Women's volleyball
Mesabi Range at RRCC, 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday's games**
Cross country
I. Falls at Roseau, 4 p.m.
Girls swimming/diving
Eveleth-Gilbert at I. Falls, 4:30 p.m.
Girls volleyball
L-BF at Northland, 7 p.m.

Voyageur spikers 1-1 at Rapids triangular

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The Rainy River Community College volleyball team went 1-1 Wednesday in two best-of-five matches at a triangular in Grand Rapids.

RRCC won its first match in four games over St. Cloud Tech, 20-25, 25-22, 25-22, 25-19. The Voyageurs' statistical leaders included: DyAna Imhof, 14 kills and four ace serves; Kate Howell, 10 kills; Jasmine Draper, 21 digs; Brooke Millerbernd, 12 digs; and Tali Plate, 29 set assists.



DyAna Imhof



Kate Howell

RRCC then lost to Itasca in three straight games, 27-29, 19-25, 22-25. Howell had 12 kills with Imhof adding eight more. Draper recorded 29 digs, while Millerbernd picked up another 10. Plate registered 22 set assists.

The Voyageurs, whose season match record now stands at 3-3, return to action next Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. when they host Mesabi Range to open Minnesota College Athletic Conference Northern Division play.

RRCC was initially scheduled to begin its MCAC North schedule on the Friday before Labor Day with a road match against Fond du Lac, but Voyageurs head coach Mel Millerbernd said the Thunder dropped volleyball this year because of a lack of participants.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL



STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN BONESKE

From left, the Vikings' Amanda Nelson hits the ball into blocking opposition from Cherry's Natalie Anderson (9) and Joely Roberts (5) in Tuesday night's match in the Littlefork-Big Falls High School gym.

L-BF Vikings drop match to Cherry in five games

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

The Littlefork-Big Falls volleyball team went the distance Tuesday night in its home opener against Cherry before losing the match in five games, 28-26, 18-25, 25-18, 8-25 and 11-15.

"We had moments in the match where we looked just great," said L-BF head coach Kim Wimmer. "We played the volleyball that we want to play... and then there were obviously moments where we didn't play the greatest, so we have to figure out how to take those great stretches and do those stretches consistently, so that we can come up with some wins."

Wimmer said there were

moments in the match where both teams had trouble returning serves from the other side.

"They had some tough servers, they had some tough hitters and they played smart volleyball," she said. "There were times in the game where we did the same."

The Tigers led most of the first game, in which the Vikings waged a comeback at the end to win after trailing 24-21.

Cherry overcame an early 2-0 deficit in game two and then led by as much as 10 points before winning by seven.

L-BF dominated the start of game three, leading by as much as 12 points before the Tigers waged a comeback to

cut the deficit to two, then the Vikings pulled away at the end to win by seven.

Cherry ran away early with game four before winning by 17 points.

L-BF held a lead early in the fifth and deciding game, before the Tigers broke a 5-5 tie and never trailed again on the way to winning by four points.

The Vikings' statistical leaders included: Amanda Nelson, nine kills and two ace serves; Breann Larson, 20 digs and six kills; Emily Knaeble, 28 digs; Sydney Wendt, 12 assists; and Taylor Wendt, 10 assists.

The match loss kept L-BF winless on the season going into Thursday's local rivalry at International Falls.

CITY OF RANIER
NOTICE OF OPEN FORUM
RANIER COMMUNITY HALL
9/11/14 @ 6:30 PM
PROPOSED LAND USE/ZONING
ORDINANCE

PRIOR TO THE OPEN FORUM,
PLEASE REVIEW THE DRAFT LAND
USE ORDINANCE ON
THE CITY'S WEBSITE @ raniermn.govoffice2.com.
WRITTEN COMMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED
AND CAN BE PROVIDED TO THE CITY
BY E-MAIL @ cityofranier@frontiernet.net
OR DELIVERED TO THE CITY OFFICE.



Perry
looks forward to meeting
all community members.
Everyone Welcome!

**ALL FUNDS RAISED
WILL SUPPORT
CAMPAIGN**

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Perry Hedlund.
Treasurer Andy Hedlund • 1402 16th St., Int'l Falls, MN

Join us for the

PERRY HEDLUND
Campaign Fundraiser

FISH FRY
Thursday, September 4th • 6-8pm
at **THE ELK'S CLUB**

ELECT

Perry
HEDLUND
KOOCHICHING COUNTY SHERIFF