

SPORTS



Who is...
Andrew Snyder, Bronco boys basketball senior guard, is featured

B2

QUICK HITS

FHS boys hoops team cut down in Cloquet

The International Falls boys basketball team ran into a proverbial buzz saw Tuesday night in Cloquet when the Broncos were chopped down by the Lumberjacks, 88-24.

Falls head coach Derek Dowty said the team didn't come ready to play and didn't have much to show statistically with Cody Hallin and Ben Humbert being the leading scorers with 9 points apiece.

The Broncos, who trailed 48-21 at halftime, were only able to muster 3 points in the second half when several of Falls' reserve players saw action.

Cloquet had four players score in double figures led by Jacob Bushey with 20 points, which included five 3-pointers.

The Broncos, whose season record now stands at 1-1, play their next game Dec. 3 at Bemidji.

Fort Frances Lakers outlast Wilderness

The Fort Frances Lakers got two goals and three assists apiece from both 2012 Falls High School graduate Mason Meyer and Lyndon Lipinski to help lead them to a 9-5 victory over the Wisconsin Wilderness on Tuesday evening in Superior International Junior Hockey League action at the Spooner Ice House.

Lucas DeBenedet, a 2013 FHS graduate, also scored twice and set up two others to aid the Lakers' offensive cause while Kevin Kurm notched a pair of goals and Bryce Lipinski added a single score.

Tanner Fricke doled out a pair of assists for Fort Frances, which trailed 3-2 after 20 minutes and led 6-4 after two periods of play.

Nick Minerva scored twice for Wisconsin while Tanner Vinson, Zach Kraft and Darrick Howard supplied solo goals.

Mason Meyer named player of the week

The Superior International Junior Hockey League announced Tuesday that Fort Frances Lakers forward Mason Meyer has been named the Pizza Hut player of the week for the period concluding Nov. 24.

In three outings last week, the 2012 International Falls High School graduate recorded two goals and six assists to help the league-leading Lakers pick up five out of a possible six points in the SIJHL standings.

Meyer began last week with an assist in a 5-4 shoot-out setback in Thunder Bay on Nov. 19, then scored twice and set up one goal the following evening in a 6-5 shoot-out triumph in Hoyt Lakes vs. Minnesota and eventually capped off his week by dishing out four assists in a 6-1 victory at home Nov. 22 against Wisconsin.

GIRLS BASKETBALL PREVIEW

Broncos seek IRC title, spot in Section 7AA finals



From right, the Broncos' Lexi Owen knocks the ball away from Lauren Rautio (35) during a practice last week in the Falls High School gym.

Last season's starters graduate

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

The International Falls girls basketball team enters the 2013-14 season with all five starters from last year's team having graduated and only one senior on the roster.

Gone are starting center Jenna Vergeldt, forwards Sara Christianson and Anah Schwartz and guards Reva Renollet and Rachel Foss from the Broncos' 2012-13 team that went 21-8 overall, placed second in the Iron Range Conference and advanced to the Section 7AA semifinals.

Renollet, who is now playing college basketball at Fergus Falls, became a career 1,000-point scorer for the Falls last season. Foss, who is in her freshman season on the College of St. Scholastica women's basketball team, holds the Broncos' records for the most assists in a year and a career. Vergeldt also became a career 1,000-point scorer last season and set Falls' records for the most career rebounds and blocks.

Shawn Gilbert enters

his 13th season as a head coach with his list of top returning athletes including senior guard Lexi Owen, junior guards Teagan Anderson, Cassie Tomczak and Shelby Wolden and junior forward Maddie Filipiak.

Gilbert said the strengths of this season's team are athleticism, quickness and shooting, though no starters return and rebounding is a weakness.

While he is again concerned about injuries, Gilbert said he is looking forward to "coaching a great group of girls and watching them come together as a team."

Gilbert said the team goals this season include winning the IRC title and more than 20 games and also advancing to the Section 7AA finals.

He said the teams to watch out for this season include Hibbing, Virginia and Mesabi East in the IRC, Mountain Iron-Buhl and North Woods in the Arrowhead Conference and Esko and Aitkin in Section 7AA.

The Broncos open the season next Friday when they host Eveleth-Gilbert.

GIRLS BASKETBALL PREVIEW



From right, the Vikings' Abby Thompson is guarded by Karly Swenson during a practice last week in the Littlefork-Big Falls High School gym.

Vikings seek NLC title, deep playoff run

No graduation losses for LBF

BY KEVIN BONESKE
Sports Editor

After not having any seniors last season, the Littlefork-Big Falls girls basketball team has all its key players back in 2013-14.

John Larson is entering his fourth season as head coach of the Vikings, who went 16-7 in 2012-13 and won the Northern Lakes Conference. L-BF's season

came to an end after losing to Cherry in the Section 7A Tournament.

Larson's list of top returning players includes senior forward Brooke Millerbernd, who reached the 1,000-point career scoring mark and was the NLC's Co-Most Valuable Player last season.

Three other returning All-Conference players include senior forward Dyana Imhof, senior center Abby Thompson and freshman guard Kaylee Kennedy.

An NLC honorable mention selection, sophomore guard Breann Larson, also returns.

Along with the players' experience, the head coach said this year's team has the "desire to be great."

He said the team goals in 2013-14 include winning the NLC title and to "advance deep into (the) playoffs."

John Larson said he is looking forward this season to "the games and constant improvement."

The Vikings open the season Monday at Bigfork.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Minnesota faces Michigan State in regular-season finale

EAST LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Mark Dantonio is ready to fight for Michigan State.

When asked about having to campaign for his No. 11 Spartans (10-1, 7-0 Big Ten) to earn a BCS berth if they don't reach the Rose Bowl by beating No. 3 Ohio State on Dec. 7 in the conference title game, Dantonio talked about a 3-1 record in his team's last four games against Wisconsin and a one-point loss to OSU last year. That is the closest scare the Buckeyes have had in two unbeaten seasons.

"Oh, yeah, I'll campaign," Dantonio said when reminded that his Legends Division champs were jumped by Michigan for a Sugar Bowl berth in 2011 when the Spartans lost 42-39 to the Badgers in the Big Ten championship game.

"We've beaten Wisconsin three out of the last four years. You can start with that. But we'll worry about that later. We're not going to worry about that now. Our focus has to be on Minnesota."

The Spartans are No. 1 in the Big Ten in 15 team statistical categories, led by the winningest class in school history. With 39 victories and three more opportunities, Dantonio said the focus this week will be on an appropriate Senior Day sendoff against the surprising Golden Gophers (8-3, 4-3) today.

Eighteen Michigan State players will be making their final home appearance. The group, led by linebackers Max Bullough and Denicos Allen and cornerback Darqueze Dennard, are part of three double-digit win seasons, including 11-win campaigns in 2010-11.

"I want to congratulate our football team in that regard and congratulate Darqueze Dennard in being one of the three finalists for the Jim Thorpe Award," Dantonio said of a trophy given to the nation's top defensive back. "There always has to be a reason to play. There always has to be a cause. And this is an opportunity to win 11 football games and go 8-0 in the conference."

Michigan State began the season unranked, sputtered in September and lost a game it easily could have won at Notre Dame before growing into a complete team. Quarterback Connor Cook and running back Jeremy Langford have answered a lot of questions, with a few remaining in terms of conference supremacy.

First up is Minnesota, which had its second four-game win streak this season snapped with a 20-7 home loss to then-No. 16 Wisconsin last Saturday.

Aaron Hill returned an interception for a touchdown and David Cobb rushed for 68 yards for the Gophers, but Philip Nelson completed just 7 of 23 passes for 83 yards and Minnesota couldn't get anything going offensively in tying a season low for points while managing 185 total yards.

Coach Jerry Kill was quick to say that there are no moral victories, but he was clearly proud of how his young team performed.

"I can live with a lot of things when you play your butt off," Kill said.



Jerry Kill

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Monday's games
Girls basketball
L-BF at Bigfork, 7:15 p.m.

Tuesday's games
Girls hockey
I. Falls at Fort Frances, 7:15 p.m.

Boys hockey
Eveleth-Gilbert at I. Falls, 7:30 p.m.

Boys basketball
I. Falls at Bemidji, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday's games
Boys basketball
I. Falls at Hibbing, 7:30 p.m.