

SPORTS

Outdoors

Go ultra light for crappies

Steve Carney
Outdoors Columnist

This is the time of the summer when downsizing your fishing gear to accommodate the tremendous crappie and bluegill fishing happens. Usually when water temperatures hover around the 80 degree mark, I re-rig and downsize my equipment. Here is my equipment list for making the transition.

Rods and reels

I drop down to a 5-foot rod and equip the rod with my smaller, ice fishing reels. The trick is to match the rod and the reel together in unison. It's all about the balance.

Too many anglers just throw a large reel on a smaller rod or try to use their walleye setups for crappies and bluegills. To make the experience so much more rewarding, drop down in gear size. Catching a 14-inch crappie on a smaller rod and reel combo is awesome! That's what ultra light fishing is all about.

Line

Four pound test line is the best all-around choice. Anything heavier and it will impede the action of your bait and the balance between the rod and smaller reel will be off kilter. Four pound is adequate as long as you retie the knot periodically.



Late July and August is "go time" for the best panfishing of the season. Photo submitted

Presentation

I prefer a lookalike minnow artificial that has a tiny, 1/32 or 1/16 ounce jig head. Nowadays, many manufacturers make these plastic minnows that are very realistic. During the hot summer months, crappies and bluegills are smashing

everything in sight and staying artificial keeps the action going without fooling around with live bait.

Keep in mind these summertime panfish are not the hinky and reluctant biters of the springtime — these are eating machines as we head into August.

Legion Baseball

Coon Rapids, Anoka and Fridley Gold earn top seeds as Legion playoffs begin

Matthew Davis
Contributing Writer

Fridley Post 303 Legion baseball couldn't catch a break in North Hennepin League play this summer.

The Fridley High School-based Legion club lost numerous close games amid its 2-8 record in league play. That included a late regular season 1-0 loss to Anoka July 17 and a 2-0 loss to St. Michael Blue July 16.

"Our pitching and our defense has been the strong point of our team so far," Post 303 coach Josh Groth said. "Our outfield is real good (and) our infield is real solid. Our pitching and defense has kept us in games for sure. It's been exciting all year."

Post 303 faces tougher competition in the Legion season with programs drawing from larger high schools and bringing back college players to compete. Fridley doesn't have any college players on its roster this summer. Most of the players came from the Tigers' spring roster.

Evan Shaw, a Division II Minnesota State-Mankato recruit, continued some of his success from the spring. Shaw dominated for the Tigers in the spring and made the state high school all-star series in June.

"He's pitching well (and) hitting the ball," Groth said.

Groth said they've been getting solid pitching from Harrison Blum, too.

"He's been pretty shut down this summer," Groth said.

Cooper Severson continues to step up behind the plate at catcher. Jake Johnson started strong for Post 303, but broke his ankle before returning from injury.

"He picked up right where he left off," Groth said. "He's been hitting the ball pretty well."

While Post 303 hasn't picked up where the Tigers left off in the spring in the win-loss column, Groth said it's been a good season this summer.

"Everybody enjoys coming to the ball field," Groth said. "They like to compete."

He hoped his team could make a run in the Sub-State 9 Tournament at Wintercrest Park in Coon Rapids July 24-28. Coon Rapids is the No. 1 seed, followed by Ham Lake, Champlin, Andover, St. Francis, Fridley, Spring Lake Park and Brooklyn Park.

In Sub-State 11, Anoka earned the top seed in the tournament scheduled to run July 24-28. Elk River is the No. 2 seed, followed by St. Michael Mikes, Maple Grove, Osseo, Big Lake, Monticello, St. Michael Golds and Becker.

Fridley Gold, Totino-Grace's Legion baseball team, earned the top for the Sub-State 7 Tournament after a stellar regular season, but fell 8-6 to No. 8 seed Hamline Purple (Cretin-Derham Hall) in the first round July 23.

Fridley Gold still had a chance to work back through the elimination bracket, with the tournament scheduled to run through July 27.

incredible energy."

Grandma's marked just the fourth overall marathon for Lindwurm, with the first three all completed at the Eugene Curnow Trail Marathon.

While an All-American runner for Northern State in cross-country and track and field, Lindwurm has quickly discovered another level in her transition to the marathon.

"It was very natural for me," Lindwurm said. "In high school and college I always had the most success with the longest distance — in high school the 2 mile and college the 10k — so when I decided to give professional running a try, I knew I would find the most success in the marathon. It has been my goal since my college

graduation to qualify for the Olympics Trials."

That dream has already been realized, with the U.S. Olympic Team Trials marathon scheduled for Feb. 29, 2020 in Atlanta.

"When I crossed the finish line and saw my watch, tears flooded my eyes," Lindwurm said. "I was so grateful to God who gave me this amazing ability. I felt so proud of myself and so happy to see all my hard work pay off."

"All the pictures I've found of myself from the race I'm smiling ear to ear, knowing I'm completing one of my biggest dreams. I couldn't have asked for a better race. I still feel in awe of what I've done."

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Amateur Baseball

Red-hot Fusion, Redbirds contend for Metro Minny

Patrick Slack
Staff Writer

The red-hot Blaine Fusion and Coon Rapids Redbirds have emerged as the final two contenders for the Metro Minny regular season title, winning a combined 14 league games in a row through July 22.

Blaine held off the Anoka Bucs 9-8 July 22 for its fifth win in a row and ninth in 10 league matchups to improve to 14-2 in league play.

Coon Rapids edged the Forest Lake Brewers 3-1 July 21 for its ninth win in a row in league action to improve to 13-4 in Metro Minny action. Blaine and Coon Rap-

ids are scheduled to clash one more time July 26, with regular season play concluding July 30.

Forest Lake is third in the Metro Minny at 9-6, followed by St. Michael (8-8), Champlin Park (8-8), Anoka (8-9), Andover (6-11) and Centennial (1-18).

Eastern Minny

The Eastern Minny regular season was slated to wrap up July 23, with Ramsey locked into the third seed in the South, East Bethel the sixth seed and Nowthen the eighth seed. The playoffs are scheduled to begin July 25.

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McClure earns HBF award

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hockey. In her senior year she was named to the All-Conference Team and the Duluth News Tribune All-Area Team.

McClure applied for the scholarship to assist her family in meeting her college financial obligations.

"Sometimes I wonder what my life would've been like if I would've never gotten sick," McClure said. "However, I wouldn't trade my experiences with my illnesses for the world. As much as I lost due to my illnesses, I gained so much more. My illness has made me stronger, more resilient and has given me a new perspective on life. It has opened my eyes to what is really important, such as family, living in the moment and to rely on my faith when things get hard."

McClure believes in investing in the next generation as a teacher and a hockey coach.

"The selflessness of my role models and mentors has shaped me into the person I am today," said McClure. "That is my goal, to dedicate myself to children in hopes it will impact one as I was."

The Mark "Worky" Workman Perseverance and Character Scholarship Award honors Mark Workman, of Apple Valley, who passed away at age 47 in 2018 after a short and courageous battle with cancer. Workman was a passionate hockey man who gave much of his life to youth hockey and the growth of the game. He loved working with young

players and cared deeply about their growth and personal development on and off the ice.

Workman grew up in Stillwater. He played hockey at the College of St. Scholastica and coached the team after graduation. He later coached at Brown and Robert Morris universities and was an amateur scout for the Vegas Golden Knights.

The Workman family commented on McClure's honor: "The Workman family congratulates Cassie McClure on being chosen to receive the first Mark 'Worky' Workman Award. Mark's passion for hockey was boundless, his perseverance and character were hallmarks of Mark as both a player, coach and NHL scout. Through Cassie's struggles, she truly exemplifies these qualities and we wish Cassie the best as she continues her hockey career at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. We are grateful to the Herb Brooks Foundation for continuing to support player development in Mark's memory."

The Herb Brooks Foundation is dedicated to growing the game of hockey and giving the game back to the kids. Founded in 2003 by Dan Brooks and Kelly Brooks Paradise, Herb's family and friends created the foundation to preserve his legacy by continuing his life's work of growing the game by "making hockey fun for kids and letting them learn to love the game the way we did."

Njos battles to 4th in Fargo

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two final wins of 2-1 and 8-3 to advance to the third place bout and earn a top four finish.

"It's all a mindset," Njos said. "On the consolation side of the bracket, kids are looking for a reason to quit and give up, so I have always been told to give them a reason to quit. That means scoring earlier and often and they won't want to wrestle you anymore."

Njos will now head to St. Cloud St., the current powerhouse in Division II wrestling. The Huskies have won four of the past five national championships.

"The coaches are a big thing when I visited SCSU,"

Njos said. "Coach (Steve) Costanzo is a great guy and a great coach. I can't wait to get up there and start my training. What I am most excited about is that I get to be around guys that wanna win. There is not a single guy on the team that doesn't win and I like that about St. Cloud."

Layton earns double All-American honors

Coon Rapids' Gavin Layton became just the second Cardinal to attain four All-American honors, placing sixth in Cadet Nationals in Greco-Roman at 285 July 17-18, as well as seventh place in freestyle July 13-15.

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SF grad earns 4th at Grandma's Marathon

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"My main goal was to simply qualify for the Olympic Trials, which meant running 2:45:00," Lindwurm said. "I would have been happy as long as I did that. I had greater goals of running the A standard (2:37:00) and placing top 10, but my main focus was to just qualify."

Once the race began to unfold, however, it was clear that her greatest time goals weren't just going to be attained. Lindwurm was going to smash them.

"The race felt all too good," Lindwurm said. "The sidelines were full of my friends, family and familiar faces, so to hear my name and see all the people out supporting, gave me such