

SPORTS



David Samson / The Forum

Devils Lake's Jailyn Martinson and Jes Mertens leave the floor of the Scheels Center on Friday, March 13, 2020, after their win over Fargo Davies and hearing the news that the North Dakota Class A state girls basketball tournament has been suspended due to the coronavirus crisis.

SUDDEN STOP

ND high school sports suspended amid Class A basketball tournaments

By **Carissa Wigginton and Adam Watts**
sports@forumcomm.com

Fargo

Instead of preparing a pregame speech ahead of Friday's semifinal, West Fargo Sheyenne head boys basketball coach Tom Kirchoffner had to figure out how to tell his team their season was suspended, and whether the Mustangs would play another

game this year.

Sheyenne was slated to face Jamestown in the North Dakota Class A boys basketball semis Friday night, until about five hours beforehand, when the North Dakota High School Activities Association released a statement stating all winter and spring sports and activities would be suspended until further notice due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The Mustangs never made it to Scheels Center at the Sanford Health Athletic Complex. Instead, they met in the Sheyenne High School gym so Kirchoffner could inform them their season may be over.

"I told them that a lot of their grandparents come to the games, they're super fans," Kirchoffner said. "We wanted to tell them that maybe by canceling this, maybe

that saves their grandparents. My dad is 73 years old, he sits on the bench. I thought about him this morning as well."

The Mustangs woke up this morning with every intention of trying for a trip to Saturday's state title game.

"It's hard to process right now," Kirchoffner said.

NORTH DAKOTA: Page D5

Class B basketball schools are stunned that there will be no state tournament

By **Kevin Schnepf**
kschnepf@forumcomm.com

FARGO — Elliot Rotvold was just about to step out of his house Thursday afternoon to head up to Grand Forks with his Hillsboro-Central Valley boys basketball team when the phone rang.

It was his daughter Annika, who was crying to her mother that her college track and field career at North Dakota State was over. Annika had just learned all spring

sports at NDSU were canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

It wasn't the last bit of bad news Rotvold would receive.

After his team won the Region 2 title in Grand Forks to advance to next week's North Dakota Class B state tournament, Rotvold found out Friday afternoon, while teaching his U.S. History class, that the ever-popular state tournament had been suspended.

CLASS B: Page D5

For Henning, Minnesota basketball cancellations end hopes for 2 state titles

By **Kevin Schnepf**
kschnepf@forumcomm.com

MINNEAPOLIS — The Henning High School girls basketball team, fresh off the program's first state tournament win, just completed a shoot-around practice at St. Thomas University Friday morning — thinking they were poised to win its 2 p.m. Minnesota Class 1A semifinal game.

But after piling onto the bus to go back to the hotel, Henning

head coach Michael Hepola got a call on his cell phone from a number he did not recognize.

"I thought, this can't be good," Hepola said.

It wasn't. Hepola was informed by an official from the Minnesota State High School League that all tournaments — including the one Henning was playing in — were going to be canceled immediately due to the coronavirus pandemic.

MINNESOTA: Page D6



Nick Nelson / Forum News Service

Members of the Hillsboro-CV boys basketball team are swarmed by fans Thursday following their N.D. Class B, Region 2 championship win.



Eric Morken / Forum News Service

Henning junior guard Ellie Dague (left) and her teammates hold up their Minnesota Class 1A, Section 6 championship trophy on March 6.

Storm TRACKER
WDAY abc Download the STORM TRACKER App

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SUMMER SCHELLACH PEPENBURG JARED WHEELER JOHN WHEELER
LYDIA BLUME ANDREW WINTER

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
26 / 15 Mostly cloudy. A few sun breaks.	31 / 28 Cloudy. Chance of a flurry or light snow late.	33 / 18 AM Flurries. Mostly cloudy.	30 / 13 Sunny.	35 / 22 Mostly cloudy.	35 / 21 Mostly cloudy.	28 / 11 Cloudy, a slight chance of snow.
Wind (mph): SE 10-15 mph	Wind (mph): SE 10-15 mph	Wind (mph): SE/NW 10-25 mph				

A meteorologist looks at pandemic math

In general, you are about 300 times more likely to die in a car crash than in a tornado. However, we cannot issue car crash warnings because they happen at random and without advanced warning, whereas we can usually offer a Tornado Watch and then a Tornado Warning in advance of most tornadoes.

I'm a meteorologist, not a doctor nor a biologist, but I do a lot with numbers and I know that the pandemic skeptics are focusing on the wrong math. The mortality rate of the virus is somewhere around 2% to 3% overall, causing many peo-

ple to reason that if they are currently healthy, they'll likely be fine. Unfortunately, contagious illness does not spread on an average. Like tornadoes, concentrations of the severe strains of this COVID-19 virus tend to happen in random clusters without a lot of advanced notice, where it can overrun regional medical facilities. The cancellation of large events is a good first step in slowing down the virus's ability to spread.

- John Wheeler

WEATHER TALK

FARGO-MOORHEAD ALMANAC

Statistics through 6 p.m. Yesterday

Temperature	High	Low
Yesterday	27	20
Normal	34	18
Record	64 in 1911	-28 in 1896

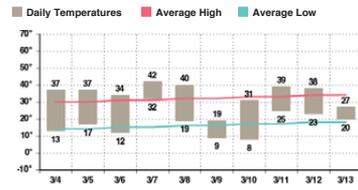
Snowfall	Month to date	Trace
Yesterday	Trace	Trace
Normal month to date	4.7"	
Season to date	44.7"	
Normal season to date	42.7"	

Red River	Level 7 p.m. Yesterday	15.98'
Flood Stage 16', Moderate Flood Stage 25', Major Flood Stage 30'		

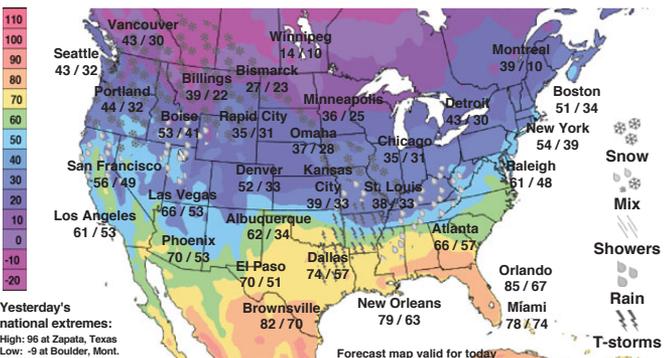
Sun and Moon		Sunrise	Sunset
Today	7:40 a.m.	7:32 p.m.	
Sunday	7:39 a.m.	7:33 p.m.	
Monday	7:36 a.m.	7:35 p.m.	

Moonrise		Moonset
Today	12:53 a.m.	10:38 a.m.
Sunday	2:08 a.m.	11:16 a.m.
Monday	3:16 a.m.	12:00 p.m.

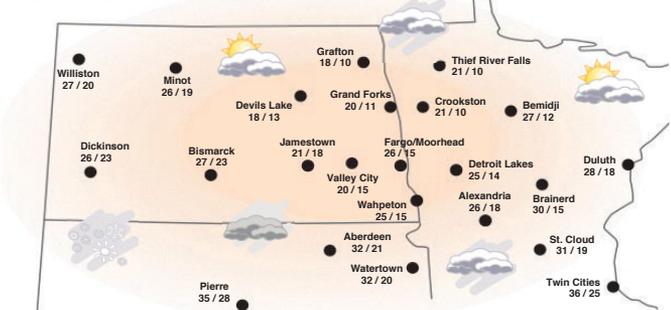
TEMPERATURES THE PAST 10 DAYS



TODAY'S NATIONAL WEATHER



TODAY'S REGIONAL FORECAST MAP



City	Today			Tomorrow			Monday		
	H	L	W	H	L	W	H	L	W
MINNESOTA									
Alexandria	26	18	mc	34	31	mc	33	19	rs
Duluth	29	18	mc	31	29	mc	37	22	rs
International Falls	27	9	mc	32	23	mc	33	13	sn
Minneapolis	36	25	mc	43	35	pc	45	29	cl
Redwood Falls	34	25	mc	43	35	pc	45	27	cl
Rochester	38	23	mc	43	31	pc	45	29	mc
St. Cloud	31	19	mc	38	32	mc	40	24	ra
N. DAKOTA									
Bismarck	27	23	cl	35	27	sn	35	27	sn
Devils Lake	18	13	cl	28	19	sn	30	13	mc
Dickinson	26	23	sn	31	21	sn	31	21	sn
Grand Forks	20	11	mc	30	21	sn	28	11	sn
Jamestown	21	18	cl	32	26	sn	30	18	mc
Minot	26	19	cl	30	21	sn	31	18	mc
Williston	27	20	sn	30	19	sn	32	13	mc

W: cl-cloudy, fg-fog, mc-mostly cloudy, pc-partly cloudy, ra-rain, rs-rain/snow, sh-showers, sn-snow, ss-snow showers, s-sunny, t-thunderstorm

MINNESOTA

From Page D1

Hepola whispered the news to his assistant coaches. Then he stood up and broke the news to his players.

"Well girls ... I'm about to cry here," Hepola announced. "The tournament has been canceled."

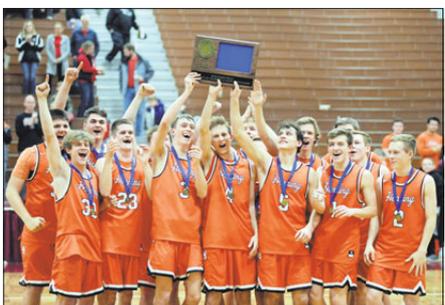
There were lots of tears. Lots of emotion.

Not only was the season over for Henning's girls basketball team, it was also over for Henning's boys team — who had just won the Class 1A, Section 8 championship Thursday night to advance to next week's state tournament. The boys will not get a chance to defend the state championship it won last year.

Ironically, Henning boys head coach Randy Misegades, his wife, son and some players were on their way to Minneapolis to watch the girls play when they heard the news. There were tears shed in the vehicle that included Misegades, his wife, two sons and players Parker Fraki, Blake Wallewand and Tanner Arndt.

They were on the list of 90 fans who were to be allowed to watch the Henning girls semifinal game Friday. It was all part of the MSHL's decision made Thursday to limit fan participation.

"I go back-and-forth to being angry, but there is really no one to be angry at," Misegades said over the phone, as he and his group were grabbing lunch in Albertville before returning



Eric Morken / Forum News Service

Hennepin boys basketball players celebrate their Minnesota Class 1A, Section 6 tournament championship Thursday night at Concordia.

home. "There is not anyone to blame, it's just unfortunate."

Misegades' boys team, with a 29-1 record, was expected to be seeded No. 1 for next week's state tournament. But even before Thursday night's section title game at Concordia, Misegades — sensing the state tournament could be canceled — gathered his team together alerting them that this could be their last game of the season.

"I told them that we have to treat this game like this is our state championship," said Misegades, whose team went on to beat West Central Area 57-45. "It's really a shame because probably in my lifetime, you won't see both our boys and girls teams go to the state tour-

namment again in the same year — both with high hopes of doing well."

Hepola agreed, calling it a special winter. "Hopefully in a couple days we can look back at it and say we didn't lose at state," he said. "And ended our season with a win. Not many teams can say that."

Misegades said "at least our boys and girls got to play section championship games" — unlike the boys teams from Perham, Fergus Falls and Ada-Borup.

Perham and Fergus Falls were scheduled to play each other Friday night at Concordia for the Class 2A, Section 8 championship.

"It's gut-wrenching and

ripped everything out of my heart, not only for me, but for those seniors who didn't get a chance to play in a possible state tournament and section championship game," said Perham head coach Dave Cresap, whose team had a 28-0 record. "It's just devastating news, but unavoidable with all the health concerns going on. I get that part, but you have to feel for these kids. In my 35 years, this is one of the closest-knit teams I have had and they are completely devastated. We had a little meeting and it was a really sad day."

Perham senior Charlie Rasmussen said it was an unreal feeling when they found out their season was going to be cut short.

"We all worked so hard for this and it is what we have dreamt of for 16, 17 and 18 years. Every day at practice we are grinding," Rasmussen said. "It's hard seeing a lot of us in tears, ending the way it did. We are not alone, this is statewide, nationwide. This is tough."

Rasmussen moved to Perham his eighth-grade year and moved into a leadership role during his career with the Yellowjackets. The 65-62 section semifinal victory over East Grand Forks marked the final time he would share the floor with seniors Carter Aakre, Landon Stevens, Ryan Murphy, Gavin Hillukka, Jordan Muench, Gunnar Anderson and Judd Soule.

"Them just taking me in and as my role increased in the

program, they really accepted me and they brought me in," Rasmussen said. "Our chemistry was unbelievable. Some can say it's one of the best teams Perham has ever had. We were unbeaten and it's crazy."

Ada-Borup was scheduled to play Cass Lake-Bena Friday night in Thief Rivers Falls for the Class 1A, Section 8 championship. Ada-Borup was aiming to reach its second straight trip to state, after losing on a last-second shot in last year's state semifinals.

"We were going to get back, that was our players' mentality," said Ada-Borup head coach Trevor Stewart. "I feel bad for our seniors. But at the same time, a little bit of the unknown with this virus is a bit scary, too. It is what it is."

On Thursday night, Stewart traveled to Grand Forks to watch his alma-mater Hatton-Northwood play in a North Dakota Class B region championship game.

"You saw this coming a little bit, but when I was watching that game in Grand Forks, I thought 'OK, we can do this even in an empty gym,'" Stewart said, referring to the fan restrictions that were going to be placed on Friday night's section championship game in Thief River Falls. "I hope we can all look back at this some day and say 'man, did we overreact to all of this.' But that's pretty hard to do right now."

Kevin Schnepf is the sports editor for The Forum and can be reached at (701) 241-5549

BRIDGE

Simple Saturday
"Simple Saturday" columns are meant to help aspiring players improve technique and develop logical thinking.

I've heard that many pessimists got that way by financing an optimist. Do you approach the play as an optimist or a pessimist? Either way may be correct.

At four spades, South took the ace of diamonds and needed nine more tricks. He had five trumps and four hearts, if he could take them. South drew trumps, then cashed the K-Q of hearts. He next overtook his jack with dummy's ace, hoping for a 3-3 break. When West discarded, South's nine tricks became eight.

LAST TRUMP
Sometimes declarer must be a pessimist and cater to foul breaks. In this deal, South must be an optimist. He cashes only the K-Q of trumps, then the K-Q of hearts. If hearts broke 3-3, South

could draw the last trump with the ace and take the ace of hearts.

East actually has four hearts but also has the missing trump. So South can still take the ace of trumps and ace of hearts to make his game.

DAILY QUESTION
You hold: ♠A 6 2 ♥A 5 4 2 ♦A J ♣J 10 9 6. Your partner opens one heart and you respond one heart and he bids two clubs. What do you say?

ANSWER: You might bid 3NT; you have balanced pattern with a stopper in the unbid suit. Still, I would be reluctant to commit to notrump with three aces, a useful jack of diamonds and four-card club support. Bid two spades, the "fourth suit," and let partner make another bid. He might hold 7 4 3, K Q 10 8 7, A K Q 5 4.

North dealer
Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A 6 2
♥ A 5 4 2
♦ A J
♣ J 10 9 6

WEST
♠ 8 4
♥ 7 3
♦ K Q 10 9 6 2
♣ A Q 5

EAST
♠ 9 7 3
♥ 10 9 8 6
♦ 8 5 3
♣ K 8 4

SOUTH
♠ K Q 10 5
♥ K Q J
♦ 7 4
♣ 7 3 2

North 1♣ East Pass South 1♥ West 2♦
All Pass

Opening lead — ♦ K

SUDOKU

3		1	2	6	
		9		4	1
	5		7	2	
9			1	4	
6		3		7	
4				5	
2	4		5		
	5	8	7		
	7	2	6		5

Yesterday's answer

5	6	4	8	3	1	2	7	9
1	3	8	2	9	7	6	4	5
9	2	7	4	5	6	3	8	1
6	4	9	5	6	3	8	1	2
7	8	1	6	4	5	9	2	3
2	9	5	1	7	3	4	6	8
4	7	6	3	1	9	8	5	2
3	5	2	7	8	1	9	4	6
8	1	9	5	2	4	7	3	6

Complete the grid so every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

3/14 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★