

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOCCER



From left to right, senior Celia Murphy-Pearson, Maddie Smisek and Mya Wesling will serve as captains for this year's Northfield girls soccer team. The Raiders start their season Sept. 1 at home against Rochester Mayo. (Michael Hughes/Northfield News)

Northfield girls soccer happy for a chance to play this fall

By MICHAEL HUGHES
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The feeling is mutual for everyone on the Northfield girls soccer team.

Yes, the Raiders would have liked to play a full season this year, and clashed against section and other non-conference opponents.

But an 11-game conference-only schedule is still far better than the alternative.

"There was a part of us that was getting ready to be disappointed and not have a season," Northfield senior Celia Murphy-Pearson said. "It's really great that we get to be able to have half our season. Even if it's not full, it's still something, which is really good."

"It's still nice to be able to get to play, play other teams and just be able to play the game," senior Maddie Smisek added.

Murphy-Pearson and Smisek are both captains for Northfield this year, along with senior Mya Wesling.

Through the first week and a half of practice, those three and all the Raiders have been forced to meld new safety protocols with the typical features of early-fall practices.

"I'd say the big thing is when we're on a break we have to stay 6 feet apart and put a mask on walking to the fields and walking to our cars," Wesling said. "Other than that, it's still been a great tryout."

"We've been adjusting with all the new COVID-19 things," Murphy-Pearson added. "I think for all of us it's been the most different tryouts (have been), but it's still a lot of the same stuff with running tests, practicing, getting to know everyone."

GIRLS SOCCER SCHEDULE

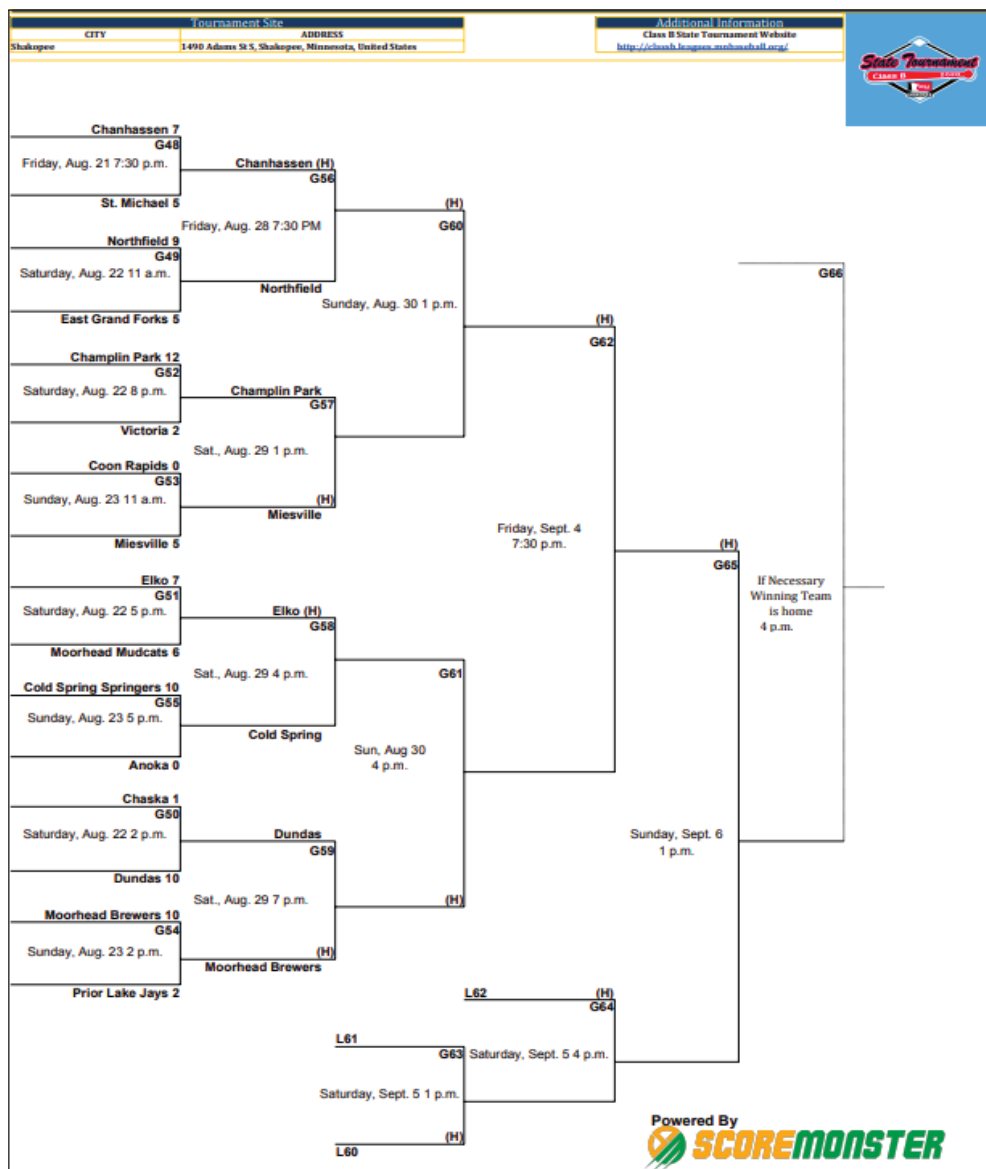
- Sept. 1 — vs. Rochester Mayo, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 3 — at Albert Lea, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 10 — vs. Rochester John Marshall, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 12 — at Mankato East, 2 p.m.
- Sept. 15 — at Rochester Century, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 18 — vs. Faribault, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 22 — at Red Wing, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 24 — at Owatonna, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 29 — vs. Mankato West, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 2 — vs. Winona, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 6 — at Austin, 7 p.m.

Last year, Northfield finished the regular season 9-5-1, which was good enough for a tie for fourth place in the Big 9 Conference.

This year, one of the only available goals for the Raiders to strive for is to try and improve on that conference standing, since there is no set plan for a postseason.

"We were really disappointed by the shortening of (the schedule) and all that, but to even just have a season is amazing," Wesling said. "I think we're all so grateful to be able to play this season because football and volleyball were moved and we all feel so bad for them. Even if they do get to have their season it's not the same with the fall energy, and we all appreciate that so much."

MBA BRACKET



In the first weekend of the Class B state tournament, all four teams from Section 1B advanced to this weekend's quarterfinals. (Bracket courtesy of the Minnesota Baseball Association)

NORTHFIELD

From Page 1B

Severson picked up his second RBI single in the bottom of the second to score Mathison and provide the Knights with a 3-1 lead. East Grand Forks tied the game 3-3 in the top of the third, but Northfield took the lead for good in the bottom of the fourth with designated hitter Hunter Conrad coming home on a single from Mathison, Meland's RBI single and a third RBI single by Severson.

"Today was the best I've felt in quite a while," Severson said. "I'm seeing the ball well, putting good swings on it and not trying to do too much."

For Severson, Saturday was the second time this summer the first baseman collected three hits in a game and the first time all year he's driven in three runs in a game. The typical rock of Northfield's lineup has struggled this year compared to past production.

While his on-base percentage is still an impressive .411 after Saturday's game, his slugging percentage of .347 and batting average of .292 are both the lowest of his nine-year amateur baseball career.

"It always feels good to play well," Severson said. "First and foremost you always want the team to win, but when individually you play well it feels all the better. Hopefully, that's something we continue to do through the rest of the tournament. If Tim and I stay hot, we obviously know the rest of the lineup will help us out as well."

For Maus, meanwhile, Saturday continued a return to

CHANHASSEN VS. NORTHFIELD

Any path to a state title was likely going to involve beating Chanhassen, the two-time defending Class C state champions.

Northfield will have that opportunity at 7:30 p.m. Friday in Shakopee in the quarterfinals. The Redbirds and the Knights clashed in last year's quarterfinals as well, with Chanhassen snagging a 2-0 victory.

Unlike last year, however, the quarterfinals are part of the single-elimination portion of the tournament, with double-elimination not coming into play until Labor Day weekend.

Chanhassen will likely start John Straka, who limited Northfield to three hits in a complete-game shutout in last year's game. In the first-round win against St. Michael, Straka allowed two runs on five hits in six innings before the rain arrived Friday night.

Northfield will go with either Jon Ludwig or Jake Mathison to start the game, with the other available out of the bullpen.

Offensively, Chanhassen was paced against St. Michael by second baseman Aaron Kloppner, who finished 4-for-4 with three doubles, three RBIs and two runs scored.

urday continued a return to form after a down 2019. Last year, Maus' slugging percentage dipped to .373, but after Saturday his 2020 slugging percentage spiked to .507.

His four home runs and 23 RBIs both lead the team.

"When our middle of the order is going we're tough to beat," Maus said. "When our middle of the order gets going, that kind of fuels everything else."

The Knights will need both Maus and Severson next weekend, in addition to the returns of center fielder Scott Benjamin, second baseman Tommy McDonald and right fielder Ryan Torbenon — who all missed Saturday's game with prior engagements.

Northfield will play

Chanhassen, which held on to beat St. Michael 7-5 in a game that started Friday night and was resumed Sunday night after a rain delay.

That means the Knights will likely face John Straka, who limited Northfield to only three hits in a 2-0 victory in last year's state tournament.

"Just keep our approach simple and put the ball in play against him," Maus said. "He's obviously a really good pitcher, so just try to put good at-bats together and see what happens."

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The Milltown Outlaws won the Federal League AA title Sunday in Delano. Pictured in the top row from left to right are Rudy Lopez, Adam VanSickle, Jeremy Kramer, Andy Howie, Andy Streitz and Jeff Fisher. Pictured in the bottom row from left to right are Paul Jesh, Charlie Woida, Russ Bauer, Scott Paulson and Mike Marquardt. Not pictured are Jason Birdsell, Randy Grunseth, Ryan Krautkremer and Pat Trembley. (Photo courtesy of Paul Gesh)

Milltown Outlaws win Federal League AA title

By MICHAEL HUGHES
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The Milltown Outlaws, a 35-and-over baseball team based out of Dundas, won the Federal League AA championship Sunday in Delano.

After narrowly missing out on the final spot in the AAA playoffs because of a tiebreaker, the Outlaws were the top seed in the eight-team AA playoffs.

Milltown won by forfeit in its first game, and then topped fourth-seeded Rosetown by a 5-1 margin. In the semifinals Saturday, Milltown lost its only game of the tournament, 5-2, against the Minnetonka Saints.

That meant the Outlaws needed to snag a pair of wins Sunday in order to win the AA title. First, Milltown eased to a 5-1 victory against the Minnetonka Mustangs to set up a rematch for the title with the Minnetonka Saints for the championship.

The second time around, the Outlaws raided the Saints early and held on late in an 8-7 victory

to claim the title. Milltown built a 4-0 lead after the first three innings and an 8-2 advantage after the first four frames. The Saints fought back with a pair of runs in each of the bottom of the fourth and bottom of the fifth to make it 8-6, and then cranked a solo home run in the bottom of the sixth to trim the deficit to 8-7.

In the seventh and final inning, Minnetonka was able to place runners on first and second, but a pop up to first base ended the game.

For the season, the Outlaws finished with a 10-4 record including tournament play. The Milltown team consists of Russ Bauer, Jason Birdsell, Jeff Fisher, Randy Grunseth, Andy Howie, Paul Jesh, Jeremy Kramer, Rudy Lopez, Mike Marquardt, Scott Paulson, Adam Van Sickle, Andy Streitz and Charlie Woida.

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LOCAL SPORTS SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, AUG. 27

- High school sports**
- Northfield boys cross country at Faribault, 3:30 p.m.
- Northfield girls tennis at Albert Lea, 4:30 p.m.
- Northfield girls cross country at Faribault, 5 p.m.
- Northfield girls swimming and diving vs. Rochester Century, 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUG. 28

- Amateur baseball**
- Northfield vs. Chanhassen, 7:30 p.m., Shakopee

SATURDAY, AUG. 28

- Amateur baseball**
- Dundas vs. Moorhead, 7:30 p.m., Shakopee

SUNDAY, AUG. 29

- Amateur baseball**
- Chanhassen/Northfield vs. Champlin Park/Miesville, 1 p.m., Shakopee
- Dundas/Moorhead vs. Cold Spring/Elko, 4 p.m., Shakopee

TUESDAY, SEPT. 1

- High school sports**
- Rochester John Marshall girls tennis at Northfield, 4:30 p.m.
- Northfield girls swimming and diving vs. Mankato East, 6 p.m.
- Rochester Mayo girls soccer at Northfield, 7 p.m.
- Northfield boys soccer at Rochester Mayo, 7 p.m.

DUNDAS

From Page 1B

In the first inning, Kashmark had crashed into the wall while trying to make a catch. He also had an open cut above his right eye he had to patch up Saturday, and while stealing a base in the second inning had his right ankle cut open when the Goodman landed on him.

"Then he goes out and had three hits, a double, two RBIs, two amazing catches," Kashmark said. "He's been an outstanding player for us all year and it's great to have some youth and speed come along for us with all the veterans. He's becoming a really big part of what we're doing."

Kashmark is in his first season with Dundas after playing last year with the Prior Lake Jays. At the start of the year, the 2017 Prior Lake High School graduate was

approached by Dundas pitcher John McCaustlin, his former high school teammate.

The Dukes were in need of another outfielder, and McCaustlin thought Kashmark was a good fit. "He recruited me and told me it was a fun atmosphere, they're really good and everybody can hit and they were looking for outfielders," Kashmark said. "I ditched the Jays and came here."

While Kashmark has provided above-average outfield defense all summer, he broke out offensively Saturday. He singled in the bottom of the second, doubled in the top of the fourth as part of a two-run inning and drove in a pair with a single as part of a six-run top of the sixth inning for Dundas.

"I was feeling really good," Kashmark said. "It was probably the best I've felt at the plate all season, even with the impeded vision. I felt good and was seeing the ball well."

Dukes rack up 23 hits

In addition to Kashmark's three hits, catcher Tyler Jones finished 4-for-4 with a walk, and first baseman Nate Van Roekel, right fielder Jon Bishop and shortstop Todd Mathison all finished with three hits.

Dundas grabbed a 2-1 lead in the top of the fourth with center fielder Haydn Lanoue's two-out, two-RBI single to score Mathison and Kashmark.

Then, in the top of the sixth, the Dukes stretched that lead to 8-1 thanks to eight total hits before adding a run in the top of the seventh and the top of the ninth.

"I think everybody came ready to play," Ruud said. "We've been fortunate to be in the state tournament so many years now, so we have a lot of guys with experience to know what it takes to win here. We keep it loose, but we're all competitors and everybody came with a good mindset today."