

SPORTS

Girls Swimming and Diving Section Championships

Blaine powers to section championship, advances athletes to state in 10 events

Patrick Slack
Staff Writer

Andover junior Emily Pawlaszki set a pool and section record, Anoka junior Reese Dehen earned a chance to defend her state title from a year ago, Blaine cruised to the team title and Coon Rapids had a pair of individuals advance during the Section 7AA Championships in Coon Rapids Nov. 7-9.

The Class AA State Championships takes place Nov. 14-16 at the University of Minnesota's Jean K. Freeman Aquatic Center.

Blaine secured section titles in six of 12 events as it powered to first place as a team.

The Bengals opened the swimming portion of the finals with a first-place finish by the 200-yard medley relay team of Allison Schrank, Nicole Wylie, Maddie Schrank and Emma Wilson in 1:47.52, then capped the meet with a win from Wilson, Hanna Ryan, Sarah Knox and Allison Schrank in the 400 freestyle relay in 3:33.20.

Knox also swept the individual distance races, winning the 200 free in 1:55.42 and the 500 free in 5:13.20, while Wilson won the 100 free in 53.35 and Allison Schrank

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The Blaine 400-yard freestyle relay team celebrates after capturing the Section 7AA title Nov. 9, advancing to state and closing out a dominant team victory for the Bengals.

Photo by Patrick Slack

College Hockey

Hentges named NCHC Player of Month for SCSU

With the first month of the 2019-20 season in the books, the National Collegiate Hockey Conference announced its October monthly awards Nov. 6, with St. Cloud State sophomore forward Sam Hentges being named the NCHC Player of the Month for October. Hentges is a graduate of Totino-Grace High School.

This is the first career NCHC monthly award for Hentges.

Hentges started his sophomore campaign in strong fashion, racking up 6 points in four games in October on three goals, which tied for third in the NCHC, and three assists, all of which were primary helpers. The Minnesota Wild draft pick recorded at least a point in all four games, including a pair of multi-point outings. His 1.5 points per game in October tied for second in the NCHC, while his 0.75 goals per game tied for the conference lead during the month.

Hentges opened the season with 2 points in a 4-4 overtime tie at Bemidji State Oct. 11, setting up a short-handed goal and scoring the game-tying goal

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Spring Lake Park's Nick Wetzel pressures Coon Rapids quarterback Jake Van Hulzen into an intentional grounding penalty in the end zone, resulting in a safety in the third quarter of the Class 5A state quarterfinals Nov. 9. The play cut the Coon Rapids lead to 7-2, but the Cardinals added a fourth-quarter touchdown in a 14-2 win.

Photo by Patrick Slack

Class 5A State Quarterfinals

Cardinals hold off Panthers in state tourney defensive clash

Patrick Slack
Staff Writer

Coon Rapids defeated Spring Lake Park 14-2 in a defensive clash in the Class 5A state quarterfinals at Osseo High School Nov. 9.

The anticipated clash of stout defenses did not disappoint, as the first quarter ended without a score, with Coon Rapids turning away a Spring Lake Park red zone opportunity and another possession inside Cardinal territory.

After gaining just one first down in two possessions in the first quarter, the Coon

Rapids offense got another turn starting at its own 6 with 11:07 remaining in the second quarter. The Cardinals proceeded to maneuver the length of the field, taking a 7-0 lead with 5:48 left in the first half.

Spring Lake Park responded by engineering a sustained drive of its own, moving the ball to the Coon Rapids 14 in the closing seconds, the big plays a fourth-down fake punt run by Brian Orellana and a 21-yard completion from Aaron Clausen to Kaleb Skelly.

The Panthers took a pair of shots at the end zone, but both passes were broken up,

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Spring Lake Park's Kaleb Skelly leaps above the defense to snatch a pass into the red zone late in the second quarter of the state quarterfinals against Coon Rapids Nov. 9.

Photo by Patrick Slack

Cardinals hold off Panthers

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keeping the Cardinals in front heading into halftime.

The third quarter proved to be a roller coaster of big defensive plays, with one of the biggest coming after a Panther punt pinned the Cardinals at their own 5.

Tilting the field position set up Spring Lake Park's lone score, as a fierce pass rush by Nick Wetzel forced an intentional grounding penalty in the end zone, giving the Panthers a safety to cut the lead to 7-2 with 2:38 left in the third quarter.

Spring Lake Park wasn't able to capitalize upon receiving the ensuing safety kickoff, though, as Coon Rapids recovered a fumble on the first play of the drive.

The ball would change hands on fumbles twice more before Coon Rapids found the end zone on a 1-yard quarterback sneak with 10:38 left in the fourth quarter to extend its lead



Spring Lake Park's Joey Sorenson finds an opening for a big return in the second half.

Photo by Patrick Slack

to 14-2, holding the advantage the rest of the way.

Spring Lake Park finishes the season with a record of 8-3, winning its second-consecutive Section 5-5A championship.

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Class 4A State Quarterfinals

Memorable season concludes against top-ranked Hutchinson

Patrick Slack
Staff Writer

An unforgettable season concluded for Fridley in the Class 4A state quarterfinals at Hopkins High School Nov. 8, with top-ranked Hutchinson earning a 52-14 win.

The night opened with the teams trading quick touchdowns, with Fridley answering Hutchinson's opening score by quickly moving downfield and finding the end zone on an 18-yard touchdown pass from Kaleb Blaha to Terrell Davis to take a 7-6 lead.

Undefeated Hutchinson's power rushing attack proved too much, though, building a 30-7 lead by halftime and ultimately scoring seven times on the ground to advance. Blaha added Fridley's final touchdown in the fourth quarter on a 29-yard run.

Fridley finishes with a 10-1 record, having won the Section 4-4A championship in dramatic



Fridley's Micah Niewald (3) and Kaleb Blaha (7) combine to bring down a Hutchinson running back during the Class 4A state quarterfinals Nov. 8. Hutchinson pulled away for a 52-14 win, bringing Fridley's season to a close with a 10-1 record.

Photo by Patrick Slack

fashion to reach state, erasing a 20-point deficit in defeating St. Anthony Village 28-27. The Tigers held their first nine op-

ponents to 7 points or less, and scored 31 points or more on eight different occasions.

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Hentges named NCHC Player of the Month for SCSU

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unassisted late in the third period to cap a comeback. He was named Second Star of the Game for his efforts. A night later, Hentges dished out another primary assist in a 2-2 tie against the Beavers. The following weekend, Hentges compiled another 3 points in a split against then-No. 11 Northeastern. He scored SCSU's lone goal in a 4-1 loss Oct. 25, then had a hand in both goals the next night to help the Huskies get their first win of the season. He had the primary assist on SCSU's first goal, then scored the game-winning goal to break a 1-1 tie and was named First Star of the Game.

Of the nine goals St. Cloud State scored in October, Hentges had a hand in six of them. He also put nine shots on goal, posted a plus-one and blocked three shots over the first month of the season. In addition, the centerman went 20-23 (.465) in the faceoff circle in October. Hentges pushed his point streak to six games and goal streak to four games with 5 points to start November and now leads the NCHC with 11 points on the season (five goals, six assists).



Totino-Grace graduate Sam Hentges was named the NCHC Player of the Month in October for the St. Cloud State University men's hockey team.

Photo courtesy of St. Cloud State University Athletics

SPORTS



FEATURED ATHLETE Max Horn



As the running game went, so went the Spring Lake Park football team this fall. At the forefront of that offensive attack was senior offensive lineman Max Horn, who helped pave the way for a repeat Section 5-5A title.

Favorite part of sport

“My favorite part about football is by far the people. Football is insanely rare in the sense that you have an incredibly diverse group of people working towards a common goal. I never would have had an opportunity to meet some of my best friends had it not been for football.”

Enjoy most about team

“My favorite part of the team is how close we have gotten over the years. There truly isn’t anything close to the experience of

a tight-knit team.”

Best part of position

“My favorite part of playing O-Line is the camaraderie. There isn’t another position in football, or any sport for that matter, that allows you to be a part of such a tight-knit group that works so selflessly.”

Top high school football memory

“My favorite memory is me and my teammate Marvin Lamin teaming up to run over a five-technique on senior night. It was a culmination of our work throughout the years and it was a special moment for me.”

Entire interview at www.abcnewspapers.com

Outdoors

Late season duck tips

Steve Carney
Outdoors Columnist

After a very weird beginning of the duck season, we are now seeing a smattering of migrants working through the state. I have been hunting both ringneck ducks and redheads and have found a new decoy pattern that really works, especially on new birds in the area.

I got this idea because I am tired of diver ducks dropping into rafts of coots and not my decoys. If you notice, a raft of coots is tightly grouped and looks nothing like the traditional spreads we waterfowlers normally do. The solution is taking 50 to 100 mixed decoys of ringnecks and coots and connect them together by making your own raft. These decoys are tightly grouped just inches apart, giving the impression this is your basic, tightly grouped raft. Some hunters I know use PVC pipe and connect the decoys via hooks and short wires. Some use plastic platforms underneath with the decoys connected via eyebolts.

When you put 100 mixed decoys together, the fake raft is only a few yards long and maybe 20 feet deep. Once placed in the water it is amazing how realistic the decoys appear to be. Once you



Create your own realistic looking “raft” using multiple species.

Photo submitted

display this unique setup, you will be amazed at how well the ducks respond. You also know nobody else is using this technique, making it one-of-a-kind, and the ducks love it.

The whole concept of decoy-

ing ducks is to mix your spread with multiple species and also multiple body sizes. These late season ducks we are chasing are not the naïve, young-of-the-year birds of early October, but rather veterans that have already been fooled a time or two.

Community

All American Girls Hockey Tournament returns to National Sports Center

The growth of girls hockey in Minnesota can be credited to the years of effort put forth by The All American Girls Hockey Tournament, and 27 years of tradition continues at the National Sports Center in Blaine Nov. 15-17.

The weekend tournament features scheduled appearances from U.S. Olympic Hockey players who are being honored, a tribute wall to some of Minnesota’s greatest female hockey players and exposure to the best female hockey in the region.

There are currently 12,228 registered female hockey players in the state of Minnesota who are 19

or younger. That wasn’t the case in 1993, when the only competitive female hockey you could find was being played at Northeastern universities. The All American Girls Hockey Tournament was established to encourage Minnesota universities and high schools to expand the exposure of the sport by hosting the largest female-only hockey tournament in the Midwest. The Mighty Ducks Grant provided the National Sports Center with four more ice rinks meant to conquer Title IX goals and make ice time equitable for girls who battled for appropriate ice times.

Now, there are 62 girls hockey

teams participating in the tournament who have never known a time without multiple Division I women’s teams and even a professional hockey team in the State of Hockey.

“It’s important to recognize how much girls hockey has changed for the better in the state of Minnesota over the last 20 years,” said Minnesota Whitecaps forward Winny Brodt-Brown. “The tournament brings together thousands of girls who love hockey just like me. It’s not only one of the longest-running tournaments at the National Sports Center, it’s a celebration of all female hockey players.”

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won the 100 backstroke in 56.36.

Also advancing to state as runners-up were Samantha Friedrich in the 500 free (5:13.43), Allison Schrank in the 200 IM (2:10.14), Wilson in the 50 free (24.20) and the 200 free relay team of Ryan, Maddie Schrank, Friedrich and Knox (1:40.97), with Alyssa Jensen moving on with a fourth-place finish in diving (343.00).

Section 5AA

Spring Lake Park earned fifth place in the Section 5AA Championships at Minnetonka Nov. 7-9.

Leading the Panthers were fourth-place finishes by the 200 medley relay team of Melania Meyers, Kirsten King, Carly Lindquist and Sarah Martin (1:53.39) and by Meyers in the 100 backstroke (1:00.26).

Section 2A

Fridley finished sixth and Columbia Heights finished ninth in the Section 2A Championships at Richfield Nov. 6-8.

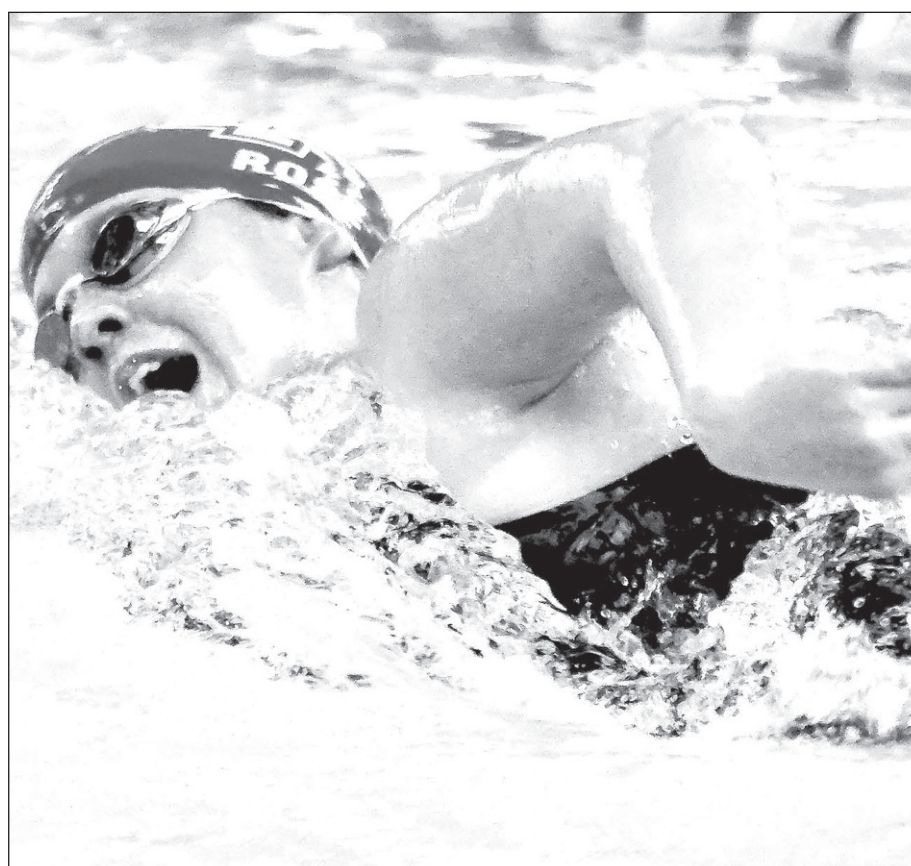
Fridley's Nadya Pugachova achieved the state qualifying standard in the 200 IM, advancing with a third-place finish in 2:14.84.

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Blaine's Sarah Knox and Samantha Friedrich swim to a sweep of the top two spots in the 500-yard freestyle and both advance to state during the Section 7AA Championship finals Nov. 9.

Photo by Patrick Slack



Spring Lake Park's Carly Lindquist, left, swims to fifth place in the 100 butterfly and Kaitlin Rose takes fifth in the 500 freestyle during the Section 5AA Championships finals Nov. 9. The Panthers finished fifth as a team during the tournament.

Photos by Anthony Iozzo/Sun Newspapers