

# SPORTS

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Saturday, August 8, 2020

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Bemidji State sophomore Sherrod Kpahn (23) runs the ball against St. Cloud State on Nov. 2, 2019, at Chet Anderson Stadium.

# WHAT'S NEXT FOR D-II FALL SPORTS?

Bemidji State, NSIC figuring out how to proceed with fall sports

By Austin Monteith  
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**Bemidji**  
Wednesday's news that athletes will be unable to compete for NCAA Division II fall championships in 2020 understandably left those within the Bemidji

State athletic department disappointed. The Division II Presidents Council canceled fall championships due to the coronavirus pandemic, joining its colleagues in Division III who did so earlier Wednesday. "We're disappointed that the student-athletes will not have

an opportunity to compete for NCAA championships in the fall," BSU athletic director Tracy Dill said Thursday. "But I fully understand and also respect the NCAA making the decision in this manner for the interest of public health for the students and staff and

everyone involved." Dill and the university's coaches held a meeting Thursday morning regarding the cancelation. "They all want to know ways that we can move forward," Dill said. "That's kind of the thrust with

athletics is you don't want to always look in the rearview mirror. You want to try to always look ahead. So that's what we're trying to do, and focus and see what positives we can get going here."

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## VOLLEYBALL



Jillian Gandsey / Bemidji Pioneer

Bemidji libero Jenna Anderson makes a pass in a 2019 match against Alexandria at the high school.

## Kinks arise as high school, club volleyball seasons converge

By Micah Friez  
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**BEMIDJI** — When the Minnesota State High School League announced Tuesday that volleyball would shift to the spring, concerns over scheduling conflicts immediately arose.

USA Junior Olympic volleyball, the popular club side of prep volleyball used heavily for college recruiting, typically overlaps the same March-May window that the high school

season will now occupy in 2021. In Bemidji, though, the Lumberjacks are just going to make it work. "I've been counting down the weeks and months until the season," said incoming senior Jenna Anderson. "It's super relieving that we do get a season because, unfortunately, some seniors last year did not get to play (in the spring)."

VOLLEYBALL: Page B3

## Bemidji High School reacts to new fall sports game plan

By Micah Friez  
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**BEMIDJI** — Everybody gets to play. Inside Bemidji High School, that's the most important fact.

"I'm grateful that, at least at this point and time, it looks like every sport is going to get a season. That's the positive you take from it," BHS activities director Troy Hendricks said. "There are a lot of people who have put in

a lot of hard work and effort into this thing, so I'm grateful that we have a season for these seniors."

The Minnesota State High School League drafted a game plan on Tuesday on how to proceed with fall sports during the coronavirus pandemic. The ultimate conclusion was forging ahead as scheduled, with the exception of football and volleyball, which will now begin

a two-month season in mid-March.

"We have a season. That's the biggest part of it," first-year football head coach Bryan Stoffel said. "I appreciated the modifications that the (MSHSL) board made that allowed us to have a season. ... I just witnessed a group of kids lose their season in the past spring. So to be able to have a season, I felt pretty grateful and lucky and excited to move for-

ward with that."

There were compromises for the sports still allowed to compete in the fall, such as a 30% reduction in the number of competitions and a limit of 1-2 games per week, per team.

The MSHSL has also emphasized limiting travel, though it hasn't offered specific guidelines for what is and is not allowed.

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The Lumberjack student section cheers for the Bemidji football team during a 2019 playoff game against Brainerd at Chet Anderson Stadium. Members of the girls soccer team, which won the section championship the week prior, wore their first-place medals in the stands.

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