

# COUNTY NEWS REVIEW

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## Blue Ribbon Beard Bonanza returning to Isanti County Fairgrounds in Cambridge

by Sarv Mithaqiyani  
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Isanti County and surrounding area beard and mustache growers who want to know how well of a facial hair they've developed can enter an upcoming contest at the Isanti County Fairgrounds in Cambridge.

The second annual Blue Ribbon Beard Bonanza will take place during the Isanti County Fair, at 3 p.m. on July 24 at the Isanti County Fairgrounds, 3101 Highway 95 NE, Cambridge.

The event is sponsored by the Minnesota Beard and Mustache Coalition, Isanti County Fair, Level-Up Beard Co., South of the River Facial Hair Club, Bad Jack, Thunder Brothers Brewery and Willow Bridge Center. The Blue Ribbon Beard Bonanza is part of a nonprofit charity organization that fundraises for cancer awareness, said Aaron Berg, organizer and co-host of Blue Ribbon

Beard Bonanza.

"Each contestant is also judged on, like, crowd appeal or appearance or their persona when they come up on stage," Berg said. "It's similar to maybe a Miss America-type pageant, where there's an interview session and then, 'Tell us about yourself and fancy costumes or outfits.' Or some people just come without it. So there's a whole variety."

"And you can tell in the crowd, who are the serious competitors, and who are the guys that just showed up for the event and heard about it and want to participate," he continued. "So the more professional are the people who've been in multiple contests. You can pick them out of the crowd."

Berg explained that contestants will receive an honest evaluation of their facial hair: its symmetry, length, size, girth,



Aaron Berg, the organizer and co-host of the Blue Ribbon Beard Bonanza, is excited about who will show up with their styled facial hair to participate in the Blue Ribbon Beard Bonanza contest during the Isanti County Fair on July 24. Photo by Sarv Mithaqiyani

See **BEARD CONTEST** on page 9

## Cambridge-Isanti Bluejacket bowling earn state honors

by John Wagner  
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Cambridge-Isanti High School's adapted bowling team had a blue-ribbon day at the MSHSL state tournament, which was held virtually on May 13.

On the lanes, junior Bryce Tinnel won the boys singles title in the cognitive impaired division with a pinfall total of 464.

"It was a surprise," Tinnel said of the title. "But I had a really good day."

Indeed he did. Tinnel, who carried a 42 average into the event, rolled a 102 and a 78 in



Cambridge-Isanti's adapted bowling team had two individuals honored by the state. Junior Bryce Tinnel won the boys singles title, while senior Hunter Carpenter won the Russ Bakko Most Outstanding Bowler award for his leadership on and off the lanes. From left is coach Steve Tischer, Tinnel and Carpenter.

See **BOWLING HONORS** on page 9

Photo by John Wagner

### GRADUATION 2021

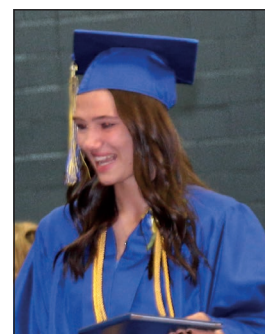


#### Commencement

Cambridge-Isanti, Cambridge Christian and North Branch school districts to hold graduation ceremonies.

pages 4, 13-17.

### RUSH CITY



#### Graduation 2021

Rush City High School celebrates its 2021 seniors during commencement held June 6.

pages 18-19

### SPORTS

Cambridge-Isanti has 11 sign national letters of intent; Cambridge-Isanti boys ride depth to M8 track title; and Braham baseball advances to winners' bracket title game.

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## BEARD CONTEST

*Continued from front*

thickness, density, uniformity and more. The first time the Isanti County Fair hosted Beard Bonanza was in 2019. Contestants numbered in the 30s from Wisconsin, Chanhassen, Lakeville, Minnetonka, Foley, Minneapolis and other nearby areas, Berg said. However, plans to host the contest in 2020 were upended because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### The contest categories include:

- 5 o'clock shadow - preceded by a fresh 8 a.m. shave; timestamped photo required.
- Mustache.
- Kids Craft - kids can craft their mustache with on-site supplies or at home.
- Partial Beard.

- Full Beard - short (less than 6 inches).
- Whiskerina - this is for ladies who wish to participate.
- Full Beard - long (more than 6 inches).
- Freestyle.

The contest will award first, second and third prize winners in each category, as well as a Best in Show Award. For pre-registration, contest rules, category and other information, visit [blueribbon-beardbonanza.com](http://blueribbon-beardbonanza.com).

### Supporting the Maddy Nelson Memorial Foundation

Proceeds from this year's Blue Ribbon Beard Bonanza will benefit the Maddy Nelson Memorial Foundation, in memory of Madison (Maddy) Rose Nelson, 18, of Cambridge, who died of cancer in 2016.

"And her parents now have a foundation and do scholarships for high school kids going into college," Berg explained. "So we're going to donate to the scholarship fund this year, whatever profits we have."

### Isanti County Fair returns

The 2021 Isanti County Fair is scheduled for July 21 through July 25.

"We have all the entertainment booked for our band shell and the grandstand events are hired. Most of our food vendors will be back along with some new ones," said Bryce Sorenson, Isanti County Fair Board president.

The county fair anticipates about 20,000 to 25,000 people, according to a news release by the Isanti County Fair.

"We will be working closely with the 4-H to comply with whatever the COVID-19 standards are at the time we have the fair to ensure public safety to

the best of our ability," the news release explained. "The Fair Board will be providing additional handwashing stations throughout the grounds."

Exhibitors are encouraged to start preparing their needlework, quilts, canning, baking, arts, crafts, or whatever projects they would like to enter in the Open Class.

Fair participants can visit the newly constructed Agribition building located in front of the horse arena. Another new addition is also the miniature horses on display in the newly remodeled horse barn.

The Isanti County Fair is always in need of sponsors and volunteers for the fair.

People who want to volunteer and help the Isanti County Fair can contact a board member at [isanticountyfair.com](http://isanticountyfair.com) or by calling 763-689-2555.

## BOWLING HONORS

*Continued from front*

the competition. Combined with his 142 handicap, Tinnel finished with that 464 total that beat his nearest competitor by 23 pins.

"He bowled his two best games of the year on that day," said Cambridge-Isanti adapted bowling coach Steve Tischer. "He bowled crazy-good."

"When he found out he had won, he was so excited, because it was so unexpected. He knew he had bowled well, but to get first in the state was a huge accomplishment. He was so excited."

The fact that he won a state title is still sinking in for Tinnel, who is the son of

Kelly Tinnel.

"I have some people who have talked to me about it, and my friends still talk to me about it," he said.

Off the lanes, Cambridge-Isanti senior Hunter Carpenter received the Russ Bakko Most Outstanding Bowler Award from the Minnesota Adapted Athletics Association.

The award is presented annually to a senior adapted bowler who has competed at a high level, shown good sportsmanship, and shown positive leadership.

"The award Hunter won was for his behavior and actions at the bowling lanes," Tischer said. "He tries to be a leader, and he treats people well. He's one of the most loving, caring students I've ever had on the bowling team. He

supports the other kids; he goes out of the way to make it a good day for the other kids.

"He helps me in my adapted developmental phy-ed class, and he helps in the lunch room. He's always willing to help, and he tries to make everyone's day a better day - and not just the kids, but the staff as well."

One of the nomination letters Carpenter received echoed that sentiment, adding: "Hunter cares deeply about others feelings and what is going on in their lives. He constantly worries about his friends, teachers, and family members, and he will be the first one to put a smile on their face when they are feeling down or having a difficult day. Hunter is also known for wanting to help with students

that are very physically challenged."

The senior said has two goals for every competition.

"I try to get turkeys, but I try to cheer everyone on," he said. "I just want to get my teammates excited, and I want them to be happy."

Carpenter said he was surprised and excited to receive the award.

"I thought it was really cool," he said. "Being my last year, it was a great way to end the year."

Carpenter, who is the son of Marshall and Sarah Carpenter, is someone Tischer said is a key member of this year's team.

"We saw the leadership that Hunter showed on the team all season long," Tischer said. "As a senior, he's going to be hard to replace."

## Cambridge woman killed in crash

by Rachel Kytonen  
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A Cambridge woman was killed in a crash on Highway 65, in Isanti Township, on June 4, at 6:07 p.m.

According to the Minnesota State Patrol, a freightliner semi, driven by Aklilu Alem Gebremichael, 32, of Dallas, was crossing the northbound lanes of Highway 65 at 278th Lane Northeast, when a 2000 Buick Lesabre, driven by Bianca Mae Rogalski, 25, of Cambridge, traveling northbound on Highway 65, struck toward the rear of the freightliner on the driver's side. Rogalski was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Road conditions were reported dry at the time of the incident, and both drivers were wearing their seat belts.

Besides the Minnesota State Patrol, the Isanti County Sheriff's Department, the Isanti Police Department and the Isanti Fire District responded to the scene.

## Motorcyclist killed in Harris

Press release provided by the  
Chisago County  
Sheriff's Office

On June 6, at 9:05 p.m., the Chisago County Emergency Communications Center received a report of a motorcycle crash near Jess Avenue and Sunrise Road in Harris.

Upon arriving on scene deputies located the 51-year-old male driver and lone occupant deceased. Initial investigation appears the motorcyclist was traveling west on Sunrise Road near Jess Avenue when it left the roadway and crashed in the ditch. The driver's information is being withheld at this time until next of kin can be notified. Chisago County Sheriff's Office is investigating the crash.

Assisting agencies include North Branch Police Department and Lakes Region EMS.

## Ever Cat Fuels to pay \$300,000 for air quality violations, failing to have required permit

Press release provided by the  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Ever Cat Fuels, LLC, will pay a \$300,000 civil penalty to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for air quality violations at its biodiesel production facility in Isanti.

After a multi-year investigation, the MPCA determined that Ever Cat Fuels operated without a required air-emissions permit and failed to meet multiple federal requirements.

MPCA staff received a report of a methanol, biodiesel, and waste vegetable oil spill at the Isanti facility.

The company stated that the wastewater generated from recovering the spill was incinerated in a thermal oxidizer at the facility two days after the spill.

The MPCA found that on multiple occasions, the wastes generated from spills at the facility, which would have been classified as hazardous waste, were diluted with water and incinerated.

The MPCA issued an administrative order that required Ever Cat Fuels to:

- Apply for an air emissions permit.
- Conduct air modeling.
- Comply with national standards regulat-

ing air pollutants and equipment performance in their facility.

- Submit emission inventory reports for 2009-2018.
- Install temperature monitoring devices and flow indicators on both thermal oxidizers.
- Submit an operations and maintenance manual for all air pollution control equipment.
- Apply for an air emissions permit for its pilot plant in Anoka.

MPCA rules and regulations are designed to protect human health and the environment by limiting pollution emissions and discharges from facilities.

When companies do not fully comply with regulatory requirements, the resulting pollution can be harmful to people and the environment.

When calculating penalties, the MPCA takes into account how seriously the violations affected or could have affected the environment, and whether they were first-time or repeat violations.

The agency also attempts to recover the economic benefit the company gained by failing to comply with environmental laws in a timely manner.



## Sports

## Cambridge-Isanti has 11 sign national letters of intent

by John Wagner

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It has not been unusual for Cambridge-Isanti High School to have students sign national letters of intent to play sports in college.

No, what made Tuesday, June 1, special was that the Bluejackets were able to host a Signing Day with all of the signees together. That is because for the last year, COVID-19 concerns forced the school to host “virtual” Signing Days with students signing their letters in front of computer screens.

But with the lifting of restrictions in recent weeks, the school was able to have its latest class of signees together to celebrate.

And it was quite a celebration, because C-I had a whopping 11 seniors – Laurna Arends, Larissa Block, Chase Carstensen, Kaylee Clement, Abbie Higley, Cierra Johnshoy, Luke Olson, Ashton Parnell, Derek Pohlkamp, Jasmyn Sibell and Allyson Treichel – come together at the school’s Media Room that morning to sign letters of intent with a variety of different schools.

Here are a few words each of the signees shared about their chosen school and the Signing Day event itself.

**Laurna Arends, soccer**

**School:** Dakota County Technical College.

**Parents:** Joe and Stacie Arens.

**Why did you choose Dakota County Technical College?** “I liked the school and the programs they have. It was just a plus that I was able to join the soccer team.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “I’m really excited. I didn’t think it was going to be this big, so it was really exciting.”

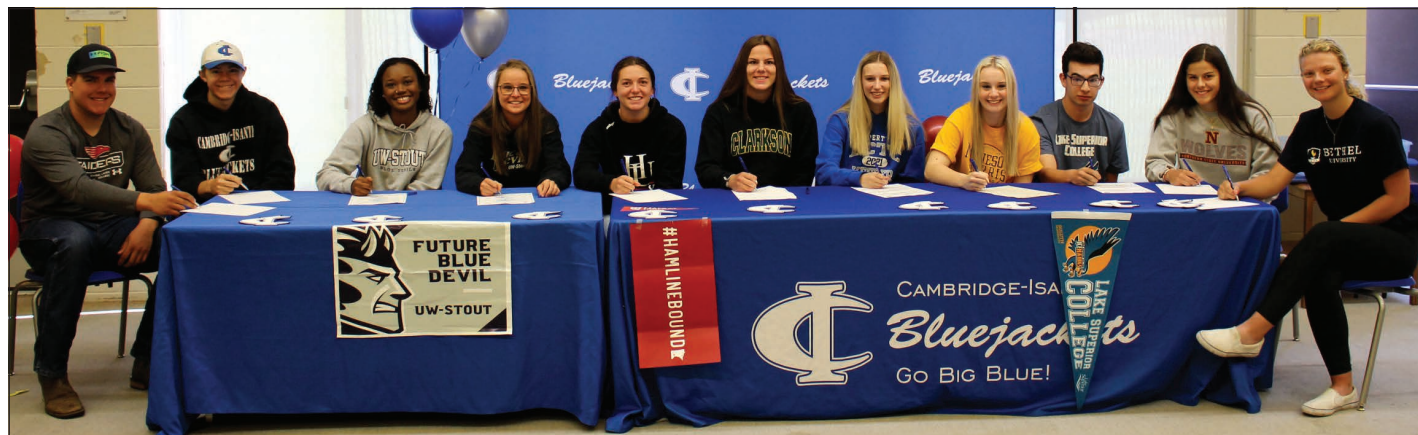
**Larissa Block, track**

**School:** Wisconsin-Stout.

**Parents:** Brandon Hickman and Molly Block.

**Why did you choose Wisconsin-Stout?** “It’s not too far away, but it’s not too close, either. When I went to visit, the coaches and the team were welcoming and friendly. It felt like they had a spot there for me.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It was exciting, but I was a little nervous, too. This year went by really fast, but I’m very excited to see what lies ahead in the future.”



On Tuesday, June 1, 11 Cambridge-Isanti seniors signed national letters of intent to play sports in college. From left are Jason Olson, Chase Carstensen, Larissa Block, Cierra Johnshoy, Ashton Parnell, Allyson Treichel, Laurna Arends, Abbie Higley, Derek Pohlkamp, Kaylee Clement and Jasmyn Sibell.

Photo by John Wagner

**Chase Carstensen, baseball and football**

**School:** University of Northwestern.

**Parents:** Kristi Carstensen, Chuck & Melissa Carstensen.

**Why did you choose the University of Northwestern?** “It wasn’t sports – it was the character and the culture that are there. I feel they’re going to build me into a better person, which is more important than building me into a better athlete.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “I’m just excited for whatever is to come at the next level.”

**Kaylee Clement, track**

**School:** Northern State University.

**Parents:** Jason Clement, Nathan Majorowicz and Jessica Carter.

**Why did you choose Northern State?** “They were one of the first colleges to contact me, and when I went on a visit, I really liked the campus and coaches. Those were the main things that attracted me.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It was really surreal. It wasn’t as if I didn’t think I could be here, but it still was exciting to reach this point. I was happy for all of my other classmates who were here today as well.”

**Abbie Higley, volleyball**

**School:** Minnesota-Morris.

**Parents:** Dan and Karen Higley.

**Why did you choose Minnesota-Morris?** “I liked the environment there, and the volleyball program is really good. They have a great exercise science program, and that will be my major. And I like that it’s kind of close to home.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It was pretty exciting. It’s like I’m standing on solid ground now, knowing that I am going there. And it was a great

way to celebrate.”

**Cierra Johnshoy, cross country and track**

**School:** Wisconsin-Stout.

**Parents:** Kyle and Lisa Johnshoy.

**Why did you choose Wisconsin-Stout?** “I really like the town, because it’s super local. I like the atmosphere and everything in Wisconsin, and the school is really nice.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “I was just happy and proud to reach this point. All along I thought I would play volleyball in college, but right now I’m excited to see what’s in the future.”

**Luke Olson, football**

**School:** Central Lakes Community College.

**Parents:** Lance and Jennifer Olson.

**Why did you choose Central Lakes Community College?** “I eventually want to work for the DNR, and they have the programs I want to prepare for that. And I’m also excited to continue to play football.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It was fun and exciting. It was interesting to see where everyone is going. Now I can’t wait to go and play football.”

**Ashton Parnell, hockey and cross country**

**School:** Hamline University.

**Parents:** Clint and Shontel Parnell.

**Why did you choose Hamline University?** “I like the hockey program there. I was sad when cross country was over, and I thought it would be cool to do two sports. And Hamline was OK with that.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It was a unique experience, because I know a lot of students don’t get to do this. I wasn’t nervous; I was just excited.”

**Derek Pohlkamp, soccer**

**School:** Lake Superior College.

**Parents:** David and Betty Pohlkamp.

**Why did you choose Lake Superior College?** “I like Duluth, and that’s where Lake Superior College is, and I like the atmosphere around the college.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It felt good. It’s been a long journey, so it feels great to sign and know the next step is guaranteed.”

**Jasmyn Sibell, golf**

**School:** Bethel University.

**Parents:** Dan and Melissa Sibell.

**Why did you choose Bethel?** “I always have liked the school. When I met the team, I fell in love with the team.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “It was kind of an awakening, because the idea that I’m going to play college golf is a little more real. It was great to be surrounded by a bunch of people that I grew up with, and it’s great to see so many of us getting to play sports in college.”

**Allyson Treichel, volleyball**

**School:** Clarkson University.

**Parents:** Tom and Madeline Treichel.

**Why did you choose Clarkson?** “They are in a beautiful area, and they have a very good volleyball program. My degree will be in environmental engineering, and they have a great program for that.”

**What were your feelings on Signing Day?** “I was a little nervous about making a speech, but I was really excited to sign and continue to play volleyball.”



## COUNTY NEWS REVIEW

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# Sports

## Cambridge-Isanti Bluejacket boys ride depth to M8 track title

by John Wagner

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Cambridge-Isanti boys track coach Kent Viesselman was ready to celebrate after his team won the Mississippi 8 Championship at North Branch on Wednesday, June 2.

“But our kids were quiet – even though we had just won the conference,” Viesselman explained. “One of the boys said to me, ‘We wanted to do our best. We expected to win the conference.’ I don’t think that’s being cocky – they were just very confident.”

“I thought that this was our best overall team performance. We placed in every event, and that was a big deal. And in many events we placed two or three kids. I told them, ‘It’s OK to celebrate winning a conference title.’ And they did.”

The Bluejackets finished with 187.5 points, outpacing second-place Monticello by more than 34 points. But C-I won only three field events on the way to the title, which is a testament to the team’s depth.

“We coach every kid, so that gives us depth,” Viesselman said. “And it also means we’re less likely to have a bad performance, because even if one kid does not do well, we will absorb that result and keep scoring points.”

Senior Jacob Ziebarth cleared 6-4 to win the high jump, while senior Ethan Hintermeister cleared 14-8 to lead a 1-2-3 finish in the pole vault along with freshmen Riley and Micah Wilson.

Another big effort for Cambridge-Isanti came in the discus, where seniors Trent Beseth and Luke Olson took the top two spots. Both landed big throws that exceeded their seed distances by a wide margin, with Beseth covering 140-10 and Olsen throwing the discus 138-4.

And the Bluejackets took second and third in the long jump behind junior Devin Larson (21-6.5) and Riley Wilson (20-5.25).

That depth was a C-I hallmark throughout the meet. For example, in the 800 junior Zander Gallmeier was second (2:06.42), while senior Austin Otier was fourth (2:09.26) and junior Joshua Provost was eighth (2:11.64). The 14 points that trio provided was more than any other school mustered in that event.

That also happened in the 110 high hurdles thanks to senior Andrew Head in second place (17.24), Riley Wilson in third (17.24) and freshman Blake Viesselman in fifth (18.29) for 18 points. That trio also took 3-5-7 in the 300 hurdles for 12 points despite not finishing better than third place (Head with a time of 42.95).

“In the field events and the hurdles, we really had some outstanding results,” Kent Viesselman said. “Having your third person place means they performed well. It was such a great team effort.”

And Cambridge-Isanti’s depth also shined in the four relays, as the Bluejackets took second place in all four for 32 more points.

### C-I girls place second at meet

The Cambridge-Isanti girls track team trailed only Monticello in the Mississippi 8 championship, with the Magic posting 188.5 points while the Bluejackets had 164.

“It wasn’t like we were blown out – it was only 18 points,” interim coach Linda Droubie said. “Monticel-



Cambridge-Isanti junior Adam Hamed crosses the finish line at the end of the 4x200 relay. Hamed and the Bluejackets finished second in that event with a time of 1:34.27.

Photos by Jorge Perales



Cambridge-Isanti junior Aiyana Knight takes a long stride as part of her 400 run. Knight won that event with a time of 1:00.01.



North Branch senior Henry Toussaint clears a hurdle at the Mississippi 8 Track Championship hosted by the Vikings on Wednesday, June 2. Toussaint won both hurdle events, including the 300 hurdles with a time of 41.73.

lo is a very strong team, so our girls can be proud that they finished within 18 points of them.”

Cambridge-Isanti scored the bulk of its points in the sprints and the field events. Sophomore Anika Larson led a 1-2-5 finish for the Bluejackets in the 200, winning the event with a 26.84 clocking. Junior Aiyana Knight was close behind with a time of 27.00, while junior Lacy Leverty was fifth at 28.50.

Knight won the 400 with a time of 1:00.01, while freshman Annie Hennen placed third with a 1:05.86 clocking.

Cambridge-Isanti also had an impressive showing in the field events, including a 1-2-5 finish in the high jump, with sophomore Ada Schlenker winning after

clearing 5-0. Senior Emily Jones (4-10) was second and junior Ashley Ladd (4-8) was fifth.

Senior Larissa Block won the long jump with a 17-4 leap, while senior Kaylee Clement was third (16-7.5). Jones won the triple jump with a leap of 34-4.5, while Schlenker (32-7.5) was fourth.

Leverty (13.61) and Clement (13.731) took 2-4 in the 100, while sophomore Kendyl Izzo placed second in the 800 with a 2:36.58 clocking. Seventh grader McKenna Sjobert took third in the 3,200 (12:37.14) and was sixth in the 1,600 (5:44.81).

Droubie said she hopes her team learned some lessons about competing in a top tier meet.

“We had some athletes who were younger, and they struggled a little bit,” she said. “They didn’t get a chance to compete last year, so this was probably their first big meet.”

“In cross country we had a couple of runners who were disappointed in how they ran in the league meet, but they totally rebounded at sections. If you are going to have a ‘tough’ meet, would you prefer to have it at the conference meet or at sections? Clearly at conference.

“We’ll come back strong and learn from this.”

### North Branch finishes third in girls meet, sixth in boys

North Branch had a number of top performances at the Mississippi 8 Championship meet it hosted, and those strong efforts lifted the girls into third place with 89 points while the boys took sixth with 47.5 points.

On the girls side, senior Paige Bauer won the pole vault by clearing 11-6, placed second in the long jump with a best leap of 16-8.5, and took third in the high jump by clearing 4-10. A pair of seventh graders, Ella Dick and Brooke Giese, finished second and fourth for the Vikings in the pole vault.

Senior Abby Schulte placed second in the shot put with a best throw of 33-0, while senior Alexis Torres took fifth in the discus with a toss of 99-8. Eighth grader Ella Kuhlman took third in the 300 hurdles (50.11), while fellow eighth grader Sophia Benedict placed fourth in the 400 (1:06.51).

On the boys side, senior Harrison Toussaint was the top performer for the Vikings. He won the 110 hurdles with a time of 16.11, and his 41.73 clocking of the 300 hurdles earned him the top spot in that race as well.

Junior Justin Ramos took second in the triple jump (41-9) and freshman Carson Weber claimed seventh (38-1.5), while junior Logan Murphy tied for sixth in the high jump (5-8).

### Unique True Team meet for C-I Girls

The Cambridge-Isanti girls finished 11 of 12 teams in the Class 3A State True Team meet, which was held virtually by teams using results from a previous meet. The Bluejackets used results from a meet at Big Lake from two weeks ago.

The virtual nature of the event did not take into account discrepancies in weather, meanwhile the Bluejackets ran on a windy day in Big Lake while other teams did not face the exact same condition. Also, star sprinter Aiyana Knight did not run at Big Lake because of injury.

“It was a tremendous accomplishment for the girls to make it to True Team State,” Droubie said. “Unfortunately we didn’t have the opportunity to have an ‘in-person’ meet, and I think the results would have been difference had there been an in-person meet.”



## Sports

## Braham baseball advances to winners' bracket title game

by John Wagner

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The Braham baseball team has made a magical run through the winners bracket of the Class A Section 5 tournament.

The Bombers, the No. 2 seed in the East bracket, opened tournament play with a 6-1 victory over East Central on Tuesday, June 1, then knocked off Onamia by a 3-1 score the next day.

That lifted Braham into the winners bracket semifinals and a contest on Friday, June 4, against No. 4 seed Ogilvie, which had upset top-seeded Hinckley-Finlayson in the previous round. The Bombers prevailed by a 9-1 margin, setting the stage for a contest against Sebeke, the top seed from the West bracket, on Monday, June 7, that was not completed at press time.

"Pitching and defense have obviously been a big part of our success," Braham coach Aitor Leniz said. "The East Central game was 1-1 into the bottom of the sixth because Jonah Johnson pitched great, and we found a way to score some late runs and win.

"Hayden Lee pitched very well against Onamia, and Caleb Schusted pitched well against Ogilvie. Defensively we made almost all of the plays behind them, and we started to hit the ball better against Ogilvie on Friday to score a few runs and give ourselves some breathing room."

If Braham won against Sebeke, the Bombers advanced directly to the championship on Thursday, June 10, at Pierz starting at 4:30 p.m. If they lost, they dropped to the consolation bracket, where they could advance to Thursday's championship game with a win on Tuesday, June 8, against an opponent that was not determined at press time.

**Cambridge-Isanti** faced an uphill battle as the No. 8 seed in the Class 4A Section 7 tournament. The Bluejackets dropped a 12-1 decision to top-seeded Andover on Wednesday, June 2, then were eliminated with an 18-4 loss to Anoka the following day.

**North Branch** dug itself a hole by losing its first game in the Class 3A Section 7 tournament, but the Vikings remain alive thanks to three straight wins in the consolation bracket.

North Branch, the No. 2 seed in the section, was upset by Duluth Denfeld by a 14-2 count on Tuesday, June 1. The Vikings were their own worst enemy in that loss, committing seven errors that allowed Denfeld to score five runs in both the first and fifth innings.

"We picked a bad time to play poorly on defense," coach Steve Christensen said.

Dropped to the consolation bracket, the Vikings stayed alive with an 11-2 home win over Cloquet on Thursday, June 3, then gained a measure of revenge by edging Duluth Denfeld 4-3 in the consolation quarterfinals on Saturday, June



North Branch senior Jordan Axberg lines a pitch for one of his four hits in the Vikings' 11-2 victory over Cloquet in a Class 3A Section 7 tournament game played Thursday, June 3.

5.

North Branch used a five-run third-inning rally to break a 2-2 tie against Cloquet, then added three runs in the fourth. Senior Jordan Axberg led the offense with four hits, including a double, and two RBIs.

In the rematch against Denfeld, the Vikings fell behind 3-0 before scoring twice in the fifth inning and three times in the sixth to earn the victory. Freshman Andrew Orf went 2-for-4 and drove home all four of the Vikings' runs, while Axberg earned the victory with seven solid innings of work in which he gave up just five hits and one walk while fanning five.

North Branch faced Princeton on Tuesday, June 8, and the winner of that contest did battle with top-seeded Chisago Lakes that afternoon. Neither of those games were completed at press time.

The winner of the game involving Chisago Lakes and either North Branch or Princeton advanced to the section championship on Wednesday, June 9. That winner faced Grand Rapids and needed to beat the Thunderhawks twice to advance to the state tournament.

**Rush City** unfortunately drew the No. 16 seed in the Class 2A Section 7 tournament, which meant the Tigers opened against the top seed in the section, Esko. The Eskomos claimed a 7-0 victory on Tuesday, June 1, that ended Rush City's season.

## Softball

**North Branch** put together two dominant performances in the first two contests in the Class 3A Section 7 tournament.

The Vikings rolled to a 10-0 home victory over Duluth Denfeld on Wednesday, June 2, then pounded Cloquet 10-0 on Saturday, June 5, to advance to the title game of the winners bracket.

North Branch pounded out 16 hits to take early leads of 2-0 after one inning and 6-0 after two before using a four-run

fifth to run-rule the Hunters.

In that contest, senior Katherine Carlson had three doubles in three at-bats, scoring twice while driving in two, while senior Emma Hurd also had three hits along with three runs scored and two RBIs.

The Vikings scored five times in the second inning against Cloquet, then added a four-run fifth to run-rule the Lumberjacks. Hurd had two hits, including a double, and stole two bases to produce three runs scored in this win, while senior Sophie Smith also had two hits and two runs batted in.

Freshman Hannah Bernier fired a one-hitter against Cloquet, striking out five.

North Branch played Chisago Lakes in the championship game of the winners bracket on Tuesday, June 8, a contest that was not completed at press time. If the Vikings won, they advanced to the section title game on Thursday, June 10.

If the Vikings lost to the Wildcats, they dropped into the consolation bracket for a game on Tuesday, June 8, against either Hibbing or Hermantown, and North Branch would need a win to advance to Thursday's title round.

**Rush City** fought its way through the early rounds of the Class 2A Section 7 tournament, opening with a 13-2 rout of Crosby-Ironton on Monday, May 31. Katelyn Buehring had a home run among her two hits, and the Tigers pounded out 13 total thanks to two-hit days by Ally Rood, Shelby Holmstrom and Madison Ribich.

The Tigers then suffered a 7-2 loss at Greenway on Thursday, June 3, but bounced back to eliminate Virginia 13-2 the next day.

Rush City faced Proctor, the top seed in the section and the second-ranked team in the state, on Tuesday, June 8, in a game that was not finished at press time.

**Cambridge-Isanti** dropped a 4-0 decision at Blaine in the Class 4A Section 7 tournament on Wednesday, June 2. The



North Branch senior Katherine Carlson jumps for joy as her team collects another hit and prepares to score another run in a 10-5 victory over Cloquet on Saturday, June 5. Photos by Jorge Perales

Bluejackets then were bumped out of the tournament by a 4-0 loss to St. Francis on Saturday, June 5.

**Braham** was unable to advance in the tough Class A Section 4 tournament. Seeded seventh, the Bombers dropped an 11-1 decision at Goodhue on Monday, May 31, before losing a 21-1 decision at West Lutheran on Tuesday, June 1.

## Boys Tennis

**Cambridge-Isanti** had several individuals and doubles pairs put together a solid performance in the Class 2A Section 7 individual tournament hosted by Elk River last week.

In the singles bracket, eighth grader Keagen Lowman defeated Jake Philipps of Blaine 6-2, 6-4 in his opening match before losing to Ryan Delaney of Duluth East 6-2, 6-1 in the second round. And junior Eric Kindem lost to Thomas Gunderson in a hard-fought 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 match.

In the doubles bracket, freshman Caden Chesla and eighth grader Micah Gustafson won their opening match against a pair from Blaine by scores of 7-5, 6-2, before losing in the second round. Meanwhile senior Rigo Mork and junior Alex Magnuson lost a tough 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 match to a doubles pair from Grand Rapids.

**North Branch** saw senior Josh Newman win his first match in the Class A Section 6 tournament last week, but was defeated in the second round of the tournament. Gabe Wurdemann lost his opening match in singles, while the doubles teams of Blake Scanlon and Noah Schwartzrock along with Theo Carjila and Brock Peterson also were knocked out in the opening round.



## Sports

## Cambridge-Isanti's Sibell advances to state golf tourney — really!

by John Wagner

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Cambridge-Isanti girls golf coach Steve Hanson pulled a mean trick on his top golfer, senior Jasmyne Sibell, as Sibell finished competing in the Class 3A Section 7 tournament at Grand National Golf Club in Hinckley on Saturday, June 5.

"He told me I wasn't advancing to the state tournament — that I had missed it by a stroke," Sibell said.

Cruel, right?

"I thought she knew she had made it, especially as she was finishing the 18th hole," Hanson said in his defense. "Plus, she has given me such a hard time over the last six years, I decided I could take one shot at her.

"I wasn't going to let her think it for very long — and honestly, I didn't think she would believe me. When I said it, she didn't look very happy, and she started to walk away. I had to yell at her, 'You know you made it, right?'"

Sibell made it pretty comfortably, actually. She posted rounds of 79 and 83 to finish fourth overall and third among the individuals competing for bids to the state tournament, which will be played at Bunker Hills Golf Club on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 15-16.

"It was exciting to officially know I had made it," Sibell said once she knew



Cambridge-Isanti senior Jasmyne Sibell tees off during the Class 3A Section 7 tournament held at Grand National in Hinckley on Saturday, June 5. Sibell finished fourth individually to earn her second berth in the state tournament. Photo by John Wagner

for sure.

But it was not an easy route for the senior, who struggled early in Saturday's round.

"I had a couple of double bogeys, and it was hard to get out of the mindset I was in," Sibell admitted. "I was trying to shoot a lower score than I had on Thursday, and everything went really well on the practice range and the putting green. But obviously the course was different.

"I just wasn't believing in myself. But then I got a couple of pars, and I started believing again."

According to Hanson, the key to Sibell's success this season was that she



Rush City senior Maggie Roth, the Great River Conference player of the year, will next compete in the Class 2A state tournament next week. She earned her berth by finishing fourth at the Section 7 tournament last week. Submitted photo

plays at an even keel.

"She doesn't get too high, and she doesn't get too low," Hanson said of Sibell. "I think that's when athletes perform their best. She's been so steady; I know she's going to handle herself on the course and always play her best.

"I think she might have put more pressure on herself than she needed to on Saturday, and she started out a little shaky. But I told her that if she just played her game, she would be fine."

Sibell will be making her second appearance in the state tournament, having played in the event as a sophomore.

"I think I will enjoy it more as a senior," she said. "Hanson will be able to

walk with me, and my family will be able to watch me and enjoy it. I'm just going to go there and play my best, and just see what happens."

And yes, there are no hard feelings between Sibell and Hanson after his dirty trick.

"It has been great to work with her the past six years," Hanson said. "She has been an asset to the program, and to the other girls in the program."

The Cambridge-Isanti girls did not advance as a team after posting a 363 team score on Thursday. Sibell was the only Bluejacket to make the cut, although senior Ashton Parnell just missed after firing an 89.

The Cambridge-Isanti boys also missed Thursday's cut with a team total of 335. Senior Easton Parnell and sophomore Logan Westman just missed making the individual cut, finishing with an 81 and 82, respectively.

#### Maggie Roth will play in Class 2A meet

Rush City senior Maggie Roth earned a berth in the Class 2A state golf tournament thanks to a fine performance in the Section 7 tournament played at The Quarry at Giant's Ridge.

Roth finished fourth among 40 golfers in that competition to earn her berth in the Class 2A state tournament.

The Class 2A championship will be played at the Ridges at Sand Creek on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 15-16.

## Area Town Ball teams produce 5-1 week

by John Wagner

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Area Town Ball teams had an extremely successful week last week, as the four teams combined for a 5-1 record. And that lone loss came against another area team.

Isanti posted a 3-0 record last week, starting with a 7-4 home victory over Rogers on Wednesday, June 2. Brent Tholen hit two home runs for the Redbirds, including a walk-off three-run shot in the bottom of the ninth.

Two nights later Isanti claimed a 3-0 victory at Osceola behind lefty Phil Bray, who pitched a complete-game four-hit shutout and notched 15 strikeouts.

Mitch Dunbar went 3-for-5 in that contest, while Logan Kalis and Nick Hoffman each had two hits.

The Redbirds closed the week by thumping North Branch 17-2 on Sunday, June 6. Isanti finished with 17 hits, including at least one by 10 different hitters, as Hoffman, Jordan Schlueter and Kalis had home runs.

T.J. Wink gave up just four hits and two runs in five innings to earn the victory, while Hoffman pitched a scoreless sixth to close out the win.

Rum River used a five-run fourth-inning rally to claim a 5-3 victory at Ramsey on Tuesday, June 1. Left-hander Tyler Kronstedt limited the Renegades to just two earned runs while fanning seven

to earn the complete-game victory.

Andy Julkowski's three-run double was the big hit in the Bandits' fourth-inning rally, while Kevin Auth and Kronstedt also had run-scoring hits.

Braham used a pair of late rallies to bury Nowthen 11-0 on Sunday, June 6. The Snappers scored three runs in the seventh and five more in the eighth to break open a tight contest.

The Snappers will play a pair of home games this week, starting with a contest against Mora on Wednesday, June 9, that is set to begin at 7:30 p.m. Braham will then host Hinckley on Sunday, June 13, with first pitch at 1 p.m.

The Nighthawks will play in the Tiger Town Classic tournament hosted by

Belle Plaine on Saturday and Sunday, June 12-13, then play at Forest Lake on Tuesday, June 15, in a 7:30 p.m. contest.

Rum River will not play again until Monday, June 14, when it starts a three-game road swing against Isanti in a 7:30 p.m. start. The Bandits then play at Chisago Lakes on Wednesday, June 16, and travel to Hinckley on Saturday, June 19.

Isanti has scheduled a pair of non-conference games this week, hosting Blaine on Wednesday, June 9, before taking on Foley two days later.

The Redbirds will close the week with a reunion of the 2011 state championship team at Redbird Field, with an alumni game scheduled to begin at 4 p.m.

## Athletes of the Week

Braham Bomber • Cambridge-Isanti Bluejacket  
Cambridge Christian Warrior • Rush City Tiger • North Branch Viking



**Larissa Block**  
Grade 12

Larissa Block played a role in three first-place finishes at the Mississippi 8 Conference meet hosted by North Branch on Wednesday, June 2. The Cambridge-Isanti standout won the long jump with a leap of 17-4, nearly a foot longer than her previous best this season, and also ran the opening leg on the winning 4x100 and 4x200 relays. She also ran on the Bluejackets' 4x400 relay that placed fifth.



**Connor Johnson**  
Grade 11

Connor Johnson helped lead the Braham baseball team to three victories in the Class A Section 5 tournament last week. The junior right fielder had six hits in three games to lead the Bombers to wins over East Central, Onamia and Ogilvie last week as Braham advanced to the winners bracket championship game to start this week.



**Emma Hurd**  
Grade 11

Emma Hurd had two big days at the plate to help the North Branch softball team win two section contests last week. Hurd went 3-for-4 with a double, three runs scored, two RBIs and a pair of stolen bases in a 10-0 home win over Duluth Denfeld on Wednesday, June 3, then was 2-for-3 with a double, an RBI, three more runs and two more stolen bases in a 10-0 win over Cloquet on Saturday, June 5.

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# Cambridge-Isanti's Ziebarth invited to all-star game

by John Wagner

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Cambridge-Isanti senior Gaven Ziebarth earned an invitation to play in the Minnesota High School Football All-Star Game, which is sponsored annually by the state's football coaches association.

Unfortunately, Ziebarth will not get a chance to play in the game; it was canceled in late May.

The game, last played in December 2019 at U.S. Bank Stadium, annually features top senior players from across the state, divided into North and South rosters.

The 2020 edition of the contest was postponed last December and then rescheduled for Saturday, June 26. Last month it was canceled after efforts to try to play the game failed.

"We understand the challenges everyone has faced over the past year,

and the disappointment of having to cancel this special event," game director Dave Fritze wrote in an email that announced the decision.

Ziebarth, who has signed to play football collegiately at the University of North Dakota, would have been the first Bluejacket to play in that contest since offensive lineman Brandon Westberg played in the 2018 contest.

### Summer Boys Basketball Camps

The Cambridge-Isanti boys basketball program is offering several summer programs for boys interested in developing their basketball skills.

The "Mac Attack" Basketball Camp will be held the week of July 12-16 at the C-I gym, with boys in grades 3-6 working from 9 a.m. to noon while boys in grades 7-10 take the court from 12:30-3:30 p.m. The cost of the camp is \$95.

The "Junior Mac Attack" Bas-

ketball Camp for boys who have completed kindergarten through the second grade will take place July 6-9 from 1-3 p.m. at the high school gym. The cost of this camp is \$50.

There also will be a Bluejacket Boys Basketball Skills Academy led by former C-I standout Micah Ladd, who now plays at Crown College. The 11 individual workouts, which will last for 75 minutes, will begin on Wednesday, June 16, and cost \$5 per session per player.

For more information or registration details, go to [www.cibluejackethoops.com/home.html](http://www.cibluejackethoops.com/home.html) or contact coach Mike McDonald at [mmcdonald@c-ischools.org](mailto:mmcdonald@c-ischools.org) or 763-222-4028.

The program also will be hosting open gyms on Monday and Wednesday evenings this summer. Prospective participants are asked to contact coach McDonald for the complete schedule.

## Summer concert series at North Folk Winery

North Folk Winery offers top musical performances during the winery's 9th annual summer concert series. Upcoming concerts include:

**June 13:** Charlie Parr concert, 7-8:30 p.m.

**July 16:** Pert Near Sandstone concert, 8-10 p.m.

**Aug. 28:** The Vines Bluegrass Festival with performances by Steam Machine, The Roe Family Singers, and headliner band The Pistol Whippin' Party Penguins, 1-8 p.m.

**Oct. 2:** The Chmeilewski Funtime Polka Band and SG Edelweiss, 1-4 p.m.

North Folk Winery owners Mike and Ann Tesneer are really excited about the lineup this year. "The concerts provide a great opportunity for people to get out and enjoy a fun outside experience. Last year we cancelled the concerts due to Covid, so we're really looking forward to doing the concert series this year," Mike said.

Music is a big part of the winery experience. Live and local music is scheduled every Friday night in addition to the annual concert series. Tickets for all concerts can be purchased at [www.northfolkwinery.com/tickets](http://www.northfolkwinery.com/tickets). North Folk Winery is located at 43150 Blackhawk Road, Harris, 651- 674-7548.



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