

SPORTS

SOFTBALL PLAYOFFS

SECTION 7AAA

Cloquet bows out

Kerry Rodd
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After opening the Section 7AAA girls softball playoffs with an impressive win over Grand Rapids last Wednesday, Cloquet fell on tough times Saturday. The Lumberjacks bowed out of the tournament with back-to-back losses to North Branch and Hibbing in the double-elimination tournament at Braun Park.

In the game against North Branch, the 'Jacks struggled to hit the ball and were shut out 10-0 by the Vikings, who took second in the 2018 state tournament. North Branch scored a single run in the first inning but blew the game open with a five-run second inning to take a 6-0 lead.

Cloquet managed only one hit in the game and that was by Sophie Diver, who went 1-for-2 in the game.

"The losses sting," said Cloquet coach Tyler Korby. "There's nothing more that we would want than to keep playing right now during the best time of the year, but that's playoff softball."

Behind Amanda Paul's pitching, Cloquet was able to hold the Vikings off the board in the third and fourth innings. In the bottom of the fifth, the Vikings tallied four more runs to end the game via the 10-run mercy rule.

"In the playoffs, the best hitting teams are the toughest ones to beat," Korby said. "We scored one run and had just four hits on the day. And what we did hit hard was hit right to a glove and that happens."

Following the loss to North Branch, Cloquet faced Hibbing and fell 2-1 to the Bluejackets. Dana Jones scored the only run of the game for Cloquet in the bottom of the first after she reached on a walk and scored on a hit by Brynne Martin.

Hibbing tied the game in the top of the fifth. The Bluejackets went ahead in the top of the seventh, but the Lumberjacks were unable to even the game in the bottom of the inning, thus ending their season.

Paul pitched all seven innings, gave up six hits, walked one, struck out 11 and gave up one earned run.

"We just couldn't apply the pressure on our opponents like we are used to," said Korby. "That's the game of softball and days



Above: Moose Lake/Wilow River's Alexis Hoffman throws a pitch during Tuesday's 7AA playoff softball game with Proctor. The Rebels were eliminated after a loss. **Right:** Cloquet's Morgan Van Reese puts a ball in play during Saturday's Section 7AAA playoff softball game against North Branch. A loss ended the Lumberjacks' season. *Photos by Dave Harwig / Pine Knot News*

like that happen."

Cloquet opened the tournament with a 7-0 home win over Grand Rapids, in a game where Paul gave up only three hits and fanned 10 in notching the win. Roena Diver and Martin both smacked out two hits for the 'Jacks in the win.

The Lumberjacks lose three seniors to graduation who are all captains. Paul, Brenna McClarey and Morgan Van Reese all graduate. All three are Academic All-State students.

"Those are three very smart, impressive young ladies," Korby said. "All of them will have a special place in my heart forever and we will miss them dearly."

Cloquet finished the season with a 13-7 record. Paul was named to the All-Section 7AAA softball team and to the Senior All-Star Series to be played on June 17. Dana Jones was named first team All-Lake Superior Conference, Paul was named to the second team while both McClarey and Martin received honorable mention for the all-conference team.

SECTION 7AA

Esko, ML/WR clipped

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When the Section 7AA tournament continued Tuesday, Moose Lake/Wilow River and Greenway were the two lone unbeaten squads. Esko, Eveleth-Gilbert, Proctor and Rush City were also remaining, but those four teams had one loss apiece and were a game away from elimination.

The only two teams remaining now are undefeated Greenway and once-beaten Proctor, which marched through three straight wins to gain the championship round on Thursday.

Tuesday's games featured teams that all had one loss. Esko, the top seed coming into the tournament, took on Eveleth-Gilbert. The other top seed, Proctor, played Rush City.

"We kind of managed to sneak into the No. 1 seed at the end of the season," said Esko coach Huff Emanuel. "We hoped we'd build momentum after receiving a bye in the first round and then got a 10-0 win in the second game, but then our bats went dead."

After losing to Greenway, the Eskomos faced an Eveleth-Gilbert squad that featured Lydia Delich on the mound. Delich is crafty and threw a no-hitter to eliminate the Eskomos 5-1.

"She did a good job of keeping us off balance," Emanuel said. "Early in the year we were scoring 15 to 18 runs a game and then we ran into the top teams and started to struggle and our bats went cold."

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SECTION 7A

Barnum reaches championship

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When the day began Tuesday in the Section 7A girls softball tournament, only Barnum and Cherry remained as undefeated squads.

The same two teams will be back to do battle for the section title on Friday, but with only one undefeated team left: Cherry.

Tuesday featured two elimination games: Carlton took on Silver Bay and South Ridge played MIB.

Carlton opened the day with an impressive win over Silver Bay, 5-2. The Mariners were the No. 3 seed and the Bulldogs were the No. 4 seed.

Carlton smacked out 14 hits in the game with freshman pitcher Abby Mitchell picking up four of those hits with two singles, a double and a triple. Mitchell was equally good on the mound as she gave up just four hits in picking up the win.

"Abby is a warrior and proved it this season," said Carlton coach Brent Pokornowski. Mitchell, along with Elizabeth Hey and Eliza DeCaigney, were selected to the all-conference team and will participate in the Polar League all-star game in Esko on June 21.

In the second elimination game South Ridge defeated MIB by an 8-2 score. Adella Olesiak continued to

be strong on the pitching rubber and notched the win in the circle.

"Both Adella and Riley Young had two hits in the MIB game for us," said Panthers coach Brad Olesiak.

By virtue of winning, the Bulldogs and Panthers played each other for the second time this season. Back on May 6, the Panthers downed Carlton 7-0. On Tuesday, it was the Bulldogs coming through with a wild 13-11 victory.

The Carlton bats stayed hot against the Panthers as they rolled up 22 hits in the win.

Continued on Page 24



GOOD LUCK AT STATE!

Congratulations on your three-peat as SECTION 7AA CHAMPIONS



The Lumberjacks boys varsity team is headed to State after winning the Section 7AA tournament at the Quarry on June 1. Pictured, from left are head coach Aaron Young, players Jacob Walsh, Karson Young, Sam Baker, Brayden Tyman, Trevor Steinert, Karson Patten and assistant coach Jim Stafford. Photo contributed by Jodi Patten

The Lumberjacks won the Section 7AA meet for the third time in a row with 640 points overall for the two-day section meet, compared to 663 for second place Marshall and 698 for Hermantown in third.

Individually, Cloquet had five players in the top 10: first place Sam Baker (with a score of 153 for two days), fifth place Karson Patten (161), sixth place Brayden Tyman (162), seventh place Trevor Steinert (165) and tenth place Jacob Walsh (166). Freshman Karson Young (176) placed 16th.

The entire team will play at the Class AA state golf tournament on June 14-15 at Ridges of Sand Creek in Jordan, Minnesota.

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TRACK SECTIONS



Racers in the girls 100-meter dash compete at the Section 7A subsection meet in Esko Thursday, including several from Carlton County. *Madison Hunter / Pine Knot News*

Esko dominates at subsection meet

Jana Peterson
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The Esko boys and girls track teams swept last Thursday's Section 7A South Subsection meet at home, with the girls winning by 54.5 points over second-place Proctor and the boys team beating Proctor by 43.5 points.

The subsection meet was the first giant step toward a trip to state. It advanced Esko and other top track and field athletes from the subsection meet to the Section 7A section meet in Cloquet on Thursday, June 10, after this issue of the Pine Knot went to press.

"Our girls have high hopes going into the section meet tomorrow; as a program, they took many strides this season, winning the Polar League for the first time since 2016, and followed that up with a Subsection South title for the first time since 2016 as well," Esko girls head coach Matthew Peterson said on Wednesday. "If everything goes as we hope, we get a chance to win Section 7A for the first time since 2012."

While there will be lots of Esko blue and gold at Cloquet, Bromberg Field will be a rainbow of colors Thursday, with representatives from the section's 27 teams competing in the section championship meet. The top seven individuals in each and top four relays advanced.

Some of the top performers countywide at last week's subsection meet in Esko included Kaden Robbins of Moose Lake, who won both the boys 100- and 200-meter dashes, and Noah Foster of Cromwell-Wright with a first in the 3200-meter run. Esko senior Dylan Edland placed first in both the 110- and 300-meter hurdles, while his classmate Gage

Stankiewicz — one of the top throwers in the state — took first in discus and second in shot put, trading places with Barnum's Garrett Coughlin in the two events. Colin Emerson of Carlton took third in both throwing events. Moose Lake relay teams dominated last week, taking three firsts and a second place, while Esko teams took second in the 4x100 and third in the 4x400 and 4x800.

On the girls side, Esko's Emily Rengo took first in the 100-meter dash, followed by Barnum's Reese Miletech. In the 200, Esko runners Kaitlyn McConnell finished first, and Whitney Hason third. Cromwell-Wright's Emaleigh Olesiak took second in the 800 meter, and first in the 3200. In the hurdles, Esko's Gwendolyn Lilly won the 100-meter hurdles, and placed third in the 300, behind Skyla Thompson of Moose Lake in first place. Esko took first in the 4x100 and 4x200 relays, while Barnum placed third. In the 4x400 Esko took second and Moose Lake fourth, and Moose Lake took second and Esko fourth in the 4x800 relay. In the high jump, Esko's Allison Thornton took first with teammate Liberty Clifford in third, while Barnum's Brooke Doran took first in long jump, with Esko's Rengo in third. Moose Lake's Skyla Thompson placed first in pole vault, with Esko's Lilly in third. Esko's Zoie Johnson placed first in both discus and shot put Thursday.

The Esko coaches were very optimistic about the section meet.

On the girls side, Peterson said the group is extremely balanced, with athletes in every event that can compete. "But most importantly, our girls have come



Esko senior Gage Stankiewicz draws a crowd as he hurls the shot put Thursday during the Section 7A South Subsection meet. After making at least two practice throws of 50 feet or more, Stankiewicz placed second with a top throw of 43 feet, 4 inches. He won the discus with a toss of 158 feet, 7 inches. *Jana Peterson / Pine Knot News*

together this spring; we've come from a group of good athletes and became a team of support that prides themselves on getting better everyday," Peterson said.

"Our boys are gritty, they are competitive while still being young," he added. "The seniors are the leaders and have done a good job steering the ship and encouraging the younger athletes to become workers."

Out of approximately 70 athletes in all, Peterson said Esko had 49 qualifying entries to the section meet Thursday. Look for a story on that meet in next week's Pine Knot News.



Esko's Gwendolyn Lilly races her way to first place in the 100-meter hurdles Thursday during the Section 7A South Subsection meet in Esko. *Madison Hunter / Pine Knot News*

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THE PRE-GAME SHOW starts 15 minutes prior to the first pitch.

7A softball ...

Continued from Page 21

"We left some runners on base early in the game," Olesiak said. "We also had a few errors in that game and they made them hurt."

Eliza DeCaigney had four hits against South Ridge and had a big day by going 9-for-12 at the dish.

Cherry punched its ticket to the section championship by beating Barnum 14-4. The game was 5-4 late, but Cherry had a big rally to pull away to the 10-run rule victory.

In the final game of the day Mendota Castonguay pitched the Bombers into the finals with a five-hitter against Carlton.

"Mendota pitched both games for us today, but we gave her a break when the first game got away from us," Colello said. "Against Carlton she hit her spots and induced a lot of ground balls."

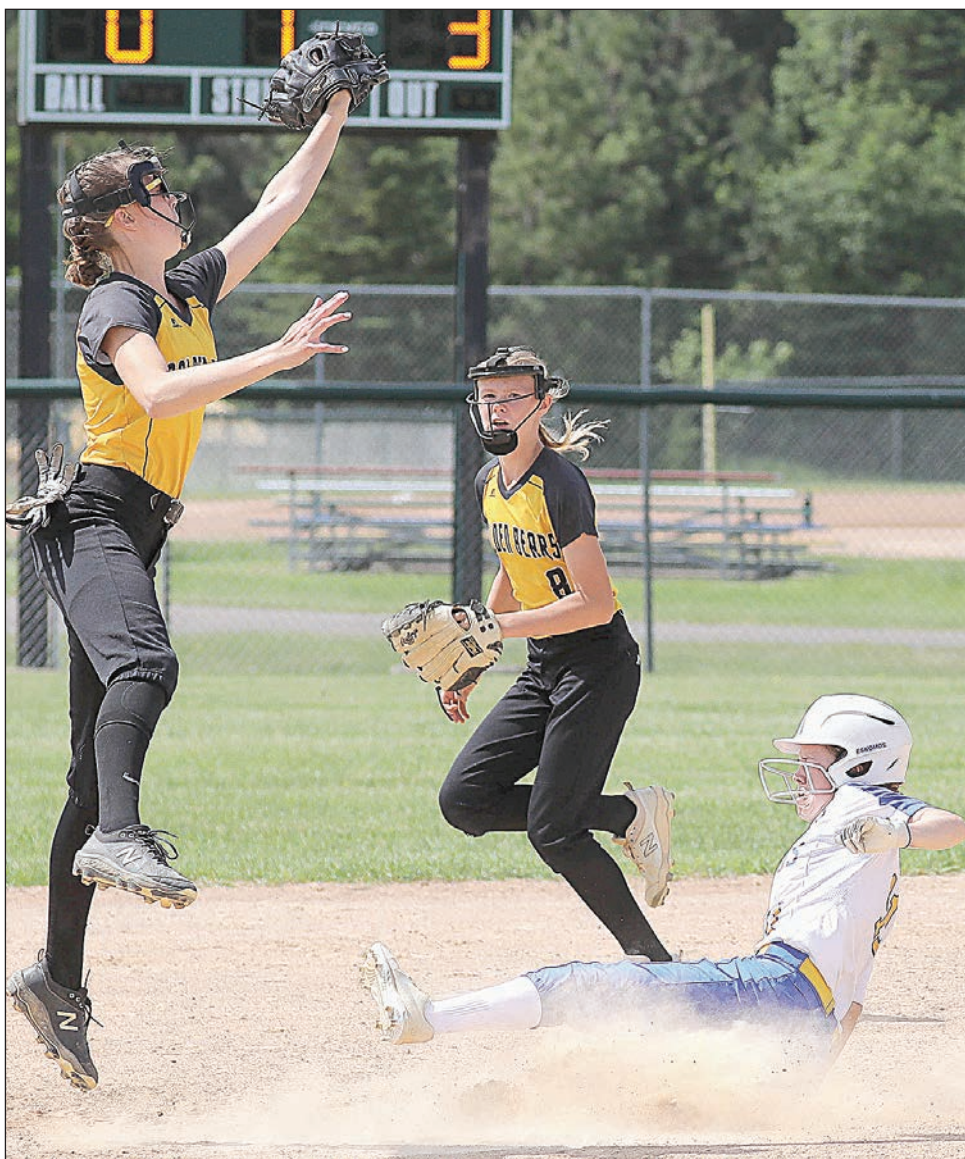
The Bomber smashed 15 hits in the 12-2 win over Carlton. Barnum blew the game open in the fifth by plating seven runs and went from leading 2-1 to 9-1.

"Carlton has a good pitcher and we knew that she likes to get you to swing at high pitches, so we really focused on making her get it down," said Barnum coach Dusty Colello. "Our first five hitters got hits to start the inning and break the game open."

The victory put the Bombers into Thursday's title match with Cherry.

"It means a lot to make it to the championship game," Colello said. "These girls have put in a lot of time over the years and I am so happy for them."

The Bombers had to beat Cherry twice.



Esco's Avery Kuklinski slides into second with a stolen base during Tuesday's 7AA playoff softball game with Eveleth-Gilbert. A loss ended Esco's season. Dave Harwig / Pine Knot News

7AA softball ...

Continued from Page 21

The other losers bracket game saw Proctor win 11-1 over Rush City.

At 1 p.m. Tuesday, the two undefeated teams took the field along with Proctor and Eveleth-Gilbert. The Rebels hoped to beat undefeated Greenway, but the Raiders proved to be too much as they handled ML/WR by a 10-1 score, sending them to the loser's bracket.

"Greenway has a very good team," said Rebel coach Kelly Goeb. "They hit the ball well and play strong defense. If a team does both of those well, they will win a lot of games which is obvious as Greenway has done just that. We knew we would have to play a top notch game to compete with them, which we didn't. They are a strong team and you have to be at the top of your game to defeat them. I wish them the best the rest of the way."

The other 1 p.m. game saw Proctor down Eveleth-Gilbert. That victory set up an elimination game between Proctor and Moose Lake/Willow River which the Rails won 8-5, thus eliminating the Rebels from the tournament.

"The Proctor game wasn't our best game," Goeb said. "We had a few errors and couldn't string many hits together. But they have a strong team as well and made the plays when they needed to."

Megan Hattenberger was 2-for-3 at the plate for the Rebels in the Greenway game. Hallie Klavu was 3-for-4 in the Proctor game with a triple and Sarah Christy had a double while Sandra Ribich was 2-for-4.

BASEBALL PLAYOFFS

South Ridge surges toward another state berth

Kerry Rodd

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Don't look now, but the South Ridge Panthers are on the verge of another state tournament after dispatching Silver Bay 7-3 on Tuesday in a nine-inning game in the Section 7A playoffs.

"The win over Silver Bay was huge," said Panthers coach Aaron Weber. "We knew it would be a close one, but our guys fought till the end."

The Panthers faced North Woods for the section title Thursday at Mesabi East, with a second game set for 7:30 p.m. if the Panthers lose the first game.

Against Silver Bay Jaxson Bennett threw six innings, but the Panthers needed more arms because the game went two extra innings.

"Jaxson threw six, Wyatt Olson threw two and Aaron Bennett finished it out," said Weber. "All of our pitchers threw well and Wyatt got out of a bases-loaded, nobody-out jam in the bottom of the seventh inning."

The game was 2-2 entering the top of the ninth when the Panthers struck for five runs, four of which came on a grand slam.

"Jaxson Bennett, Wyatt Olson, Connor Bushbaum and Jackson O'Bey all had big days at the plate," said

Weber. "O'Bey hit a grand slam in the ninth inning, Jaxson Bennett had four hits and Bushbaum added a double and a triple."

Last Thursday the Panthers knocked off Nashwauk-Keewatin 13-3 as Connor Bushbaum and Jaxson Bennett had four and three hits respectively in the 16-hit Panther attack.

Loser bracket games last Thursday included Carlton taking on North Woods and Chisholm versus Cook County. The Bulldogs dropped a 4-2 decision to Northwoods and Chisholm grabbed a 5-4 win over Cook County.

The victory by North Woods put them in an elimination match up Tuesday with Nashwauk-Keewatin and the win by Chisholm did the same against Cherry. North Woods downed N-K 15-0 and Cherry downed Chisholm 10-7.

Section 7AAA

The Cloquet baseball season ended June 3 when the Lumberjacks dropped an 11-2 decision to the No. 2 seed North Branch in the Section 7AAA tournament.

Cloquet opened the tournament June 1 with a hard-fought road loss to Grand Rapids in a game that could have gone either way. Against the Vikings it was a different story as North Branch cruised.

The Vikings struck first in the game with two runs in the bottom half of the second inning, but the 'Jacks answered with a pair of their own in the top of the third. The Vikings responded in kind with five runs in the bottom of the third, three more in the fourth and another in the fifth for the final of 11-2.

"We were right there against Grand Rapids and Chisago Lakes in the regular season," said Cloquet coach Tyler Olin. "My takeaway is I hope future classes upcoming have learned that we can hang with the top teams."

Cloquet had six hitters with one hit in the game as they were out-hit by the Vikings 11-6. Jacks Sorenson and Alec Turnbull had the RBIs for Cloquet.

The Lumberjacks finished the season at 7-15.

North Branch was upset in the opening round by Denfeld.

The Section 7AAA tournament had one lone wolf of the north, Grand Rapids, battling it out with three teams from the southern part of the section: Chisago Lakes, North Branch and Princeton.

Ultimately, the Thunderhawks wrote their ticket to the championship game with an impressive 10-5 win last Saturday over Chisago Lakes, the top seed. Chisago Lakes

dropped to the losers bracket but beat North Branch Tuesday to get a chance at redemption.

The championship game between Grand Rapids and Chisago Lakes was set for Wednesday at Wade Stadium in Duluth. Chisago needed two wins.

Section 7AA

The two Carlton County baseball teams in the Section 7AA boys baseball tournament were eliminated. Moose Lake/Willow River never made it into the double-elimination portion of the tournament after losing on Monday last week. The Esco Eskomos,

the No. 1 seed, lost back-to-back games to Duluth Marshall and Eveleth-Gilbert after opening with a win over Rush City.

After losing a tight 5-4 decision to Duluth Marshall on Tuesday, the Eskomos dropped into the losers bracket and played the No. 6 seeded Eveleth on Thursday. Instead of the top seed moving on, it was the sixth seed that won by a 10-0 score and ended Esco's season.

"We allowed 10 runs in the first inning," said Esco coach Ben Haugen. "We put no pressure on them offensively and we had

some base running mistakes and that might have cost us a run or two."

The Golden Bears will now play Pine City in an effort to make it into the semifinals.

In the winners bracket, Aitkin defeated Proctor to advance to a Thursday final against Eveleth-Gilbert.

"We had a nice season, but faltered down the stretch, especially at the plate," Esco's Haugen said. "We had a great group of kids and fantastic seniors. I felt like we had talent, but we just didn't put it together and [play] our best baseball at the end."

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MINNESOTA STATE

CARLTON COUNTY GOLF GUIDE

Tee it up
 Golf survived and even thrived in the pandemic, albeit with a few changes in Carlton County the past year. Many courses opened with restrictions and special rules last spring but still saw record player turnout and golf rounds posted. Other golf courses changed hands or took the year off. Business is booming this season, especially now that summer weather has truly arrived. Inside this special section, find out more about all that area courses have to offer.

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Cloquet Country Club / Aerial photo by Peter Tomhave

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It started on a home course

The Scanlon Open. In Scanlon's long history, it is the most prestigious recorded golf tournament held within its boundaries.

The story begins in 1968. My folks had a summer cabin on Eagle Lake near Cromwell. Just north on Highway 73, the city of Floodwood was celebrating its 75th year since incorporation. My dad asked me, while we were at the lake, if I wanted to accompany him to the festival. Sure, why not, I thought — with three other siblings I didn't get many opportunities alone with Dad.

Never had I seen Floodwood so abuzz with activity. My dad wanted to browse at the old car show and there were some beautiful jalopies. There were food and beverage vendors and some carnival rides and games. They even had clowns.

We went and visited for a while with my dad's brother, who was managing the Gambles store. Heading back outside, there was a live auction in progress. The auctioneer was standing on a flatbed truck trailer picking up or pointing to items that he was selling and then barking out his purchasing process. Competitive bidders encircled the trailer.

After several monkey wrenches, a set of dishes, and a used banjo were sold, the auctioneer held up four hickory-shafted, antique golf clubs. Opening bid was \$1. Without warning, my dad bid \$1.50, and soon the auctioneer said "going once, going twice, sold." My dad went and picked them up from the trailer and handed them to me. Funny, my dad didn't golf or, for that matter, have much time for sports. Little did he know, he'd created a golf monster.

Jumping into our 1964 Mercury, we went back to Eagle Lake, and thoughts were running through my head on how I could best utilize this gift.

I figured I could build a "little Augusta" course by the lake garage. I got a pineapple can from my mom, cut the bottom out, and used a screwdriver to dig an appropriately sized hole in the ground. Then I gently placed the can inside.

In the garage was an antique push mower. I lowered the cutting blade as far as it would go. With some effort, and making a back and forth pattern, I made the initial green look pretty good. I'd spend hours putting the balls into the pineapple can. Tramping on the green made the putting surface fairly smooth, tolerable and fair.

When the family returned to Scanlon, I figured it was time to expand this golf links idea. The Korbys had a large yard and the first thing I did was cut a good-sized green. I started the golf course by the plum trees, which were beyond what Dad considered mowable grass and yard. It gave me a chance to use my "mashie,"

a hickory club from the Floodwood purchase similar to the modern pitching wedge, and start chipping the ball from further distances.

After hearing no objection from my folks, I figured it was time for course expansion. I next created a raised golf hole similar to miniature golf tracks. Then there was a hole with a couple of sand traps, a new hole required going over a small bridge, and one hole even had a dogleg. The course expanded from three holes to nine, and eventually to 18 beautiful holes. It did not have an irrigation system in its design, so the greens did dry out somewhat. The holes averaged about 30 feet with most being par twos with a couple of par threes.

The Campbell's soup cans were smaller than the few stewed tomato cans, a variety in challenges.

After a couple of seasons, it was time to host a major golf event.

The Scanlon Open was planned. Scorecards were developed. An old car seat was pulled out from the chicken coop to offer first-hole patron seating. Some colorful pennants from my dad's gas station grand opening were hung from the plum tree branches. The greens were cut, rough trimmed, and traps raked.

The open's inaugural date was advertised in the Jack Pine, the Cloquet High School newspaper. Most golfers who committed were from Cloquet and planned to traverse to Scanlon via bikes or carpooling. Some of the famous competitor names included Moose, Pistol Pete, Cal, Beach, Chumbly, Tay Tay, Ollie, Reefer, Yuks, Doc, Wennie, Paavo, Jase, Baz, Maynard, and the Hawk. Speedy and Kraut couldn't get releases from their parole officers (Scanlon humor) so were unable to attend, and kindly sent their regrets.

Of course, I — the tournament host and course designer — won the first four-round tournament. It was my first major. Moose won the second and last open because after 1971 we were playing on real golf courses.

I wonder if archeologists will someday be digging in northwest Scanlon ruins and discover tin cans placed about 30 feet apart in the ground and scratch their heads wondering the meaning and significance.

Please enjoy the 2021 Pine Knot Golf Guide. Don't forget to support youth golf programs at your local course. If you have some hickory or steel-shafted clubs in your garage collecting dust, donate them to a kid. Golf is a game for a lifetime.

Writer Steve Korby's interest in writing goes back to fourth grade as editor of the Scan-Satellite school newspaper in Scanlon. Steve loves sports, especially golf. Reach him at steve.korby3@gmail.com

KORBY'S CONNECTIONS



Steve Korby

Tee off: Rugged Spruce Golf Club

After purchasing the course in the latter part of 2020, this is the first full year of operations for Rugged Spruce Golf Club owners Jim and Colleen Myhre. They've already put in their share of sweat equity with some major improvements to the Mahtowa-area course formerly known as 29 Pines.

The weather was kind, and the course opened early this year.

They've also poured a large concrete deck floor that extends from the clubhouse entry toward the first hole. It is a big slab perfect for outdoor dining and entertaining.

And entertaining is a Myhre specialty. Colleen is a talented singer and songwriter and plays with several Carlton County musical groups.

"Our plan is to have live entertainment on Saturdays beginning in June, both in the clubhouse and outside, depending on

weather," she told me in the clubhouse, where she also cooked me a hamburger while bartending. It was delicious. "We get the burgers from TJ's store in downtown Mahtowa," she said. "I think steak sauce is one of the secret ingredients."

The Rugged Spruce Golf clubhouse plans to be open year-round. It will accept guests on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during the winter season. The course is on a state snowmobile trail and the couple intends to welcome thirsty riders with a warm pit stop.

Competitive leagues have begun, including the Friday morning fun scramble at 10 a.m. that is open to all. I paid \$14, the senior rate, to play golf all day and it cost me \$2 to get in on the Nine Hole Scramble. Keep your eyes open for special events at the Rugged Spruce Golf Club in Mahtowa.

— Steve Korby



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to all our current and past members, our community charitable organizations, local fundraising groups, business partners, social event coordinators and the entire Cloquet community for supporting us the past 98 years.



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Tee off: Grand View Golf Links

Chris Klatte is the owner of Grand View Golf Links on Midway Road by the Dry Dock Restaurant, and he holds the lease to operate the public Proctor Golf Course on Highway 2 in downtown Proctor.

The golf course business is in his blood. “My grandpa built the golf course in Plymouth, Minnesota,” Klatte said. “My dad was the pro and my uncle was the greenskeeper. I grew up working on a golf course.”

While in Plymouth in 1997, Chris, then 21, had a friend who wanted to partner with him and purchase a nine-hole golf course they could fix up and make profitable. They actually looked in the yellow pages under “Golf Course Real Estate.” They found the Pine Hill Golf Course in Carlton. They’d never been to Carlton, but visited the course and bought it.

“They had an old hay barn for a

clubhouse” chuckled Chris. They put in a lot of work, built a beautiful, functional clubhouse, did irrigation and pond work, and improved the greens.

A few years later, the Grand view course went for sale. In a transaction that took only a couple of weeks, Chris became the Grand View owner. He sold Pine Hill to James Barry, who has since become a best friend. He began an ambitious marketing plan with newspaper, radio, and television ads that included \$5 Grand View greens fees and other specials. Players started to make their way back. Management and employees constructed a beautiful clubhouse and bar. The course got in better shape, leagues were resurrected, and golf activity increased dramatically.

If you haven’t been to the Grand View in a while, check it out. You’ll enjoy the golfing experience.

— Steve Korby

Tee off: Cloquet Country Club

It’s early in the 2021 golf season, but Cloquet Country Club manager and PGA pro Bill Manahan has been smiling proudly since Day 1 for several reasons First, and very importantly, when CCC superintendent Jud Crist, staff and volunteers took the covers off the greens in late March, they confirmed the putting surfaces came through the winter in excellent condition. Second, even with the pandemic, CCC had a very favorable financial year and several cosmetic, but needed, updates were being completed in the clubhouse and pro shop before players arrived. And third, new-membership applications just kept rolling in. It was a far cry from the spring of 2020 when there was so much uncertainty because of Covid-19.

“We have seen a big surge in the age 30-and-under memberships,” said Manahan, “which is great and adds to our potential long-term club viability.”

The Cloquet Invitational, the club’s

largest event, is held annually in July and is already completely full to capacity with golfers.

Dating back to 1923, the Cloquet Country Club will soon be celebrating its 100th year of operation. Several ingenious decisions (including stock plan) and luck have led to the current stability for the semi-private club.

The CCC board and membership has passed a couple of major undertakings, including repaving the parking lot and entrance road. The club is also adding substantially more deck space between the clubhouse and hole No. 2, which will give the club more options for serving golfers and guests outdoors if they prefer. These are exciting times at Cloquet Country Club.

Preliminary planning has begun on the best way to celebrate the club’s 100-year anniversary in 2023. Look for more details soon.

— Steve Korby

Tee off: Big Lake Golf Resort

The Big Lake Golf Resort is once again open for business. After lots of work by the new owners (Bill Jaskari, Jennifer Serafin, Camille and Chris LeBrasseur, and Amy and Matt DeCaigny), the course is open and welcoming players and guests.

Big Lake Golf is a nine-hole, par-27 golf course located at 780 Cary Road in Cloquet, a mile from Big Lake, which lies between Cloquet and Sawyer. It’s “The Biggest, Littlest, Toughest, and Friendliest Course in the World” as coined by former owners Joyce and Jalmer Angell.

The Caddy Shack — where golfers can register and purchase beer and snacks — is open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Call

218-879-4737.

The completely renovated clubhouse will be opening soon, with a full-service bar and an Americana Grill menu with an emphasis on using fresh ingredients. Food service will be offered 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. The goal is to have the facility open all year, to also serve snowmobilers when there’s snow on the ground.

The new owners are excited to invite all local communities to make Big Lake Golf Resort your favorite place to relax with dining, drinks and golf. Beginner golfers will enjoy the smaller course, and could start a lifelong pastime.



The Big Lake Golf Resort has been revived by owners Bill Jaskari, Jennifer Serafin, Camille and Chris LeBrasseur, and Amy and Matt DeCaigny.

Tee off: Divots Driving Range

Divots Driving Range in Sturgeon Lake is the only driving range between Hinckley and the Black Bear Casino Resort in Carlton.

Owned and operated by Luke and Jackie Horton, 2021 marks the fourth summer of operation for Divots Driving Range. For \$6 a bucket, participants can get a good workout.

“There’s about 60 balls in a bucket,” Luke said, “and people will leave their buckets about half full for the next customer because they get exhausted ... especially with recent heat.”

Most of the customers are either local

golf patrons or those who stay at their nearby cabins for the summer. Divots is located about 3 miles south of the Moose Lake Golf Course.

The driving range is approximately 300 yards long and has different colored stakes that represent various yardages from the tee. The tee box area has both natural grass and 100 feet of artificial turf. The balls are picked up by machine. Payment is done via credit cards.

Grab your clubs and stop out at Divots for an enjoyable time. Call 218-380-1951 for more information.

— Steve Korby

Tee off: Moose Lake Golf Club

The Moose Lake Golf Club is celebrating its 92nd season in 2021. Pro/manager Josh Gamst is now in his 14th season.

“Our grills are cooking and our decks and dining room are now open (per guidelines) to serve our hungry and thirsty golfing guests,” he said. “The course is greening up fast and getting into spectacular shape.”

Food specials this summer include Taco Night on Wednesdays and Hamburger Night on Saturdays, both 4-8 p.m.

The club’s big June fundraiser, Shoot the Moose, is scheduled for this weekend. The 66th annual Moose Lake Shortstop is scheduled for August 13-15.

Additionally, the Moose Lake Club has several golf scrambles planned for later this summer plus the 9-9-9 event in September: a two-person team event with 9 holes of best ball, 9 of alternate shot, and 9 of scramble ... all in one day.

The entire nine holes are challenging and each has its own unique characteristics. Hole No. 9 was featured in “Minnesota Golfer” magazine. It is a 178-225 yard par-3 with a tiered green.

Located near Interstate 35 and west of Moose Lake, the Moose Lake Golf Club welcomes you. Call 218-485-4886.

— Steve Korby

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It's golf season!

Again, a huge thank you to the generous hole sponsors and door prize contributors for making the inaugural **2019 Gary "Moose" Pastika Cancer Fundraiser** a success!

The 2021 event is scheduled for **Monday, July 19 at the Cloquet Country Club. 12:30 pm shotgun start.**

To sponsor a hole, donate a door prize, or registration details (foursomes encouraged), contact **Steve Korby - tourney director - 218-269-6643**

Funds raised for the Cloquet Community Memorial Hospital Foundation at the 2019's event went toward the purchase of several zero gravity power recliners for the hospital's Infusion Therapy Department. Thanks to all players, sponsors, and the Cloquet Country Club for hosting this event!
From the Moose Cancer Fundraiser Committee

Tee off: Kendahl Miniature Golf

Kendahl Miniature Golf in Cloquet is in its 56th year of providing generations of families an enjoyable outdoor experience. A third generation of the Erickson family operates the Cloquet landmark.

They are open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, weather permitting, at 812 Sunnyside Drive. The price for 18 holes is \$6 for adults and \$5 for ages 12 and under. Ask about group reservations and rates by calling 218-879-3314.

"I get a kick out of it that some Duluth residents call it their Cloquet summer bucket list ... coming to Gordy's for a burger and playing a round of mini golf at Kendahl's," owner Bill Erickson said.

The course features 18 classic miniature golf course holes, including a windmill where players have to time putts to avoid hitting the rotating blades. There is a waterwheel, lighthouse, a large castle, a steamboat, raised holes and bridges along with hidden holes.

Part of what sets Kendahl apart is its longevity. Being in Erickson's extended yard for 55 years means there is plenty of shade provided by mature, beautiful trees. A wealth of other beautiful flora and flowers provide more spots to sit and rest and get in touch with nature.

— Steve Korby

Tee off: Pine Hill Golf Club

Jim and Cassie Barry have owned and operated the Pine Hill Golf Club in Carlton for the past 15 years.

It's located just over a mile south of Highway 210 on Highway 61 in Carlton. Just drive past the Royal Pines Inn, Olssonville, and the Carlton County transportation building on Old Highway 61, and you're there.

Originally built by Carlton resident Walter Radzak as a three-hole course and driving range in the 1970s, Bob Kelley designed and expanded the course to nine holes and par 31 in 1996. The course changed ownership a few times after that, until the Barrys bought it in 2005.

"We opened the 2021 golf season on March 28," Jim said, "which was our third-earliest opening since I've been here. The other two were crazy warm years opening on St. Patrick's Day. The course is off to a fantastic start."

Barry gushed that the putting greens weathered the winter very well and are in great shape. They've already fertilized greens and tees and the course is turning even greener and inviting.

Pine Hill has a senior league on Mon-

days, a men's league on Wednesday evenings and a couples league on Thursdays. Jim thinks they have found their niche by catering to retired, senior and beginner golfers. The course isn't easy and has challenging holes for all golfers, but is flatter and quite walkable. A nine-hole round, for \$14, can usually be played in about one hour and 15 minutes.

League play has begun, with most leagues sporting more participants than last year. The pandemic, interestingly, enticed many new and returning golfers to the game because it is outdoors, socially distanced, and courses developed good safety player protocol.

Pine Hill is perfect for both beginners and seasoned veterans. It has some shorter holes plus some challenging shots around tree doglegs and alongside Otter Creek. It also has one of the nicest, friendliest bar areas in the region. It's easy to belly up to the nice wooden bar and check if your name is mentioned or engraved alongside those of the other great historical golfing legends.

Stop by Pine Hill, you'll enjoy it.

— Steve Korby



Dan Donofrio has owned the Retreat Golf Club for 11 years.

Tee off: Retreat Golf Club

Where do you go for relaxation, fresh air, exercise and recharging your batteries? Where is your retreat? Many golfers in the region escape to the Retreat Golf Club, 5 miles east of Floodwood on Highway 2. The nine-hole scenic golf course is open to the public.

Esko resident Dan Donofrio has owned the Retreat for 11 years, with the goal of being "the finest nine-hole golf course in Minnesota." He thinks they're on the right track.

The Retreat Golf Club offers men's, women's and couples leagues, and holds several scrambles each season, including those for Floodwood Catfish Days, Red White and Blue, Cromwell Municipal, Kalli's Bar In Wright, Tough Pin, and the

Hunting Shack Scramble.

For several years, every September Retreat has been one of the host sites for the Lee Samuelson memorial scramble. Lee wanted to help the Retreat and other area courses. So he created a golf scramble tourney that covered six courses in four days, including the Retreat, Proctor, Grand View, Pine Hill, 29 Pines (now Rugged Spruce), and Moose Lake.

The Retreat course is very pretty, and the greens are as fine as any course in the Northland. It is very affordable and challenging for golfers of all abilities. Come and enjoy this friendly public course in 2021.

— Steve Korby



Check out this week's full edition of the Pine Knot News and discover Steve Korby's **Par 5 Local Golf Quiz.**

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