

FOOTBALL

Covid, fumbles stymie Cloquet

Kerry Rodd
sports@pineknotnews.com

Friday night's Cloquet football game against the Grand Rapids Thunderhawks proved to be a nightmare. Prior to the game the Lumberjacks found out they had lost four coaches, including head coach Tom Lenarz, due to Covid-19 protocol and then the team proceeded to self-destruct with seven fumbles, four of which were lost as Grand Rapids throttled Cloquet 41-0.

"We had an assistant coach test positive, and after looking back on the few days before he got tested it was determined that I, and a couple of other assistants, could have potentially been within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes," said Cloquet head coach Tom Lenarz. "We decided that out of an abundance of caution we would quarantine ourselves to make sure the kids got to keep playing."

That meant the 'Jacks were without more than half their coaches, leaving just three coaches there Friday night. For Lenarz, it was the first time in his tenure as head coach that he'd missed being on the sidelines.

"It was incredibly tough," Lenarz said. "It was the first time



Cloquet's Reese Sheldon carries the ball during Friday night's football game against Grand Rapids. Dave Harwig / Pine Knot News

I have not been at a Lumberjack football game in 18 years. Not being with the guys was hard emotionally. Luckily, my wife was there to help me through it. I watched the livestream with some of the other assistants who couldn't be there as we Zoomed with each other at the same time."

Cloquet gave up two first-quarter touchdowns and trailed 14-0 after the opening period of play, then gave up another touchdown in the second quarter to go down 21-0 at halftime.

Despite the loss, the Lumberjacks outgained the Thunderhawks 293 yards to 277 yards and they ran double the number

of offensive plays. For the game, Cloquet ran 64 plays from scrimmage while the Thunderhawks ran only 32 plays.

Many of the problems for Cloquet centered around their ability to hang onto the football. In total, they put the ball on the field seven times.

"It is absolutely unacceptable and you can't beat anyone doing that," said Lenarz of the fumbles. "It has been an issue all year with us and is something we simply must keep working on. Guys have to realize how important it is to focus on hanging onto the ball. Until that happens, we will continue to struggle against good

teams."

Things went from bad to worse in the third quarter when Grand Rapids scored twice more — building their lead to 34-0 after three quarters of play.

"Grand Rapids is big, fast and aggressive," Lenarz stated. "They have a senior-laden team that has played well this year. We knew that this was going to be our toughest game."

In an odd twist of fate, the Lumberjacks controlled the ball for nearly 36 minutes of the game while the Thunderhawks had the ball for less than 10 minutes. Despite the loss, Lenarz was able to find some consolation in the play

of one of his junior athletes.

"Marshall Hayes has been a rock star for us this year," said Lenarz. "He is one of the few ball carriers that has not fumbled and is someone who does the dirty work between the tackles. He has played very well all year long and has really grown into the position. I am proud of his effort and the way he runs the ball. We will rely on him heavily in the playoffs and as the weather gets worse."

The Lumberjacks are now 3-2 on the season and were set to play at Duluth East Wednesday night.

South Ridge still perfect

Kerry Rodd
sports@pineknotnews.com

Connor Bushbaum and his South Ridge teammates have gone on a roll of epic proportions. For the second straight week the star running back scored four touchdowns and raced for well over 200 rushing yards in leading his team to an impressive 46-12 win over Silver Bay Nov. 5.

"Connor just reads his blocks really well, he is patient and waits for an opening and then uses his speed," said Panthers coach Brent Johnson.

Bushbaum got the scoring started for the Panthers midway through the first quarter Thursday when he slammed in from the 5-yard line and then for good measure tacked on the two-point conversion run. The Mariners answered just into the second quarter on a 15-yard touchdown pass from Luke Stadler to Sully Tikkanen, but the Panthers

snuffed out the two-point conversion run to maintain an 8-6 lead. Before the first half ended, Bushbaum added his second score of the game when he raced in for a 39-yard touchdown run and then Aaron Bennett hit Weston Stroschein for the conversion pass, leaving South Ridge ahead 16-6 after the first half of play.

"Our line has been playing exceptionally well on both sides of the ball," said Johnson. "We seem to wear down opponents in nine-man where you have multiple players playing both ways."

The Panthers exploded in the third quarter for three straight scores as they built a 38-6 lead. The first score was a Bennett-to-Bushbaum 8-yard touchdown pass. After Tyler Anderson added the conversion run the Panthers were up 24-6. Bushbaum followed with a sensational 74-yard touchdown jaunt which

was followed by a Bennett-to-Stroschein conversion pass for a 32-6 advantage. Before the third quarter ended, Bushbaum raced 22 yards to pay dirt as the Panthers built a 38-6 lead. Weston Stroschein closed out the Panther scoring on a 2-yard run and the conversion run by Zach Wells was good for a 46-6 lead.

"I knew at the beginning of the season this team would be good, but this team has lived up to my expectations and then some," said Johnson. "However, we still have some goals to meet. What we do well on both sides of the ball is that we are physical, and we play as a team with no fingerpointing."

In all, the Panthers rolled up 466 yards in total offense with Bushbaum rushing for 270 yards and Tyler Anderson adding an impressive 115 yards on the ground.

"Tyler Anderson had a nice game for us rushing the ball," said Johnson. "It's



Panthers senior running back Connor Bushbaum, seen here earlier this season, scored early and often against Silver Bay last week. Pine Knot News

nice when you have two backs you can count on when teams start keying in on Connor."

South Ridge dominated on both sides of the ball as they finished with 428 rushing yards, on an average of 8.7 yards per carry,

to go along with 38 passing yards. Meanwhile, the Mariners finished with 93 total yards as they averaged only 2.5 yards per play during the game.

"This team stays positive and they don't worry about stats," Johnson said.

"The only stat they worry about is the 'W' in the win column."

The 'W' that South Ridge put into the win column was their fifth of the season as they improved to 5-0 on the season.

The ticker

A quick look at area teams in action

Cromwell-Wright 33 Isle 14

Ethan Shelton and Jaegar Goranson both scored a pair of touchdowns as the Cards rebounded from last week's loss to Ogilvie. Shelton led the Cards with 118 yards rushing and Goranson was right behind with 112 yards on the ground. Goranson also added a 6-for-12 passing game good for another 122 yards. Shelton caught three passes for 62 yards and Emmett Clark caught three passes for 60 yards. Clark scored the other touchdown for the Cards on a 20-yard touchdown strike from Goranson. The Cards are now 3-2 on the season after losing back-to-back games to Bigfork and Ogilvie in the previous two weeks.



Cromwell players celebrate a touchdown against Isle Friday night. *Jake Kachinske / Pine Knot News*

Aitkin 38 Esko 6

The Eskomos fell to 2-3 on the season and picked up their second straight loss of the season. All three of Esko's losses have been at home and its two victories

have been on the road.

Ogilvie 22 Carlton-Wrenshall 7

The Raptors faced the tough task of playing the undefeated Lions on the road in Ogilvie. The loss

drops the Raptors record to 2-2 on the season.

Cancellations

In other Carlton County prep football news, Barnum did not play this week and Moose Lake/

Willow River will not play again this season as the team canceled its remaining games due to Covid-19 quarantine requirements. As of Wednesday, when the Pine Knot News went to press, other Carlton

County schools were still planning to finish the season, but that could change.

The Ticker is compiled by Pine Knot News sports writer Kerry Rodd.

VOLLEYBALL

Panthers sweep Wrens

Jana Peterson
news@pineknotnews.com

"Scrappy" couldn't quite overcome "tall and athletic" on Monday, but the Wrenshall volleyball team competed hard against it in Monday's home match against South Ridge.

The Panthers swept the Wrens 3-0 (25-11, 25-15, 25-12).

It's been a good season for the Panthers (now 7-1) said head coach Brad Olesiak, explaining that they graduated four seniors last year but welcomed members of an undefeated junior varsity squad into the varsity ranks this season.

"I thought they would fit in perfectly with what we had coming back and they have gelled very well," Olesiak said.

He praised the performance of his two senior hitters, Camryn Olsen and Raina Schneider, against Wrenshall, admitting that this year's team has a lot of height, which is nice. "I thought we played one of our all-around better games of the year," he said. "We had one starter out, but our new girl did very well."

Olesiak said he lined up his best blockers opposite Wrenshall's two top hitters, which helped as well.

"Wrenshall played well, they're scrappy," he said. "They're a solid team and they don't give up. I'm surprised they don't have a better record."

The loss brought the Wrens to two wins and six losses.



Wrenshall sophomore Janae Sjodin blocks an incoming shot from South Ridge freshman Svea Snickers during Monday night's match.

Wrens head coach John Peterson said his team struggled with communication Monday, but showed flashes of brilliance. Senior middle hitter Brooke Kent had a couple of really great hits as well as blocks, and did well with her serving too.

"She's my strongest player overall and the best athlete on the team," Peterson said. He also praised his other middle hitter, sophomore Janae Sjodin, who also had a couple of great hits and blocks Monday.

"She is adjusting to a new position but she's been doing great," Peterson said. "The whole team is getting better constantly."

Both teams have had games canceled or rescheduled: the Wrens three times — counting this Thursday's

game against Floodwood — and the Panthers twice. They do their best to reschedule or find another game in an already shortened season, the coaches said. After Floodwood canceled, Peterson set up a match with Nevis, nearly three hours away. Instead of playing Cherry earlier this year, Olesiak picked up a game against Moose Lake. The Panthers are set to play Esko in their last regular season game after a postponement due to Covid exposures.

Pandemic permitting, local volleyball teams have two weeks left of their shortened season, followed by playoffs if it happens. Both coaches say they and their players are grateful for every game as Covid-19 numbers continue to climb



South Ridge senior Camryn Olsen tries to block a shot from Wrenshall's Brooke Kent during Monday night's game between the Panthers and the Wrens.

Photos by Dan Saletel/Pine Knot Sports

in the Northland.

"I'm 100-percent glad we had a season, even with the challenges," Peterson said of his small but tight knit team. "They need that touch of normalcy, physical activity and socialization — it's all needed."

Still, it's been challenging.

"They've been having a hard time keeping up their

spirits during the games without many fans there. They get down on themselves a little quicker than normal," Peterson said, explaining that each player is allowed to have two family members in the gym, and zero classmates are allowed.

So far, knock on wood, the teams themselves have remained healthy. But Covid is nipping at their

heels, Olesiak said. He's hoping they can finish the season.

"I'm very pleased with the girls, they're wonderful, they work hard and get along very well," he said. "It's been very enjoyable, and stressful — waiting for the call that we're not playing or done — but our goal is to take it one day at a time and keep going."

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— Pine Knot News —

OUTDOORS

Returning to the magic of the deer hunt

The annual event that brings families and friends together kicked off this past weekend when the 2020 Minnesota firearms deer season opened. Deer camps across the state welcomed young and old alike as they melted into forested areas in search of that elusive whitetail deer.

I am fortunate to have hunted in three wonderful deer camps. As a kid, I hunted at our family shack near Hardwood Lake, then it was off to Beaver Creek Outfitters in Gowan, as well as Black Lake Outfitters in Cromwell. All of the experiences were unique and had their own traditions, but all had many similarities as well.

Sometimes hunters have a hard time trying to explain the excitement and anticipation of opening weekend. The Friday night prior to the opener is much like Christmas Eve.

Leading up to the opener, anticipation builds as hunters spend more and more time at their shacks, camps and trailers. Weekends prior to deer season they check out and repair stands, get rid of the mice who have taken up residence, clear and brush out shooting lanes, scout for new areas to put stands or blinds in, restock propane, mow down a summer's worth of high grass, clear downed trees from trails and more.

Wednesday and Thursday

nights prior to the opening Friday are spent making meals, packing and running over checklists and generally making sure everything is ready to put in the truck on Friday.

For me there is no better feeling than driving into the camp for the first time. Greetings are exchanged and then the work of unloading vehicles begins. Once that is done and everything is put in its proper place, the time to relax begins. Most shacks boast a couple of Coleman lanterns, their glow welcoming groups both small and large. Cards come out and stories of hunts from days gone by begin to flow. Laughs are shared and the tales that are told all grow with time. Despite the stories always being the same, there is always a sense of urgency to hear it all again. It is a matter

of pride to be able to tell a story.

After a few hours of good food and conversation, it is time to hit the sack and dream of that big buck charging out of the woods the next morning. Heavy eyes give way to sleep and the visions of what the future might hold.

Opening morning the shack is filled with the aroma of coffee, bacon and eggs and the smell of the propane lanterns. Slowly but surely, the shack patrons crawl out of sleeping bags and begin to dress in their blaze orange. After breakfast the crew slowly makes its way outside and the atmosphere becomes much more serious as the realization that the hunt is about to begin hits.

For me, walking to the deer stand on a cool, crisp, November opener is what it is all about. It is dark. Other than the crunching

of your boots over the crusty leaves, it is quiet. Hunters peel off from the group and slowly make their way to their favorite stands and locations. Crawling up into the stand for the first time brings a feeling of familiarity. Looking off to the east and seeing the glow of the sun just below the horizon has an almost intoxicating effect.

Breathing in the cool air with eyes closed ... the quiet shuffling of leaves below the stands sends your senses into overdrive. Was that a deer? Squirrel? There it is again. And people wonder why I hunt.

Pine Knot News sportswriter Kerry Rodd has been covering Carlton County sports for decades on the radio and in the newspaper. Contact Rodd at news@pineknot-news.com.

RODD'S RAMBLINGS



Kerry Rodd

OUTDOORS NOTES

Deer opener was too hot for many

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources conservation officers were busy during the opening of the firearms deer season last week. Here is what some of the officers from the region reported:

Scott Staples (Carlton) worked a baiting case and other tips that were called in. One person who has had several DNR violations in the past was found to be hunting deer over

bait, hunting deer without a license and unlawfully possessing a firearm. Assistance was given with a medical call where a hunter fell 16 feet out of his deer stand. Other violations encountered over the weekend included operating an ATV during prohibited hours, untagged deer, failure to register deer, and faulty ATV registration.

Jeff Humphrey (Cromwell) fielded numerous calls and questions before the season started. He followed up on baiting

complaints and unlawful target shooting. He assisted local law enforcement with a suspicious vehicle, received calls of an orphaned bear cub in the Cromwell area and issued wildlife possession permits. Deer opener was tempered by mild weather and little deer movement, Humphrey reported. Hunters were reporting mixed results. Several hunters checked were in T-shirts. A few decided to go golfing. Some common violations encountered included

transporting loaded firearms, ATV operation, deer license and tagging, allowing youth to commit game and fish violations and no blaze orange.

Andy Schmidt (Duluth West) worked baited stand complaints and answered questions regarding the deer season. Very warm weather and few hunters resulted in few deer taken in the area. Trespassing complaints, baited stands and ATV violations were most common issues observed during the week.

Jacob Willis (Brookston) said activity was slow compared to prior seasons in the station but there were still plenty of hunters afield. Willis assisted another officer with a DWI arrest on an ATV in the far northern part of the station. Enforcement action was taken for operating an ATV without headlights, trespass and hunter harassment.

Walleye allowed on Mille Lacs

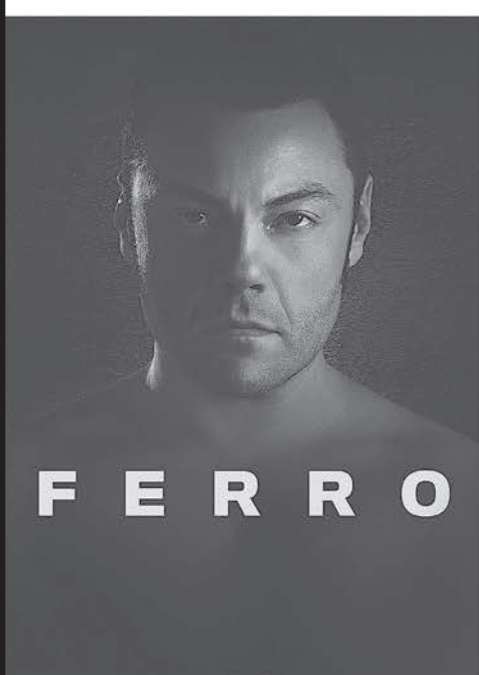
Winter anglers on Mille

Lacs Lake will enjoy a walleye harvest this winter for the fifth season in a row. Starting Dec. 1, anglers will be allowed to keep one walleye between 21-23 inches or one fish longer than 28 inches. This is the same regulation as the last two winter seasons.

Mille Lacs was popular during the winter of 2019-2020, in part due to poor ice conditions on other large Minnesota lakes. Anglers put in a record of more than 3 million fishing hours on the lake.

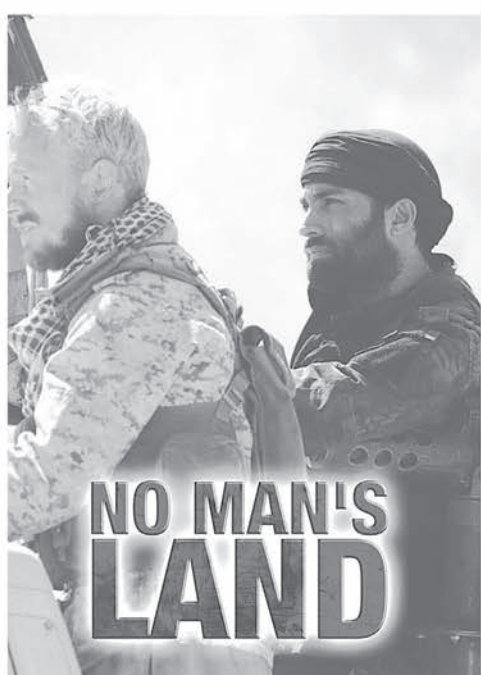
The STREAM Scene

Where all the top choices can be found in one place!



FERRO

“Movie: Ferro”
From Italian director Beppe Tufarulo (“We Love Our Clients”) comes this documentary that takes an inside look at the private and professional lives of Tiziano Ferro, one of the most famous contemporary Italian singers, spotlighting the highs, lows and challenges from the artist’s perspective after 20 years in the business. (ORIGINAL)



NO MAN'S LAND

“No Man’s Land”
The Syrian civil war is the backdrop for this eight-episode drama series about a young French man searching for his presumed-dead sister, who winds up joining forces with a unit of female Kurdish fighters as they travel in ISIS occupied territory. Felix Moati, Mélanie Thierry and James Purefoy head the cast. (ORIGINAL)



THE CROWN

“The Crown”
Season 4 advances the story to the late 1970s, when Queen Elizabeth (Olivia Colman) and the Royal Family are preoccupied with finding an appropriate bride for Prince Charles (Josh O’Connor), who is still unmarried at age 30. At the same time, divisiveness builds in Britain thanks to the policies of Margaret Thatcher (Gillian Anderson) and war with the Falkland Islands. (ORIGINAL)



Disney - The WONDERFUL WORLD of MICKEY MOUSE

“The Wonderful World of Mickey Mouse” (Nov. 18, Disney+)
From the makers of Disney Channel’s “Mickey Mouse” cartoon shorts comes this series of animated shorts in which Mickey and pals Donald, Minnie, Daisy, Goofy and Pluto embark on their greatest adventures yet. The seven-minute episodes will be rolled out on Fridays. (ORIGINAL)
How to watch: www.disneyplus.com (\$6.99/mo.)