



Sports

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Forest Lake gymnastics team earns state bid

John Wagner
Sports Editor

In recent seasons, the Forest Lake gymnastics team has been represented by individual gymnasts at the state meet.

This year will be different – in a good way. The Rangers will send their entire team to the state meet after winning the Class 2A Section 7 title in a meet the team hosted on Friday, March 19.

“The state meet is such a fun meet to go to, because everyone there is so good,” said senior Claire O’Gorman, who will be competing at state for the third year in a row. “In years past I’ve gone with only one teammate, and this year I get to go with the whole team. And that’s super-exciting; I won’t be alone out there.”

The Rangers punched their ticket to state by posting a season-high team score of 145.825 to best second-place Anoka, which had a 144.875. The team victory snapped a string of 11 straight titles by Cambridge-Isanti, which finished third at 143.850.



Photo by John Wagner

The Forest Lake gymnastics team, lead by coach Lindsey Pierron (left), will advance to the state meet for the first time since 2009 after winning the Class 2A Section 7 meet it hosted on Friday, March 19.

“Since I’ve coached here, we have never broken 145 [as a team],” coach Lindsey Pierron said. “So to go past that and score 145.825 was pretty exciting. But these girls deserved that score.”

Individually, O’Gorman was the star of the meet, winning the vault (9.875), bars (9.450) and floor (9.675) to claim the

all-around title with a 38.050 score.

“After I finished the beam, I realized I had the two events that made me the most nervous out of the way,” O’Gorman said. “I knew I had my two best events [floor and vault] left, so that gave me confidence.”

O’Gorman finished the meet in style: On her final

vault, she received scores of 9.9 and 9.85 from the judges, which gave her the school record in that event with a 9.875 score.

But the Rangers were far from a one-woman team. Junior Keely Sisco placed third in the all-around with a fine 37.000 score that will allow her to join O’Gorman in the state competition in that event.

Her strong performance included a second-place finish on the bars (9.225) and a third in vault (9.550).

“Keely had a career-best on vault, and I thought she also had a strong performance in the floor exercise,” said Pierron of Sisco, who finished sixth on floor with a fine 9.400 score.

Meanwhile freshman Delaney Nickles finished

ninth in the all-around with a 35.425 mark, and she qualified for the state meet individually with a 9.450 score on the floor.

“She wasn’t as confident as she normally is because she’s still coming back from her injury,” Pierron said of Nickles. “But her routine on the floor was the best she’s done all year.”

As a result Forest Lake will be making its first appearance as a team in the Class 2A state meet since 2009, and their fifth from Class 2A Section 7 overall.

The state meet will be hosted by Champlin Park High School, with the Class 2A meet held on Saturday, March 27. As the representative from Section 7, Forest Lake will compete starting at 11:30 a.m.

“I think it’s going to be so much more fun that the team gets to compete together,” Pierron said. “It isn’t about one person, it’s about the entire team. And it will be exciting that they get to experience it together. They have worked so hard for it, and they deserve it.”

Ranger wrestling sends 4 to state

Cardinal sets school and section career wins record

John Wagner
Sports Editor

Four Forest Lake wrestlers have put themselves in position to cap an unusual season with an unforgettable accomplishment.

The Rangers will send a quartet of wrestlers – seniors Derrick Cardinal and Tyler Raway, sophomore Jacob Aho and freshman Parker Lyden – to the state meet after each finished in the top two spots in their weight class at the State Prelim tournament hosted by Coon Rapids on Saturday, March 20.

Cardinal, Raway and Aho all were impressive in winning their weight class at the tournament, while Lyden placed second at 106 pounds.

“We had 13 kids wrestle at sections, and 11 advanced to the State Prelims,” coach Joe Kunshier said. “I think it’s great to have that many guys advance to the state meet.”

Cardinal made the biggest splash at the State Prelims. His 19-3 technical fall over Steven Cruze of Willmar was the 236th victory of his career, surpassing the school and Class 3A Section 7 record for career wins set by former Ranger great Ben Morgan.

“We all know what Derrick’s goals are: He’s a three-time state champion who wants to be a four-time state champion,” Kunshier said. “But there have been wrestlers in this section who have become college national champions, so to surpass them is quite an accomplishment.”

Cardinal followed that first win with another technical fall and a 9-3 decision over Luke Studer of Blaine to win the 132-pound crown.

Not to be overlooked is fellow senior Raway, who posted three pins in a combined time of 5:29 to win the title at 195.

“Tyler is an elite wrestler,” Kunshier said. “He’s one of those special kids who come along very rarely in a coaching career. He has worked so hard, and he should not be considered in Derrick’s shadow.” He pinned a kid in the finals who is state-ranked, and it was just a dominant performance. He’s really, really coming on at the right time.”

Aho has been limited by a mid-season injury, but he showed he was healthy in winning the 113-pound title without allowing his three opponents to register a single point.

“Jake is one of those kids who, once he puts his feet on the mat, is not thinking about injuries – he just works with what he has,” Kunshier said. “He’s healing well, and he’s a tough, sound kid. After placing at the state tournament last year, his goal isn’t just to get there. He wants to place, and place high, and he’s capable of doing that.”

Lyden earned two wins in the 106-pound bracket to advance to the championship match, where he lost to Leo Edblad of Cambridge-Isanti. Since Lyden had not faced third-place finisher Vance Barz of Sauk Rapids Rice, he was obliged to wrestle a “true second” match; Lyden claimed a 4-3 decision over Barz to clinch his state berth.

“Parker had a really good tournament,” Kunshier said. “He was seeded third, but he wrestled above his seed. And in the State Prelims he avenged a loss to Brandon Board of Andover. He wrestled a sound, smart tournament.”

While there were plenty of highlights for the Rangers, there were some heart-wrenching

losses as well. Arguably the most painful came at 145, where junior Daniel VanAcker came one win short of advancing to state.

VanAcker, who placed sixth at 132 pounds at last year’s state tournament, lost his first-round match to Gabe Wagner of Brainerd. VanAcker fought back to win his next three matches to claim third, but in his true second match he lost to Dalan Jones of Coon Rapids.

Junior Alex Lofgren suffered a similar fate at 138, winning his first match before losing in the second round to Camden Carlson of Willmar. Lofgren won twice in the consolation bracket to secure third place, but Carlson placed second, negating the need for a true second match.

Another close call was registered by freshman



Submitted photos

Forest Lake senior Derrick Cardinal, left, stands with former Ranger standout Ben Morgan after Cardinal claimed his 236 career victory. That total broke the school and Section 7 career record held previously by Morgan.

Jackson Marr at 126. After winning his first match, he was shut out in the second to fall into the consolation bracket, where he dropped a 6-5 decision to end his season.

Freshman Mark Rendl was seeded fourth at 170, but he won his first match

before losing in the second round to eventual champ Alex Kowalchuk of Coon Rapids. Rendl advanced to the third-place match, where he lost a tight decision to Macray Klohs of Buffalo.

Sophomore Colin McGear advanced to the State Prelim at 182, where

he lost twice, while junior Jordan Silvera earned a pin in his first consolation match before bowing out with a 1-2 record at 220.

The Class 3A state semifinals will be hosted by St. Michael-Albertville on Saturday, March 27 starting at 2 p.m.

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Sports



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Ranger boys hockey loses to Elk River/Zimmerman

John Wagner
Sports Editor

The Forest Lake boys hockey team dropped a 7-5 decision to Elk River/Zimmerman in the semifinals of the Class 2A Section 7 South Bracket on Thursday, March 18.

As the overall No. 3 seed in the section, the Rangers earned home ice for the contest. But the fifth-seeded Elks scored the only goal of the first period before a wild second period leveled the score at 3-3.

Senior Connor Brust got Forest Lake rolling with his goal at 2:25 of the second, while senior Jackson Maas and junior Gavin Middendorf netted

goals less than two minutes apart late in the period.

Elk River collected a short-handed goal at 3:27 of the third period to take the lead, but Middendorf retied the game roughly two minutes later.

Then the Elks exploded for three straight goals, the first coming at the 9:57 mark and the other two less than a minute apart – and with under two minutes to play. Middendorf completed a hat trick, his second of the season, in the final minute to close the scoring.

Senior Casey Sauve finished with 26 saves for Forest Lake, which finished with a 10-7-2 record.

Forest Lake girls hockey upset in section semifinals



Photo by John Wagner
Junior C.C. Walesheck skates up ice in the Forest Lake girls hockey team's 5-1 victory over the Northern Tier Stars on Tuesday, March 16.

Rangers beat Northern Tier Stars in opener

John Wagner
Sports Editor

The Forest Lake girls hockey team suffered a cruel finish to an outstanding season.

The Rangers dropped a 4-1 decision to Grand Rapids/Greenway in a home semifinal contest in the Class 2A Section 7 tournament on Thursday, March 18.

In that game, second-seed Forest Lake fell behind when the third-seeded Lightning scored once in the opening period and two more goals in the second.

Senior Emma Brust got the Rangers on the board with a goal at 3:48 of the final period, but the team was unable to mount a comeback, as it had often done during the regular season. Grand Rapids/Greenway iced the victory with a short-handed tally late in the third.

Sophomore Adria Haley finished with 16 saves for Forest Lake, which finished with a 15-4-2 overall record.

The Rangers opened

section play with a 5-1 victory over the seventh seed, the Northern Tier Stars, in a home contest on Tuesday, March 16.

Junior Jennarae Bateman scored just 20 seconds into the game to give Forest Lake the lead, and the Rangers added goals by sophomore Emma Halweg and senior Rachel Gollnitz to build a 3-1 advantage after the second period.

Junior C.C. Walesheck scored early in the third period, and Forest Lake spent the final five minutes of the third period killing off penalties. But the Rangers did not allow another goal, while freshman Sami Pool added a short-handed marker to close the scoring.

"I thought we were a little sloppy in the first period, but I thought we cleaned things up nicely in the second," coach Andy Richardson said. "I was really pleased with the way we killed penalties in the third, and adding a short-handed goal was a great way to respond."

Haley stopped all but one of the 20 shots she faced to earn the victory.



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SPORTS BRIEFS

Compiled by John Wagner

Bothun claims multiple awards

Forest Lake graduate **Josie Bothun** was named College Hockey Association Goaltender of the Year and also was named to the All-CHA First Team, the league announced on March 3.

The freshman at Penn State set a school single-season record with 16 victories in just 20 games, and she posted a league-best 1.41 goals-against average and .947 save percentage.

Bothun also is one of eight finalists for the 2021 Women's Hockey Goaltender of the Year award sponsored by the Hockey Commissioners Association.

Parent sets UND track record

Forest Lake graduate **Jennifer Parent** set a University of North Dakota school record and scored in three different events for the Fighting Hawks at the Summit League indoor track and field championships on Feb. 28.

The junior finished sixth in the long jump at the league championship, setting a school record with a leap of 5.76 meters (18 feet, 10.75 inches). She also finished sixth in the triple jump (11.38 meters) and pole vault (3.87 meters) to help North Dakota finish fourth in the meet.

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Sports



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Adaptable True finds right form

Senior finishes 10th in 100 breast at 4th state meet

John Wagner
Sports Editor

Forest Lake senior swimmer Maxamilian True entered this season as one of the top high school breaststrokers in Minnesota, having qualified for the state tournament each of the previous three seasons.

But the school record holder in the 100 breast did not balk when coaches suggested tweaks to his stroke early this season.

“There are always changes that need to be made to get faster,” True said. “At the beginning of the year you can always work on things. I’m open to changing my stroke to make me faster.”

That response was music to the ears of Rangers boys swim coach Dominick Mancini.

“If there’s a gap, he wants to fill it,” Mancini said of True. “He embraces things that will make him better, make him faster. That’s what drives him.”

True made his fourth consecutive trip the state meet, which was held at the Freeman Aquatic Center on the University of Minnesota campus on Friday, March 19. For the fourth year in a row True



Photo by John Wagner

Senior Maxamilian True, shown competing in the 100 breaststroke in an event late in the season, finished 10th in this year’s state meet with a 57.46 clocking.

finished among the top 11 swimmers in the state in the 100 breast, placing 10th with a time of 57.46.

That capped an impressive Forest Lake career that began in the seventh grade, when he made an immediate splash with his ability in the breaststroke.

“I started the season on the JV, but by the end of the year I was swimming with the varsity,” he said. “I needed to score 45 points in meets that season to letter, and I entered the section meet with 44 points – so I knew I needed to score there. I finished 10th

or 11th, so I got my varsity letter. And I dropped 15 seconds off my time in the breaststroke [that season], which was excellent.”

True qualified to swim in the state meet for the first time as a freshman in 2018. In that meet he placed 11th in the 100 breast, while swimming a leg in the 200 free relay and earning a spot in the 100 fly. The following year True finished seventh in the 100 breast, breaking the school record with a 57.19 clocking, while also swimming a leg for the 200 medley relay that

placed 14th. Last year he again swam the breast for the 200 medley relay that placed 13th, and individually he took ninth the 100 breast.

That did not stop True from working with assistant coach Kellie Olson on a variety of subtle improvements to his form when this season began.

“A lot of swimmers it takes a long time – seasons, really – to change things,” Olson said. “Max has been pretty quick to pick up what we’ve been showing him. He’s always

searching to do things better. He’s always asking how he can improve. With him, I always focus on what he’s doing right. He’s doing a lot of things right.”

Those adjustments helped True shatter his school record in the 100 breast at the Class 2A Section 7 meet, where the senior defeated a talented field with a 56.51 clocking.

Mancini said True’s drive to improve is matched only by his drive to work hard.

“It doesn’t matter what the day is, what set he’s

doing, or anything that came before: In the water, Max is one of the hardest-working guys,” Mancini said. “He sets a great example for the team. He embraces the fact that swimming is a tough sport, and he’s willing to do the work to get better.”

Mancini said True also has focused on helping the Forest Lake program improve as well.

“During a meet you see him pacing the sidelines, cheering guys on,” Mancini said. “And he’s willing to pull guys aside and tell them things he’s seeing.”

True said he thanked his coaches at Forest Lake, former coach Joe Mau and current coaches Mancini and Olson, for helping him reach his goals of returning to state and breaking the school record.

“My coaches have helped me correct and improve my strokes, but they also have taught me life lessons as well,” True said. “And I thank my parents, Rob and Ann True. They come to meets, support me, and have done a lot of things for me.”

Olson said she will be sad to see True graduate.

“People know his name in the swimming world because he’s a good swimmer,” she said. “But he’s such a great leader and such a hard worker, losing him is going to be hard.”



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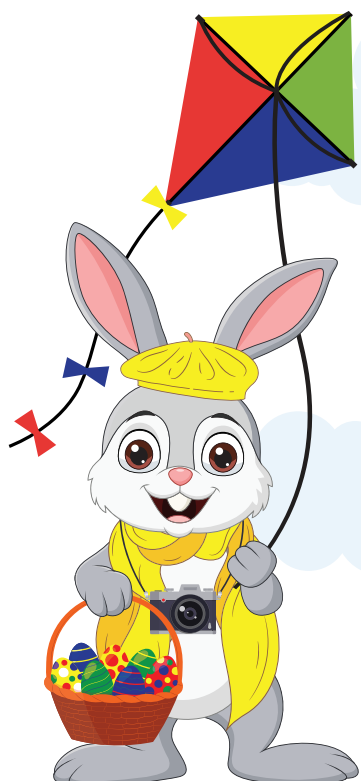
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Taking their shot



Photo by John Wagner
Three members of the Lakes International Language Academy archery team – from left, Wilbur Newell, Stella Newell and Sophia Parke – line up shots while competing in the Osakis Archery Tournament, which was held virtually on Saturday, March 20. LILA's high school team placed second in the Osakis Tournament and will be competing in the National Archery in the Schools Program's Minnesota State Tournament this Saturday, March 27.

Forest Lake hoops teams in action this week

John Wagner
Sports Editor

The Forest Lake boys basketball team advanced to the second round of the Class 4A Section 7 tournament without breaking a sweat. The Rangers were scheduled to open the tournament with a home game against Cambridge-Isanti on Saturday, March 20. But the Bluejackets were forced to forfeit the contest over concerns regarding COVID-19.

As a result, the No. 3 seeded Rangers advanced to the semifinals of the section and a matchup against second-seeded Duluth East, which claimed a 78-59 home win over Anoka in its opening game. Forest Lake's contest with Duluth East was played on the road on Tuesday, March 23, and was not completed before press time.

If the Rangers won, they advanced to the championship game against the winner of top-seeded Andover and No. 5 seed Coon Rapids. That game will take place Thursday, March 25; if Anoka wins, it will host the championship, but if Coon Rapids wins, Forest Lake would host.

Meanwhile the Forest Lake girls basketball team began Class 4A Section 7 play with a home contest against Andover on Tuesday, March 23, that was not completed at press time.

The Rangers, as the top seed in the section, received a bye into the semifinals, while Andover advanced with a home victory over Anoka.

If Forest Lake won on Tuesday, they advanced to host the championship game of the section to be played on Thursday, March 25. Their opponent would be either second-seeded Cambridge-Isanti or No. 6 seed Coon Rapids.

PUZZLE BLOCK

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	
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62					63					64		

- ### CLUES ACROSS
- As soon as possible
 - Gateway (Arabic)
 - Doctors' group
 - Madder genus of plants
 - A team's best pitcher
 - Ancient Greek sophist
 - Go up
 - Neither
 - Bolivian river
 - Manila hemp
 - Comedienne Gasteyer
 - British School
 - Human reproductive organs
 - Surrenders
 - Dog with long, silky coat and drooping ears
 - Sun up in New York
 - Lead alloy
 - Eastern Asian plant
 - Rapid deployment force (abbr.)
 - Japanese warrior
 - Festivity
 - Interruptions
 - Nonsense (slang)
 - Data mining methodology (abbr.)
 - Calvary sword
 - French river
 - Global business conference (abbr.)
 - Afflicted
 - Con man's game
 - No (Scottish)
 - Jewish spiritual leader
 - Fish
 - Camera term (abbr.)
 - Impudence
- ### CLUES DOWN
- A continuous portion of a circle
 - Genus of seabirds
 - Infant's dining accessory
 - Native Americans from Arizona
 - Popular fruit
 - Poisonous plant
 - Scolded
 - Assists
 - Hand (Spanish)
 - Amazon product identifying system (abbr.)
 - Basics
 - Cain and ___
 - Malaria
 - Indicates particular shape
 - Respiratory disease
 - Central Standard Time
 - Imitate
 - Golf score
 - A place to lay your head
 - Three cards of the same suit
 - Not in
 - Human gene
 - Ancient Chinese philosophic concept
 - French river
 - Thinks up
 - Type of geological deposit
 - Helps little firms
 - Area units
 - A device to remove
 - Secret political clique
 - Polite interruption sound
 - Foundation
 - Clare Boothe ___ American writer
 - Swiss river
 - Prejudice
 - Actor Idris
 - Resistance fighters
 - Speak disrespectfully of

SOLUTIONS ON PAGE 11

CRAFT & CREATE WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ADHESIVE
ANTIQUING
APPLIQUE
ARTIST
BEADS
BRUSHES
CANVAS
CLAY
DETAIL
EMBOSS
FASHION
GRID
INK
INSPIRATION
JEWELRY
MATERIALS
MEDIA
NEEDLES
PAINT
PAPER
PATTERN
PHOTOGRAPHY
RULER
SEWING

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to crafting. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 12 = o)

A. 23 12 6 6 1
Clue: Enjoyable activity

B. 1 13 20 18
Clue: Spun threads

C. 13 20 4
Clue: Expression of creative skill

D. 15 12 12 26 15 12 20 3 8 18 9
Clue: Crafting with wood

	8		9				2
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						4	5
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