

MEN'S HOCKEY



Bemidji State sophomore Kyle Looft (7) fires a shot toward the Bowling Green net in the first period Friday at the Sanford Center.

Jillian Gandsey / Bemidji Pioneer

LATE CHANGE

Beavers, Mavs to meet in last-minute schedule addition

By Austin Monteith

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As fate would have it, the Bemidji State men's hockey team is facing a familiar opponent once again this weekend.

Thanks to COVID-19 protocols within their originally scheduled opponents — Lake Superior State for BSU and Alabama Huntsville for No. 2/3 Minnesota State — the Western Collegiate Hockey Association's Minnesota contingent will meet for the fourth time in two months this Friday at the Sanford Center. This week's nonconference contest is a makeup of a postponed

Nov. 23 matchup that was originally to be played the day after the teams' season opener, a 5-0 MSU win.

"We just want to keep playing, and that's the biggest thing," Beavers head coach Tom Serratore said. "We both obviously couldn't play because of our situations this weekend. Just to be able to play is good for our guys."

With nine games postponed or canceled so far, the team has gotten used to having schedule changes on short notice. As sophomore defenseman Kyle Looft noted, it's easier to deal with when the COVID-19 issues are on the other

AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **Who:** BSU vs. Minnesota State
- ▶ **Where:** Sanford Center
- ▶ **When:** 4:07 p.m. Friday
- ▶ **Radio:** Beaver Radio Network/92.1 FM
- ▶ **Web stream:** FloHockey.tv

team, which has been the case for BSU thus far.

"Instead of taking two weeks off, we're able to practice," Looft said. "It is frustrating a little bit, but you can't do anything about it. Obviously other teams aren't trying to go get COVID, so it's not like we're super mad about it or anything."

Bemidji State is 0-2-1 in three nonconference games against Minnesota State this season, and the teams are set to meet twice more in league play next month. Since their last encounter a month ago, BSU (5-4-2, 1-1-0 WCHA) has turned the corner after a slow start and is now 4-1-1 in their last six games, including three straight victories over a top-10 Bowling Green team, with wins of 2-1 and 3-1 last week. Looft and goalie Zach Driscoll were named WCHA defenseman and goaltender of the week for their performances in the series.

"Our confidence is pretty

high, but we also know there's a lot more work to do," Looft said.

There's always plenty of buzz in the building whenever the Beavers and Mavericks (9-1-1, 6-0-0 WCHA) mix it up, though it hasn't been quite the same without fans in attendance for their meetings this year, as will again be the case this Friday.

"It was weird because normally we're used to having a ton of fans in the stands for those games," Looft said. "It's definitely been different, but we're both still very competitive teams."

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BOY'S HOCKEY

BHS demolishes Crookston in home-opening win

Pioneer Staff Report

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BEMIDJI — Finally, the Bemidji High School boys hockey team felt at home again.

The Lumberjacks thrashed Crookston in a home-opening 12-2 victory Friday night at First

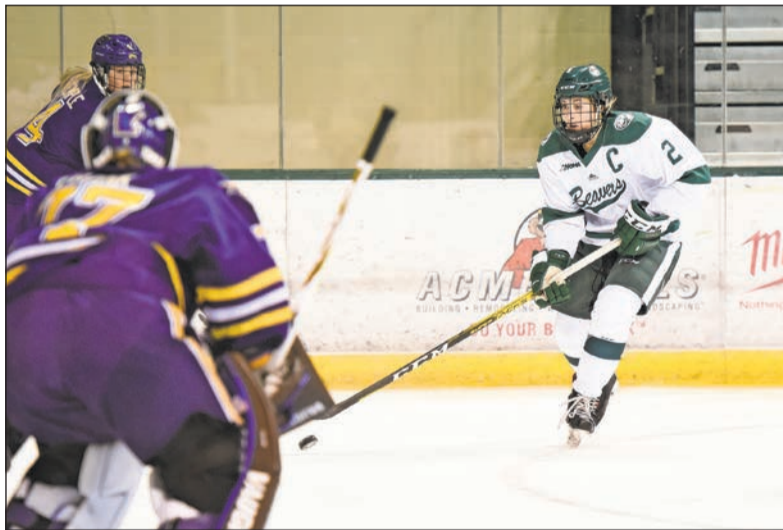
National Rink. The victory snapped a 15-game losing streak that dated back to Jan. 7, 2020, at Crookston, and also marked their first win on home ice since Feb. 14, 2019, against Thief River Falls.

The last time BHS won

by 10 or more goals was an 11-0 victory over Warroad in February 2016. The contest also marked the most goals scored in a game by the Jacks since a 14-0 victory over River Lakes in February 2010.

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WOMEN'S HOCKEY



Bemidji State senior Mak Langei (2) skates with the puck in the first period against Minnesota State on Jan. 9 at the Sanford Center.

Jillian Gandsey / Bemidji Pioneer

Dowhy, shot blockers getting job done for BSU

By Austin Monteith

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The bone-bruising art of shot blocking has become an area of expertise for a pair of Bemidji State women's hockey players.

Senior defenseman Mak Langei has put her body on the line for an NCAA-leading 47 blocked shots this season. That's 10 more than the next closest player, and at a clip of nearly four per game.

Not to be outdone, at third nationally in blocks is fellow Beaver senior blueliner Tina Kampa, who has laid

AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **Who:** BSU at Minnesota State
- ▶ **Where:** Mankato
- ▶ **When:** 6:07 p.m. Friday; 3:07 p.m. Saturday
- ▶ **Radio:** Beaver Radio Network/1300 AM & 94.3 FM
- ▶ **Web stream:** FloHockey.tv

get some stings here or there. But at the end of the day, if we can help stop a goal from going in the net, that's all that really matters."

Shot blocking was one component in BSU's Western Collegiate Hockey Association series split with Minnesota Duluth last weekend.

Goaltender Kerigan Dowhy totaled a career-high 46 saves in Friday's 1-0 overtime win. The senior blanked UMD through regulation Saturday with the visitors prevailing 1-0 in overtime.

out for 36 blocks.

"Getting blocked shots is a big accomplishment," Langei said. "But I think our whole (defensive) corps this year has been having quite a few blocked shots. Obviously you get little bruises, you

BLOCKERS: Page B4



Jillian Gandsey / Bemidji Pioneer

The Lumberjacks celebrate after senior Nathan Alto (20) scored in the first period against Crookston on Friday at First National Rink.