

BRIEFS

MSU softball sweeps Mustangs

MANKATO — Kylie Sullivan had two RBIs as Minnesota State swept Southwest Minnesota State 2-1 and 5-3 in a Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference softball doubleheader Wednesday at the Maverick All-Sports Dome.

In the opener, Mackenzie Ward allowed three hits and no earned runs with 10 strikeouts in a complete game. Sullivan had two hits, including an RBI double, and Cheyenne Behrends drove in the winning run with a single in the fifth inning. Madi Newman added a triple and single.

Katie Bracken was the winning pitcher in Game 2, giving up one earned run on three hits with four strikeouts in four innings of relief. Hailey Forshee had two hits and an RBI, and Sullivan and Courtney Baxter each had an RBI.

Minnesota State (24-8, 6-2 in Northern Sun) plays at Minnesota Duluth on Saturday.

MSU baseball extends win streak

SIOUX CITY, IOWA — Nick Altermatt had six hits and four RBIs as Minnesota State extended its winning streak to seven games by sweeping Southwest Minnesota State in a Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference doubleheader Wednesday.

Game scores were 13-1 and 6-2.

In the opener, Altermatt had four hits, including a home run, and four RBIs, and Jackson Hauge drove in three runs. Ryan Wickman and Adam Schneider both had two hits and two RBIs.

Cam Kline pitched six innings to get the win, giving up one run on four hits with eight strikeouts.

In Game 2, Jack Zigan pitched five scoreless innings in relief, allowing three hits with eight strikeouts. Kline, Schneider, Hauge, Mikey Gottschalk and Ben Livorsi each had an RBI.

Minnesota State (18-4, 11-2 in Northern Sun) plays a three-game series against Northern State on Saturday and Sunday at Aberdeen, South Dakota.

The Free Press

Dream acquire WNBA's No. 1 pick

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Dream acquired the No. 1 overall pick in the WNBA draft from the Washington Mystics on Wednesday.

The Mystics obtained the No. 3 overall pick Monday and the No. 14 selection in the second round.

Washington also has the right to swap its 2023 first-round pick with Atlanta's first-round pick acquired from Los Angeles on Feb. 5. The Dream traded Chenedy Carter and the rights to Li Yueru to the Sparks for Erica Wheeler, Los Angeles' first-round draft choice next year and the No. 15 pick this season.

The Associated Press

SPECIAL

Knott's recruiting chops have shaped MSU



Minnesota State men's hockey associate head coach Todd Knott helps run practice Wednesday at TD Garden in Boston.

Photos by Pat Christman

Jutting, Serratore, Hastings have seen special qualities

By Kevin Dudley

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You don't have to spend much time around Minnesota State associate head coach Todd Knott to see he's special.

Tom Serratore was wowed by his insight while listening to him broadcast Bemidji State games on TV two decades ago. Troy Jutting was impressed with his maturity and vision when he first interviewed him for his position at Minnesota State, a meeting that took place at a Pizza Ranch in Okoboji, Iowa.

Mike Hastings could tell he had an eye for talent when he watched Chase Grant, Matt Leitner and Zach Palmquist, all of whom were already at MSU when Hastings arrived. Akito Hirose saw his trademark persistence just days after his commitment, when Knott inquired with him about another defenseman, Jake Livingstone, whom he got to commit not long after.

With the Mavericks in a second consecutive Frozen Four, Knott's fingerprints are all over the program's accession to national prominence.

"There's few I've met in my entire time in the game that have a work ethic and an attention to detail like he has," Hastings said. "There's a talent to recruiting — one is identification and another is relationship building. He's exceptional at both."

Jutting and Serratore saw Knott's talents long before MSU was making Frozen Fours.

Serratore coached Knott the final three seasons at Bemidji State.

"He was a joy to coach," Serratore said. "I think what he was lacking in strength, he made up for with his hockey sense and his brains, and I think that's what makes him a good coach today."

After Knott's last season with the Beavers in 2001-02, he showed Serratore his ability to put that knowledge into words in the 2002-03 season, when he worked as an analyst on the Beavers' TV broadcasts.

One of Serratore's assistants took a head coaching job with the North American Hockey League's Fargo-Moorhead Jets for the 2003-04 season and needed an assistant. Serratore had a suggestion.

"I thought Knott would be the perfect candidate because he was (living) in Bemidji, he was



Todd Knott watches an MSU practice last week. Knott has been the driving force in recruiting many of MSU's players.

How to follow

Game time: 7:30 p.m.

Opponent: University of Minnesota

Radio: KTOE 1420-AM

TV: ESPNU

Watch parties: Buffalo Wild Wings, Pub 500, Chet's Place

obviously a commentator for our games, and I thought he had a great perspective on things," Serratore said. "That's what got Knott in coaching."

By the 2007-08 season, Knott was a head coach for Des Moines in the United States Hockey League, and Jutting hired him as an assistant at MSU in 2009-10.

Jutting had heard about Knott as an up-and-comer in the juniors ranks, and former MSU assistant Darren Blue also had a relationship with Knott prior to his time at MSU.

Jutting felt he had a good handle on what Knott would bring to MSU when they sat down at that Pizza Ranch back in 2009, but his unique talents became clear when Knott hit the recruiting trail.

"Persistence — I think Todd understands the importance of it," Jutting said. "You can't have great teams without great players."

Knott's ability to evaluate talent speaks for itself.

As MSU's recruiting coordinator under Hastings, he's had a hand in recruiting every player on the MSU team that will play in Boston this weekend, and in most cases, he was the driving force in landing the commitment and signing.

With just one NHL draft pick on the roster, Knott has consistently shown the ability to find untapped potential in players who will develop within the construct of MSU's business model and will be vastly different at age 22 than 18.

"It seems to be the late bloomer guys that are in their second or third year of juniors that are kind of finding their stride," MSU goalie Dryden McKay said. "Todd is really good at projecting how they're going to fit into our group."

Knott doesn't just identify talent. That relentlessness on the recruiting trail hasn't gone anywhere, and it's why the Mavericks don't have off years.

Knott is looking to build a program, not a team.

"I'll feel like we're looking good with what we've got coming in and what our potential is for the future, and sometimes he'll text me and ask me about different players just out of nowhere. Just kind of seeing what my opinion is on it," Hirose said. "He's definitely one of those guys that always wants more and that's the best you can ask for out of a recruiter."

It reminds Hastings of some of the great goal scorers he's coached.

"Usually the ones that are really good at it — once they get one, they want two. Once they get two, they want three," he said. "Then they hit a reset button the next night and they start over."

Knott's eye for talent and fire to keep pushing are a big part of the equation, but it can't start or end there.

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Hastings receives another Penrose

National coach of year two years running

The Free Press

After taking his team back to the Frozen Four for the second straight season, Minnesota State's Mike

Hastings has again been chosen as the recipient of the Spencer Penrose Award as the Division I men's hockey coach of the year, it was announced Wednesday.

It's the third time that Hastings has received the award, having also won it in 2015 and 2021. Only three other coaches have won the Penrose Award three times: Len Ceglarski, at both Clarkson and Boston College; Charlie Holt of New Hampshire; and Jack Parker of Boston University.

"I'm very appreciative based on one thing — it's your peer group that votes on that," Hastings said.

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Twins delay opener a day

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Twins postponed their season opener against the Seattle Mariners by a day until Friday because of expected bad weather.

The forecast for Thursday at Target Field called for a mix of rain and snow.

Joe Ryan, a 25-year-old right-hander, is scheduled to be the first rookie to start for the Twins on opening day since Tom Hall in 1969. Acquired from Tampa Bay on July 22 in the Nelson Cruz trade, Ryan was a member of the U.S. team that won a silver medal at last summer's Olympics.

Robbie Ray is to start for the Mariners after agreeing to a \$115 million, five-year contract. The 30-year-old left-hander will be the 16th different pitcher to start on opening day for Seattle since the franchise started play in 1977. Marco Gonzales started the previous three after Félix Hernández started 10 in a row from 2009-18.

Friday had been a planned off day. The rescheduled opener is set for same 3:10 p.m. start as Thursday.



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