

Royals ranked No. 2 in volleyball, girls soccer

Volleyball team defeats No. 3 ranked team, goes 4-0

BY JAMES STITT
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The Watertown-Mayer volleyball team had a frenzied and fantastic start to the season on Friday, winning all four of their matches at the Albany Earlybird Tournament. In addition to an undefeated start, the No. 2 ranked team in Class AA got an early chance to prove their ranking, capping off the day with a 2-0 win over the No. 3 ranked Maple Lake team.

The Royals kicked off the season with a 2-1 win over Sauk Centre, winning the first set 25-14, then dropped a closely contested second set 22-25 before winning the third set 15-11.

Libby Burns led the attack at the net with a team-high 11 kills and helped in the back row with eight digs to go with one ace. Ashley Olson was also a force at the net on both sides of the ball with five kills, three solo blocks and a block assist. Alaina Burns and Kate Thibault added four kills each, Natalie Ernhart had three, Arisa Intlekofer and Haley Baker each had one.

Natalie Ernhart facilitated the offense to the tune of 22 assists, with Kate Thibault dishing out four, and Olson and Libby Burns adding two each. Ernhart and Thibault also led the back row with a combined 30 digs. Emily Burns picked up 11 digs, Alaina Burns tallied seven, Olson and Mallory Czinano each had one.

Ernhart and Intlekofer also added a pair of solo blocks, with Alaina Burns picking up a block assist.

The Royals made it tough on Sauk Centre when putting the ball in play, tallying 12 aces in the win – Thibault (3), Alaina Burns (3), Emily Burns (3), Ernhart (2), Libby Burns (1) and Czinano (1).

WATERTOWN-MAYER 2 NEW LONDON-SPICER 1

The Royals moved on to face conference foe NL-S in game two, winning big in set one (25-15), before holding off



Natalie Ernhart and Libby Burns led the No. 2 ranked Watertown-Mayer volleyball team to four wins to start the 2021 season. (File photo) with Libby Burns tallying three, Ernhart picking up two and Emily Burns adding one.

Ernhart dished out 18 assists with Baker picking up one as well. Olson had one block in the win.

Ernhart dished out 24 of the team's 26 assists with eight different Royals getting involved in the attack – Olson (9), Libby Burns (8), Czinano (6), Baker (2), Ernhart (1), Alaina Burns (1), Thibault (1) and Paris Kubes (1).

Alaina Burns had a stellar showing when serving, picking up four aces on just seven attempts. Ernhart and Libby Burns each had two aces and Thibault added one.

WATERTOWN-MAYER 2 ROCORI 0

With the pair of wins, the Royals moved on to the playoff pool and shut out both opponents, starting with a 2-0 win over Rocori (25-17, 25-12).

Libby Burns was a force at the net with 11 of the team's 20 kills. Alaina Burns followed with three kills, while Czinano, Olson and Thibault added two each.

In addition to leading the attack, Libby and Alaina Burns were stellar defensively with a combined 26 digs. Ernhart and Thibault tallied seven each and Emily Burns picked up three.

The Royals had six aces

WATERTOWN-MAYER 2 MAPLE LAKE 0

A busy first day of volleyball ended with a clash of two of the best teams in the state, as the No. 2 ranked Royals took on the No. 3 ranked Irish. Watertown-Mayer edged out Maple Lake 25-23 in set one before a convincing 25-16 win in set two.

Libby Burns once again led the attack with eight kills, finishing the day with 35 kills, which would put her at the most kills in the state through the first weekend of the volleyball season. Baker chipped in four kills, Thibault added three, Czinano recorded two and Intlekofer finished with one.

Natalie Ernhart tallied 17 assists, finishing with 81 total on the day, which would also put her at No. 1 in the state early on.

Thibault had one assist as well and led the team in digs with eight, followed by Libby Burns (5), Alaina Burns (4), Ernhart (3), Emily Burns (2) and Czinano (1).

Czinano, Ernhart and Libby Burns each had two aces, while Thibault added one.

Olson had two block assists, while Intlekofer and Baker each had one.

Watertown-Mayer girls soccer team peppers net with 27 shots in opener

BY JAMES STITT
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The Watertown-Mayer girls soccer team knew they would have a target on their back this season after the most successful season in program history last year. The Royals knew expectations would be high after last year, but their preseason ranking is quite a jump up. Watertown-Mayer broke into the top-10 rankings last year and now have jumped all the way up to the No. 2 ranking in Class A.

"I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing, but here we are," coach Joseph Perez said. "I don't put much into preseason rankings as we haven't played a game yet, but it does feel good that the girls are being recognized and the program is being recognized."

Though the road ahead is difficult, with conference opponents Holy Family Catholic and Southwest Christian also in the top 10 at No. 4 and No. 7, setting the stage for some big games this year.

But before they get into conference play, the Royals have some other opponents to start the season, which kicked off with an Aug. 28 matchup at Providence Academy. With a lot of changes this year, the Royals played through the adversity well in a 2-1 win.

The program's all-time leading scorer, Maris Heun, got right back to her tendency to find the back of the net, scoring 15 minutes into the game to give the Royals the lead. Despite being one of the shorter players on the field, Heun doesn't often play like it, and her season-opener goal was no different as she took a pass from Mercedes Burmeister and headed it home.

"For her size, she's fearless," Perez said of Heun.

"Megan Barnhart, who moves up to the midfield this year after playing outside back last season also scored in the win, something the Royals are looking forward to after her shift in roles.

"[Maris and Megan] should do the bulk of the scoring this season for us," said Perez. "They're both seniors and a good group."

Another change this year is the formation, as the Royals move to a 3-5-2 this year.



Maris Heun added to her school record with a goal Saturday. (File photo) With Maggie Czinano playing basketball at the University of Minnesota this year, one of the best centerback duos in the state has been broken up, but the other half is ready for the challenge. Mercedes Burmeister is back after a sophomore season that saw her earn an All-State Honorable Mention and takes over a back line that has one less defender.

"She's willing to accept the challenge," said Perez. "The reason we have her back there is she is always ready for the pressure."

The advantage of the new formation and a secure back line, the Royals were able to throw the attack forward time and again to the tune of 27 shots. Though they only scored twice, there were plenty of close calls.

"We probably hit the post about six times, it just wouldn't go in," said Perez. "I told them to keep shooting and eventually it will go in."

Another challenge in the game was playing on a turf field. The Royals practice on grass but soon will be playing on turf for home games after the field renovations. Early season matchups at Providence Academy and Orono, who both play on turf, will help them get adjust to the different playing surface, which they will debut in a Sept. 7 meeting with big Lake at 5 p.m.

Carver County teams off to 6-1 start at state

Young America and Watertown advance with host Waconia, Carver falls in close game

BY JAMES STITT
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Crow River Valley League teams have been stellar at the 2021 Class C Minnesota State Amateur Baseball Tournament, with each of the four squads winning at least one game.

In the first weekend of play, Young America, Watertown and Carver each won their opening game, while league champion Waconia earned a bye.

In the second round, Young America, Watertown and Waconia each won their games, while Carver lost a close game to Bluffton.

YOUNG AMERICA CARDINALS 11 ORTONVILLE ROX 3

The Cardinals got four runs in the first inning of Saturday's game in Chaska and never looked back, cruising to an 11-3 win over Ortonville. Isaac Hormann bunted safely to start the game and Brice Panning joined him on base with a single. Alex Logelin and Matt Mann then both put the ball in play, resulting in a series of errors that saw three runs score. Roch Whittaker next batted in a run to give the Cardinals a 4-0 lead, one they would not relinquish.

With the offense scoring in each of the first five innings, including another four-run burst in the fourth, the Cardinals were able to give starter Dillon Whittaker a rest while getting numerous other pitchers (and a lot of draftees) a chance to take the mound at the state tournament.

Whittaker pitched five innings with two hits allowed and four strikeouts. The Cardinals then gave four more pitchers an inning each on the mound - Will Hoerner (Hamburg), Cade Weigert (Cologne), Zach Stockman (Plato) and Jordan Harris. The four innings by the four

relief pitchers saw only one earned run.

The Cardinals had three innings where they scored one run and another four-run inning. Logelin scored Hormann on an RBI double in the second, Hunter Rickaby singled and scored on an error after a Cole Peters single in the third and Roch Whittaker plated Brice Panning on a single in the fifth for the 11th and final run.

The four-run inning came in the fourth. Hormann doubled and scored on a Brice Panning single to start the inning. Mann and Rickaby then hit RBI singles and a Josh Lenz single paired with an error led to the fourth run of the inning and a 10-0 win.

Rickaby was 4-4 with a run and an RBI. Brice Panning had three hits, three runs and an RBI. Mann had two hits, two runs and an RBI. Hormann scored three runs on two hits. Whittaker plated two on one hit and scored one run. Lenz and Logelin each had a hit and an RBI, while Logelin added one run scored.

Peter Treinen had two hits and an RBI to lead the Rox and Nate Treinen had one run scored on two hits. Chris Downey had one hit and an RBI, Joe Fuller had a hit and Andrew Treinen had an RBI.

The Cardinals take on the St. Patrick Irish Saturday, Sept. 4 at 4:30 p.m. in Chaska.

WATERTOWN RED DEVILS 8 AVON LAKERS 1

There seems to be something magical about the fifth inning for Watertown, as the Red Devils have used that inning to turn the tide in both of their state tournament games. In both outings, the Red Devils entered the fifth tied, but left the inning up by four or more runs. In the first round, they jumped past the Midway Snurbirds with five

runs to race to a 7-3 win, then repeated that effort in round two against the Avon Lakers.

The Red Devils and Lakers exchanged runs in the first inning with Watertown's Ben Smith plating Patrick Tschida on an RBI double and Avon's Ryan Janzen taking advantage of a pair of errors to round the bases for the Lakers to knot the game at 1-1.

The game remained tied until the fifth inning rolled around and Watertown found their magic once again. Andrew Nichols singled to start the inning and Jake Anderly joined him on base after a bunt forced an error. Jadrien Keavy then loaded the bases with a successful bunt. Tschida knocked in one runner on a single, Smith plated two more with a single of his own and Zach Iten helped his effort on the mound with an RBI single to put the Red Devils up 5-1.

With a strong start from Iten, the 5-1 lead was more than enough to send the Red Devils on to the next round of the state tourney. Iten scattered five hits across six innings with no earned runs and four strikeouts to earn the win. Tschida pitched three hitless innings in relief.

The Royals added three more runs in the ninth on RBIs from Smith and Mitch Kelzer and a steal of home by Smith to put the final score at 8-1.

Smith led Watertown with three hits and four RBIs to go with one run. Tschida scored three runs on two hits to go with one RBI. Nichols and Keavy both had two hits and combined for three runs. Kelzer and Iten each had a hit and an RBI. Ryan Hangartner, Anderly and Nick Trucke each had one hit.

Cody Stich had two hits to lead the Lakers, while Matt Meyer, Riley Voit and Joe Dolan each

had one.

The Red Devils take on the Eagle Lake Expos Saturday, Sept. 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Waconia.

BLUFFTON BRAVES 3, CARVER BLACK SOX 1

The Carver Black Sox looked like they would continue the Crow River Valley League's undefeated start to the state tournament, putting their first two runners on with a triple from Connor Cornell and an RBI single from Kyle Dalton. But Bluffton pitcher Jake Dykhoff settled in to hold the Black Sox scoreless for the rest of the game, allowing just three hits. Jake Dykhoff struck out 10 while allowing just three hits over the next eight innings of the Sunday afternoon game in Chaska to earn the complete game win. With the win, the Braves became the first team to defeat a CRVL team, as Carver, Waconia, Watertown and Young America finish the first two weekends of play with a 6-1 combined record.

With Jake Dykhoff's stellar outing, the Braves' three-run third inning was all they needed, a scoring burst that saw three Dykhoffs cross home plate. Justin Dykhoff hit a RBI single that resulted in two runs as Jake Dykhoff and Josh Dykhoff both scored, then Wyatt Haman hit an RBI single to score Justin Dykhoff to put the final score at 3-1.

Carver's Ben Alexander and Bluffton's Wyatt Haman each had two hits in the low-scoring affair.

The Braves take on the Sartell Muskies Friday, Sept. 3 at 7:30 p.m. in Waconia.

SOBIESKI SKIS 6 ISANTI REDBIRDS 5

It looked like smooth sailing early on Sunday afternoon for Sobieski Skis after they opened up a 6-0 lead through four innings, but the

Isanti Redbirds made it a tight one in Chaska with a late rally.

The Skis loaded the bases to start the game as Beau Hanowski reached on an error, Scott Litchy singled and Joey Hanowski walked. Ben Hanowski was then stuck by a pitch to score the first runner and Josh Wenzel plated a second runner on a single. Collin Eckman then drove in Riley Hirsch with a single in the second to put the score at 3-0 for Sobieski. Joey Hanowski hit an RBI single in the fourth and Wenzel plated two runners on a single later in the inning to put the Skis up 6-0, but they would need every one of those runs thanks to a late rally from Isanti.

The Redbirds loaded the bases in the fifth thanks to a single from Jeff Bowman, a walk to Joe Tuholsky and an error that put Wyatt Soderquist aboard. Logan Kalis then drove in a pair of runners on a double to put Isanti on the board. The Redbirds again took advantage of walks and errors to load the bases in the seventh, with a walk and two errors putting Tuholsky, Soderquist and Kalis on base. A sacrifice fly from Blaze Hogie resulted in a run and put the score at 6-3.

With their backs against the wall, the Redbirds found some late-game magic when Soderquist cut the deficit to one run in the ninth with a two run home run, but the Skis managed to get the final two outs before the Redbirds finish the comeback.

A pair of draftees earned the win and the save for the Skis. Randall's Caleb Strack scattered four hits across six innings with two earned runs and five strikeouts to pick up the win. Pierz pitcher Chad Weiss then earned the save in three innings of work with three hits allowed and two strikeouts.

Wenzel did the damage for the Skis with three hits and three RBIs. Joey Hanowski had two hits and an RBI and Eckman added one hit and an RBI.

Soderquist and Kalis led the Isanti offense. Kalis had three hits and two RBIs, while Soderquist had two and two to go with two runs scored.

Isanti pitcher Taylor Wink was able to stall the Skis after their hot start, holding them to two hits and no runs in 5.33 innings of relief pitching with six strikeouts.

The Skis take on the Dumont Saints Saturday, Sept. 4 at 11 a.m. in Waconia.

EAGLE LAKE EXPOS 3 LIVERNE REDBIRDS 0

Eagle Lake's draftee from Waterville helped them move past the Redbirds, as Dalton Grose shutout the Luverne offense Sunday night in Chaska. Grose went all nine innings with only three hits allowed in a seven-strikeout win.

With Grose dealing on the mound, the Expos only needed a few runs. Jake Schrieber scored what proved to be the winning run after hitting a double and scoring on an error. Tony Ross then hit an RBI single to score Matt Helget and Owen Atherton scored on an RBI single from Luke Johnson.

Helget led the Expos with two hits, while Atherton, Johnson, Ross, Schrieber, Seth Guetter and Max Goertzen each had one hit.

Luverne's Derek Lundgren, Skyler Wenninger and Declan Beers each had one hit in the loss.

Jake Haugen and Pipeston draftee Brandon Alfson struck out 15 batters combined in the loss.

The Expos take on the Watertown Red Devils Saturday, Sept. 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Waconia.

Defense delivers for Alexandria, St. Patrick and Watkins

Only one run given up by the three winners in Waconia Saturday with two shutouts and an extra-inning win

BY JAMES STITT

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ALEXANDRIA BLACK SOX 2 KIMBALL EXPRESS 1

Kimball earned an early 1-0 lead Saturday in Waconia and led for almost the entire game before Alexandria found the tying run in the ninth inning, and the winning run in extra innings, nullifying what was a stellar performance from the Express pitcher.

Through eight innings, Ben Johnson limited the Black Sox to one hit and no runs, sending the game into the bottom of the ninth with Kimball up 1-0. But Alexandria's offense struck when it was needed, getting their second and third hit of the game in the ninth inning. The pair of singles from Travis Krueger and Eric Carlsen paired with Blake Stockert being struck by a pitch, had the bases loaded with one out. A strikeout on the next at-bat had the Express one out away from getting out of the game with a win, but a clutch hit by Brett Savelkoul sent the tying run across the plate.

While the Black Sox needed the bat of Savelkoul to tie the game, they were able to earn the game winner without another clutch hit. In the bottom of the 11th, the Black Sox loaded the bases when Blake Stock-



Alexandria short stop Chris Curry makes a diving stop before throwing a runner out at first base in their win. (James Stitt/The Patriot)

ert and Carter Stockert were hit by pitches and Savelkoul walked. Chris Curry then took one for the team, being struck by a pitch, resulting in the winning run crossing the board.

The effort on the mound shared between Blake Stockert and Dylan Haskamp (draftee from Sauk Centre) had Alexandria in the game despite the offense generating no runs through eight innings. Stockert started and went six innings with one earned run and five strikeouts, while Haskamp struck out five in five innings of relief.

The Express earned their 1-0 lead in the first inning when Brooks Marquardt singled, moved over off the bat of Austin Ruehle and scored on an RBI single from Jordan

Jospeh. Marquardt led the Express with three hits and Ruehle added two more.

The Black Sox take on the Maple Lake Lakers Saturday, Sept. 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Chaska.

ST. PATRICK IRISH 10 AUSTIN GREYHOUNDS 0

After being held scoreless for the first four innings, the Irish exploded in a big way in the fifth inning of play in Waconia Saturday morning, sending four runs across the plate on the way to a 10-0 win.

Kyle Rhodus got the inning started with a double and walks to Matt Ambroz and Jace Westman led to a bases loaded situation with no outs. Jack Friedges then hit an RBI single and Seth Ambroz batted two more

in on a single to plate the first three runners of the game. Walks to Ryan Friedges and Zak Endres resulted in a fourth run.

With Colin Denk limiting the Greyhounds to just one hit in seven innings, the four runs were more than enough to move St. Patrick on to the next round. Denk finished with nine strikeouts and one walk, while pitching twice as many strikes compared to balls.

The Irish made the most of their opportunities on base, scoring 10 runs on seven hits. Wild pitches and walks led to four scores over the sixth and seventh inning, with a walk off double from Rhodus ending the game in the eighth inning.

Rhodus and Seth Ambroz led the Irish with two hits and two RBIs

apiece, while Endres and Jack Friedges each had one and one.

Erik Torres and Alex Ciola had the lone two hits for Austin.

The Irish take on the Young America Cardinals Saturday, Sept. 4 at 4:30 p.m. in Chaska.

WATKINS CLIPPERS 5 PRINCETON PANTHERS 0

The Princeton Panthers could not overcome the trio of Geislings leading the Watkins Clippers Saturday in Waconia, as Nolan and Carson Geislinger were involved in every scoring play, with Matt Geislinger earning the complete game shutout win.

While Matt Geislinger delivered a gem of a game with nine strikeouts in nine innings, one walk and five hits, the Pan-

thers still had a chance to win the game with their pitcher putting together a strong outing as well. Damon Rademacher struck out eight in seven innings with only two earned runs and one walk. But Nolan and Carson Geislinger manufactured some crucial runs to send the Clippers on to the next round.

In the first inning, lead-off batter Nolan Geislinger walked and moved over on an error and wild pitch to score on a sacrifice fly from Dan Berg. Nolan Geislinger later scored in the seventh after reaching base on a single and scoring on a Kevin Kramer double.

Carson Geislinger then delivered the scores in the eighth to put the game away. Following a walk to Carter Block and a double from Justin Thompson, Carson Geislinger batted both runners in on a double. The offensive duo of Geislings (Carson and Nolan) then executed a double steal that saw Carson steal home plate to put the final score at 5-0.

Carson Geislinger finished with two RBIs and one run on one hit, while Nolan Geislinger had two runs on one hit. Thompson and Kramer each had two hits for the Clippers.

The Clippers take on the St. Martin Martins Saturday, Sept. 4 at 11 a.m. in Chaska.

No-hitter fails to deliver win for Fergus Falls

St. Martin finds a way to win with no hits, Maple Lake shuts out Jordan to keep season alive

BY JAMES STITT

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ST. MARTIN MARTINS 1 FERGUS FALLS HURRICANES 0

If you told Fergus Falls fans that they would have a pair of pitchers combine for a no-hitter Saturday afternoon, they would be safe to assume they would be leaving Chaska with a win. While Mitch Porter and Alex Koep delivered that combined no-hitter, it was St. Martin leaving Chaska Athletic Park

with the victory.

Porter started the game and pitched six innings without a hit, but left the game with a loss on the stat sheet. While Porter and Koep held the Martins without a hit, St. Martin managed to score the only run of the game. In the sixth inning, Kyle Lieser walked and moved to third base on a wild pitch before scoring on a sacrifice bunt from Bryan Schlangen to score the deciding run.

The Martins only needed the one run as

Scott Lieser pitched a complete-game shutout, striking out seven, allowing five hits and just one walk.

Porter pitched six hitless innings with 11 strikeouts. Koep, a draftee from Urbank, struck out four in two innings to complete the no-hitter for Fergus Falls, the second ever combined no-hitter in the history of the Class C State Tournament. There have only been 24 no-hitters overall in the tournament.

Jake Anderson led

the Hurricane offense with two hits, while Alex Hensch, Jack Hiedeman and Carter Thielke had one each.

The Martins take on the Watkins Clippers Saturday, Sept. 4 at 11 a.m. in Chaska.

MAPLE LAKE LAKERS 2 JORDAN BREWERS 0

With Maple Lake pitchers Ben Reilly and Eric Newman (draftee from Buffalo) combining for a three hit, 12 strikeout performance that shut out the Brewers, the

Lakers only needed one scoring inning to get past Jordan Saturday in Chaska. Reilly earned the win as the starter, pitching six innings, while Newman kept the shutout with three innings in relief pitching.

Maple Lake's Luke Fobbe got on base in the sixth with a single and scored on an RBI triple from Hunter Malachek, then Donnie Mavencamp doubled the lead with an RBI single. The two runs were all the Lakers needed to move on to the next

round.

Malachek and Mavencamp led the Lakers offense with a combined four hits and two RBIs. Fobbe and Ben Goetz each had a hit as well.

Jordan's Nate Beckman scattered six hits across eight innings with seven strikeouts and two earned runs. Beckman, Scott Hollingsworth and Jonathan Draheim each had a hit for the Brewers.

The Lakers take on the Alexandria Black Sox Saturday, Sept. 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Chaska.

Luxemburg erases 7-1 deficit with 10-run inning

After high-scoring game, Milroy, Sartell and New Ulm move on in close games

BY JAMES STITT
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LUXEMBURG BREWERS 13 ADA ATHLETICS 7

The Brewers overcame a shaky start with a monster inning late in the game that kicked off 12 unanswered runs that saw them erase a 7-1 deficit. Luxemburg entered the seventh inning with just three runs, but belted out eight to score 10 runs and flip the Sunday morning matchup upside down.

Reed Pfannenstien, Noah Grove, Sam Iten and Connor Clark strung together four consecutive hits to plate the first two runs of the rally, then an error resulted in a third run scoring. Luke Harren, Ethyn Fruth, kept the pressure on with three more hits and three more runs coming in. Pfannenstien, who's first at-bat of the inning came when the Brewers were down 7-1, returned to action with the game knotted at 7-7 and hit his second single of the inning. An error and a wild pitch put three more runs on the board and Iten capped the inning with an RBI single that put the Brewers up 11-7. Derrick Orth would later add two more runs with a two-RBI single in the eighth to put the final score at 13-7.

The Brewers needed the epic comeback after a hot start from the Athletics. Sunny Resnick, Blake

Fetting and Ethan Opsahl each hit an RBI single in the first inning to put Ada up 3-0, then Brett Fetting and Resnick both hit singles and scored on errors in the second inning to give the Athletics a 5-0 lead through two innings.

Reed Pfannenstien then took over pitching duties for Luxemburg to limit the Athletics to a pair of runs over the next 6.67 innings of play with nine strikeouts to allow the Brewers offense to pull off the comeback win.

Orth had two hits and four RBIs to lead the Brewers, while Iten and Clark had combined for four hits and four RBIs. Grove had three hits and two runs scored, and Harren had two and two.

The top of the order for Ada combined for 10 hits and six runs. Brett Fetting had two hits and three runs; Resnick had three hits, two runs and an RBI; Blake Fetting had two hits, two runs and an RBI; Opsahl had three hits and an RBI.

The Brewers take on the Waconia Lakers Friday, Sept. 3 at 7:30 p.m. in Chaska.

MILROY YANKEES 6 BEMIDJI BLUE OX 5

While the Blue Ox did their best to pull away from Milroy Sunday afternoon, the Yankees always found a way to respond to Bemidji's score, eventually earning a 6-5

comeback win in Waconia. The Blue Ox scored two runs in the first inning before the Yankees answered with a run in the second, then scores in the fourth in the fifth inning by Bemidji were equaled by Milroy to keep the Yankees within one run. A two-run seventh inning then completed the comeback to keep Milroy's season alive.

Cody Rutledge made the Yankees pay for a pair of early walks, plating Collin Rutledge and Mitch Hendricks on a double to put Bemidji up 2-0 in the first inning. Milroy's Branden Flock answered with an RBI double of his own to cut the deficit in half in the second inning.

Cody Rutledge drove in his third runner of the game in the fourth inning before another RBI double from the Yankees, this time from Derek Rasmussen, kept the deficit at one.

A two-run home run in the fifth by Caleb Manecke saw the Blue Ox again try to pull away from the Yankees, RBI singles from Matt Bauer and Aaron Mathiowetz to match the scoring output in the bottom half of the inning.

With Milroy's Nathan Deutz shutting the Blue Ox down the rest of the way in a 4.67 inning relief performance that saw only four hits, no walks and no

runs, the Yankees were finally able to pull ahead in the seventh. Singles from Andy Schmidt and Bauer paired with two Bemidji errors led to a couple Milroy runs crossing the plate, giving the Yankees a 6-5 lead they would not relinquish.

Bauer had two hits and two RBIs for Milroy, Mathiowetz had two RBIs on one hit, David Schmidt had two hits, Rasmussen had one hit and two RBIs.

Cody Rutledge and Manecke led the Bemidji offense with a combined four hits and five RBIs, while Collin Rutledge and Brazil Zuehlke also had multi-hit games with two each.

The Yankees take on the New Ulm Brewers Saturday, Sept. 4 at 7 p.m. in Chaska.

SARTELL MUSKIES 4 WANAMINGO JACKS 1

Wanamingo out-hit Sartell 6-4 Sunday in Waconia, but four errors doomed the Jacks as the Muskies found the winning runs in an inning that saw them tally no hits.

In the third inning, Adam Schellinger and Ethan Carlson both reached base on errors and Tim Burns walked to load the bases for the Muskies. Jace Otto then put the ball in play, resulting in two runs crossing the plate when Wanamingo's attempt to turn

a double play resulted in an error. With a stellar effort from Sartell's starter, those two runs were all the Muskies would need to advance, though Jake Sweeter would add another run when stealing home and Riley Ahrndt added a fourth run on a solo home run.

David Deminsky kept the Jacks cold Sunday afternoon, fanning 16 batters while allowing just one run. The Sartell starter earned the complete game win in just 96 pitches, 78 of them strikes (81 percent).

Andrew Deters had two of Sartell's four hits, while Schellinger and Ahrndt had one each. Otto and Ahrndt had the lone RBIs.

Alex Roosen and Brady Afinson each had two RBIs for Wanamingo, with Anfinson earning the lone RBI. Peder Sviggum and Aaron Bauer each had one hit, while Roosen scored the lone run.

Alex Roosen pitched all nine innings for the Jacks, striking out seven while allowing just four hits and two earned runs.

The Muskies take on the Bluffton Braves Friday, Sept. 3 at 7:30 p.m. in Waconia.

NEW ULM BREWERS 2 SPRING HILL CHARGERS 1

With Lambert draftee Nick Altermatt limiting the Chargers to just

one run Sunday night in Waconia, the Brewers only needed one scoring inning to keep their season alive. Altermatt struck out 12 while allowing just three hits and no earned runs or walks, earning the complete game win for New Ulm.

Spring Hill's starter was no slouch either, with just two earned runs in eight innings of work, meaning the Brewers needed to make the most of their opportunities.

New Ulm did just that in the fourth inning when Hunter Ranweiler and Wade French hit back-to-back singles. An error then loaded the bases, with Andrew Peters plating two runners on a single that proved to be the decisive at-bat.

Dylan Gertken scored the lone run for the Chargers, reaching on an error before a pair of wild pitches sent him across home plate.

Peters' two RBIs were the only ones in the game. French had two hits to lead all batters, while Peters, Hunter Ranweiler, Cole Ranweiler, Judd Davis and Justin Hoffmann each had one hit for New Ulm.

Eric Terres, Jamie Terres and Eric Schoenberg combined for the three Spring Hill hits.

The Brewers take on the Milroy Yankees Saturday, Sept. 4 at 7 p.m. in Chaska.

Crusaders win battle of top two teams in Class A

Ranked No. 1, Mayer Lutheran defeats No. 2 Minneota in volleyball opener

BY JAMES STITT
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With expectations high once again, the perennial powerhouse that is Mayer Lutheran volleyball kicked off the season at the Breakdown Side Out Classic in Hopkins, with the No. 1 ranked Crusaders taking on the No. 2

ranked Minneota Vikings. The two sides exchanged blows throughout the five-set match, with Mayer Lutheran taking sets one and three (25-20, 25-21) and Minneota responding with wins in set two and four (25-20, 25-20). Yet the Crusaders were able to find enough separation to win the tie-breaking

fifth set 15-10 to take the match 3-2.

The Crusaders, lead by captains Emma Lade, Lilly Wachholz and Julia Carns, should return another powerful attack.

"Offensively we will be strong but championships are won by defense," said coach Joelle Grimsley. "We will have to work hard at getting the ball

to our hitters by staying disciplined on defense."

Team Goals: "Learn throughout the season (journey), when we lose we are going to learn from it and make sure that by playoffs we have done everything we can do to continue to improve and be ready," said Grimsley. "Goals are to position ourselves

to play well and get to the state tournament and perform at a high level once we get there."

Season Outlook: "Play hard and stay healthy and injury free and that will give us the opportunity to be where we want to be," said Grimsley. "I am looking forward to these girls improving and gelling on the court."

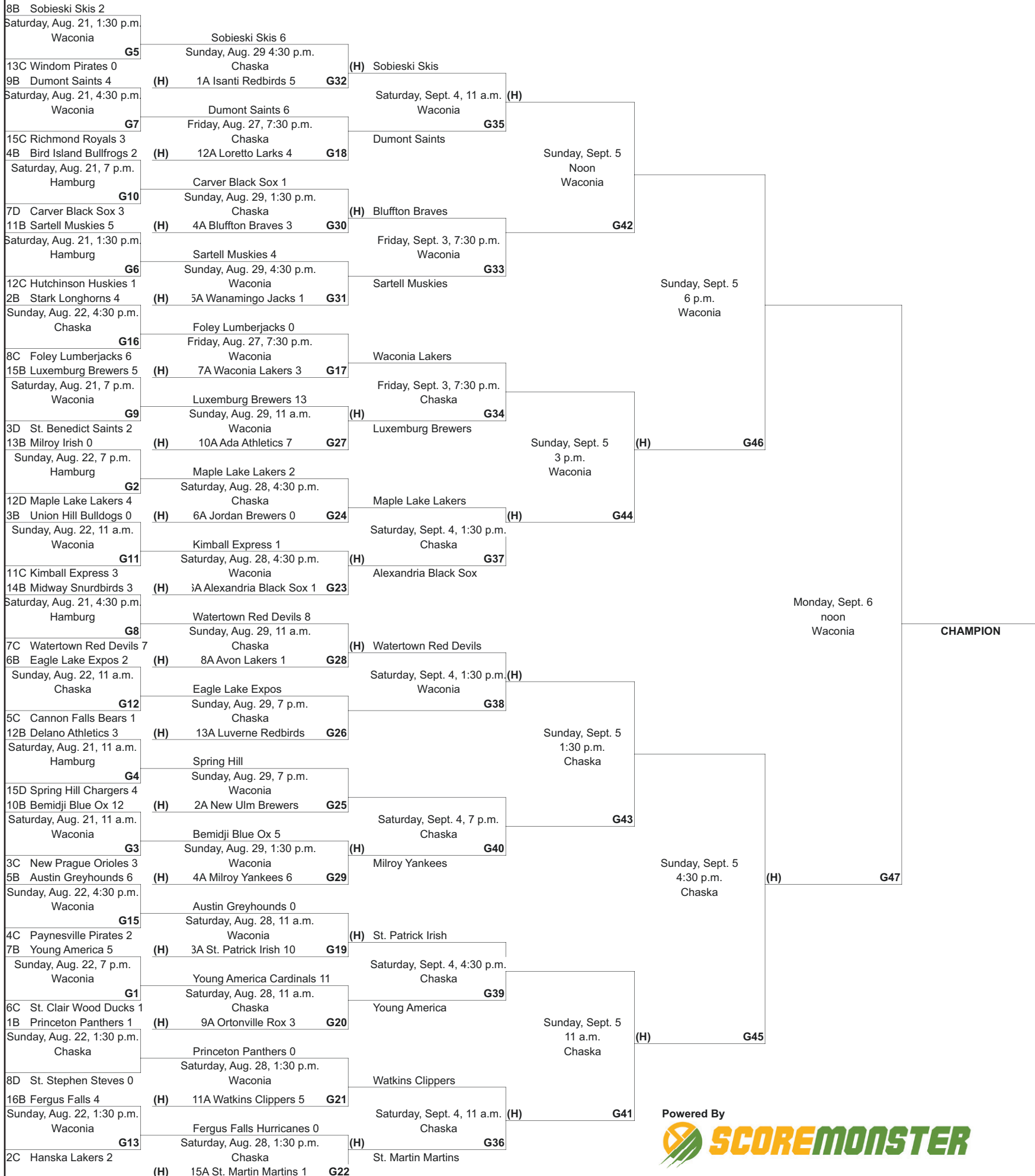


Emma Lade and the Crusaders return to play with the No. 1 ranking in Class A volleyball. (File photo)

2021 Class C Baseball State Tournament Bracket

Tournament Sites	
CITY	ADDRESS
Chaska	CHASKA ATHLETIC PARK 725 W. First St, Chaska, MN
Waconia	LION'S FIELD Oak Ave & Parkside Ln , Waconia, MN
Hamburg	HAWK FIELD 100 Sophia Ave., Hamburg, MN

Additional Information
Class C State Tournament Website
http://classc.leagues.mnbaseball.org/



Waconia downs Foley, Dumont defeats Loretto

BY JAMES STITT
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The Waconia grounds crew worked all day to prepare the field after the downpour of rain over the past few days, resulting in a Friday night matchup that delivered a great game for their efforts in the more than 600 fans in attendance. The Waconia grounds crew finished the day victorious over the weather and the Waconia baseball team was victorious as well, with the Lakers defeating the Foley Lumberjacks 3-0.

With Lakers pitcher Kodey Simon delivering a stellar performance on the mound with some good defensive plays behind him, the Waconia offense did not need to generate much to earn

the victory. Simon scattered four hits across nine innings while striking out five and walking one. Simon earned the complete-game win with 83 strikes on 110 pitches.

The Lumberjacks pitcher Ryan Chmielewski was also in command on the mound, pitching six scoreless innings out of the first seven while allowing just five hits and striking out eight.

Justin Schultz got a hit in Waconia's first at-bat before Chmielewski refused to allow another hit until the fifth inning, when the Lakers broke through in the fifth on back-to-back hits. Chris Bullis doubled in the lead-off spot and scored off the bat of Jake Hendricks to give Waconia what proved to be the winning run.

The Lakers then added some insurance runs in the eighth inning. Ronnie Olson, who delivered some highlight plays at second base got the offense going with a single and was joined on base by pinch hitter Robbie Smith. RBI singles from Derek Martin and AJ Friedrich then followed to give Waconia a 3-0 lead heading into the ninth.

Simon allowed a hit in the ninth, only the fourth one given up all game, but sat down the next three batters to earn the complete game win.

Waconia had seven hits, one each from Schultz, Martin, Bullis, Hendricks, Olson, Smith and Friedrich.

Drew Beier had two hits to lead the Lumberjacks, while Luis Massa and Mitchell Loegering

each had one.

The Lakers take on the Luxemburg Brewers Friday, Sept. 3 at 7:30 p.m. in Chaska.

DUMONT SAINTS 6 LORETTO LARKS 4

In a close game in Chaska Friday night, errors got the better of the Loretto Larks, as four errors helped the Dumont Saints build a 6-2 lead heading into the ninth. But the Larks fought to the end, scoring two runs in the ninth to put the tying run at the plate, only to fall just short of a comeback.

The Larks got on the board in the third, when Kent Koch hit a single, moved over on a walk to Tyler Maher and a grounder by Keenan Hodgkin, then scored on a wild pitch.

The Saints quickly responded in the next inning, when Jordan Roos singled and scored on a two-run home run by Matthew Thielen.

The Saints extended their lead in the sixth on three walks and an error, as Trent Bresland walked, Erik Deal got on base on an error, Paul Zach walked to load the bases and Jacob Ulrich walked to score a run and put Dumont up 3-1.

The Larks got one back in the bottom half of the inning as Keenan Hodgkin rounded the bases following a walk, stealing second before scoring on two passed balls.

Down just one run entering the final inning, disaster struck for Loretto as a walk and an error put two runners on with no outs. A pair of sacrifice

bunts led to the first run of the inning for Dumont to score, then another error sent two more Saints across to put the Larks down 6-2 in the final inning.

Loretto managed a pair of runs in the bottom of the ninth when Tyler Maher scored William Reschenberg on an RBI single and a wild pitch sent Koch home, but it was not enough to keep the Larks' season alive.

Roos had three of the Saints' seven hits, while Thielen's two-run home run resulted in his game-high two RBIs.

Maher had two hits and an RBI to lead the Larks, while Koch scored two runs on one hit.

The Saints move on to face the Sobieski Skis Saturday, Sept. 4 at 11 a.m. in Waconia.

Central football preview

Head coach: Gary Kosek

Assistant coaches: Dave Style, Darrin Fox, Jordan Voigt and Keegan Oak

Captains: Jake Kalkes (3 year starter at MLB), Ben Hoernemann (2 year starter CB, backup QB and will see time at WR), Hunter Neubarth (will play both ways at WR/Safety, Noah Strickfaden (QB and will play situationally in the secondary).

Strengths: "We want the players playing fast and not thinking," said Kosek. "Offensive linemen know their blocking rules and react. Defensive players know their alignment, assignment and react. Skill guys knowing their jobs. We want that to be our strength and work consistently on that in practice: players playing fast and never confused."

Goals: "We want to improve week to week and peak in mid October," said Kosek. "To do that we need to be better fundamentally this year. Our coaches have been working hard in positional



Noah Strickfaden returns for his third year under center to lead the Central Raiders. (Photo courtesy of Scott Helland)

groups to break down the 'jobs' each kid is responsible for. Football is truly the ultimate team game, it takes 11 guys on the field taking care of their 'job' to find success."

Season outlook: "Although we graduated a bunch of good football players and kids, we feel good about the leadership of our team," said Kosek. "We return 10-11 kids with varsity experience but will have a number of first year guys who are really eager to prove themselves. Starting at the QB position, we have Noah Strickfaden

set for his 3rd year starting. We expect big things from him and more importantly, he has high expectations. Jake Kalkes will lead our defense as a 3 year starter at middle linebacker."

District/section outlook: "There is a lot of good football in the area; our district and section come playoff time will be no different," Kosek said. "I think we have what it takes to be a good football team too. We have good reason to be optimistic, now we have the opportunity to go out and prove it."

Cross country alumni meet

BY JAMES STITT
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The Central cross country team hosted Lester Prairie/Mayer Lutheran and Glencoe-Silver Lake Aug. 28 for the annual 2021 Baylor Park Alumni Meet, with the Raider boys picking up where they left off.

Jake Druley and Mitchell Druley, who both qualified for the state meet last year, led a first-place effort for the boys. Jake finished

second with a time of 18 minutes, 9 seconds and Mitchell Druley was fourth (19:32). Gabe Michels finished sixth (19:44), Tyler Neubarth was eighth (21:15) and Aaron Druley was 13th (24:09).

Amanda Brinkman led the Central girls, finishing second with a time of 21:26, and was followed by Ella Mae Neaton (25:26, 7th), Josie Beneke (26:44, 11th), Lacy Buckentin (27:28, 14th) and Teagan Wenzel (29:51, 18th).

The Lester Prairie/Mayer Lutheran girls were led by Addison Hoof (21:36, 3rd), who was followed by Miranda Mallak (22:18, 4th), Jessa Heimerl (25:13, 6th), Brooke Heimerl (26:35, 10th) and Anah Lee (27:31, 15th).

The Lester Prairie/Mayer Lutheran boys were led by Connor Meyer (21:18, 9th), who was followed by Colby Reading (24:31, 15th), Andy Ruwersma (26:24, 17th), Josh Hecksel (27:24, 20th) and Luke Erdman (30:33, 24th).

WATERTOWN-MAYER SPORTS SCHEDULE						
www.kevinbutcher.com						
 Kevin Butcher 952-212-2374		 Go Royals!		 Edina Realty		 MLS
Day/Date	Cross Country	Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer	Girls Swimming	Volleyball	Football
Thurs., Sept. 2		@ New Prague, 7 pm	@ Orono, 5 pm		@ Mayer Lutheran, 7 pm	
Fri., Sept. 3	@ Maple Lake, 9 am					@ Foley, 7 pm
Sat., Sept. 4						
Mon., Sept. 6						
Tues., Sept. 7		Home vs. Big Lake, 5:15 pm	Home vs. Big Lake, 7:15 pm			
Wed., Sept. 8						