

Journal-Press SPORTS & SCHOOL NEWS

AMATEUR BASEBALL



JJ Johnson swings away in Sunday's 19-8 road win at Loretto. Johnson had three of the Bulldogs' 20 hits in the game. Buffalo defeated the Larks 23-1 just two games prior to Sunday's contest. (Photo by Rob LaPlante)

Bulldogs continue to light up scoreboard

Hits, runs keep coming; Dogs improve to 6-1

By Rob LaPlante
Sports Editor

Offense. Offense. Offense. If you're a fan of high-scoring baseball games, this year's version of the Buffalo Bulldogs is your team.

A 6-1 start to the season has included three victories this past week over Dassel-Cokato, and twice over Loretto.

The Bulldogs scored a combined total 49 runs over the three games, including a 23-1 home win Wednesday, June 1, against

the Larks. Amazingly, the 23 runs were two less than the previous game, where the Bulldogs won a 25-3 contest May 26 against Montrose/Waverly.

Against Loretto, Kai Brisk hit the team's second grand slam in as many games to give Buffalo a 13-1 lead in the bottom of the fourth inning. The Bulldogs scored five runs in the inning. It was one of four innings in the game where they scored five times, including a 5-0 lead after the first.

Jon Euerle pitched four innings to earn the win. The only blemish on the scoreboard for Euerle and the Bulldogs came in the top of the second on a solo homer from former Minnesota Twins player

Corey Koskie.

A combined 27 runs were scored in Sunday's rematch game at Arnold Klaers Field in Loretto. The Bulldogs jumped to a 7-1 lead after three, but a five-run fourth by Loretto closed the gap to one. Buffalo would eventually pull away for a 19-8 win, thanks to a two-run fifth and seventh innings, along with a pair of four-run innings in the eighth and ninth.

Evan Soeffker led a 20-hit performance by going 4-for-5 at the plate, with three runs scored, and five RBI. While there were no grand slams or homers in the game, Soeffker, Ethan Hansen, JJ Johnson, and Brett Renshaw each had doubles - Soeffker hitting

two.

The Bulldogs swept the season series with Loretto by a combined score of 42-9.

With all the offense this season, Manager Corey Braun credits his team for staying composed throughout some long innings and long days/nights at the ballpark. Sunday's game took three hours and 16 minutes to complete.

"It can be tough sometimes," Braun said. "You try and get everybody in and everybody to play. But it's nice to see us stay on it throughout the game. We're not just scoring 10 runs in one inning and

Bulldogs

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TRACK & FIELD

Eleven qualify for state

Two team records, nine champions emerge from Section 8AAA tournament

By Rob LaPlante
Sports Editor

Six males and five females from the Buffalo track and field squads qualified for this year's Class AAA state meet, which begins with the preliminary round Thursday, June 9, at St. Michael-Albertville High School.

Among the 11 qualifiers, nine ended up winning a section title.

Buffalo had three relays place first. Jadon Boots, Owen Herbst, James Dorado, and Jared Gregoire won the boys' 4x800 in a time of 8:00.92. It's the same four that placed eighth in last year's state meet at 8:07.67.

Herbst, Carson Giddings, Gregoire, and Boots also placed first in the 4x400. Herbst and Boots were two returning state participants from the same event a year ago.

Buffalo's distance runners also enjoyed personal success. Gregoire earned the section championship in the 800 run (1:55.53). Also advancing to state with second-place finishes were Boots in the 1,600 (4:31.27), Dorado in the 3,200 (9:50.42), and Carter Walker in the discus (152.08).

As a team, Buffalo's boys placed fourth in scoring with 86 points. Moorhead edged STMA 167 to 161.5 as section champions.

Walker and Giddings are two of five first-time state qualifiers, which also includes three females - Macie Guida, Allee Feldman, and Hanna Braun.

Shroyer qualified for state in three events. Guida, Feldman, Lauren Feddema, and Braun, each earned spots in two events. One meet after setting the girls' team record in the 400 (57.36), Shroyer broke her own record with a first-place finish in 57.18.

Shroyer also put her name in the record books, along with Feddema, Feldman, and Guida with a second-place time of 1:44.33 in the girls' 4x200.



A total of 11 members of this year's Buffalo track and field teams qualified for this year's Class AAA state tournament by finishing in the top-two spots of last week's Section 8AAA tournament that began Wednesday, June 1, at Sartell, and concluded Friday, June 3, at STMA. Pictured above are this year's state qualifiers (front row, left-right): Hannah Braun, Macie Guida, Brianna Shroyer, Lauren Feddema, Allee Feldman; (back row, left-right): James Dorado, Jared Gregoire, Carson Giddings, Jadon Boots, Owen Herbst, and Carter Walker. (Submitted photo)

The previous record was set in 2019 by Alexis O'Malley, Feddema, Emma Latcham-Reiter, and Katie Lavato in 1:45.13.

"The girls broke the record, and they did it with even a bad handoff of the baton, so that was impressive," said Head Coach Scott Palmer.

Shroyer, Feldman, Braun, and Feddema joined the boys as section champions of the girls' 4x400 in 4:01.21. Braun

was also section champion in the 800 (2:19.22). Guida placed second in the 200 (26.83).

Buffalo's girls also placed fourth in team scoring with 63 points. STMA ran away with the section title with 202.5. Brainerd finished second (112).

"We are well-represented at state this season," Palmer said. "We had a couple narrow misses, as well in other events."

Elsa Peterson was third

in the 300 hurdles (46.97). Feddema, Bri Bluiett, Peterson, and Guida placed third in the 4x100 (49.61). Collectively, Buffalo reached the podium (top-six) in 18 total events.

Including four alternates, Buffalo will send 15 total athletes to state. Palmer credits a couple factors for the strong representation.

"The increase in the number of athletes this year going out for track is huge, as well as having

quality kids to fill in different events," Palmer said. "The more kids and number of events you send to state gives you more of an opportunity to score in the team standings."

This marks the second-straight year STMA will host the state track and field meet. It's the first time it takes place over

Track & Field

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GIRLS GOLF

Buffalo saves best for last

By Rob LaPlante
Sports Editor

This year's Buffalo girls' golf team accomplished something that hasn't been done since the 2015-2018 Bison teams won four consecutive section titles.

Buffalo concluded its season with a sixth-place score of 751 in last week's Section 8AAA tournament at Rich Springs Golf Course in Cold Spring.

While the result wasn't a section title, the Bison's score of 374 on day one of the tournament on May 31 qualified them for the final round of play on June 1. It's the first time since 2018 they made the top-six cutoff as a team.

"It felt great," said senior Aspen Adams, who ended the two-day tourney with Buffalo's fourth-lowest total of 200. "It was awesome for all our hard work to pay off in the form of earning a spot on the second day."

Adams was one of four different Bison golfers to shoot a round under 100 over the two days. Her score of 98 on day two tied her with Anna Kugler for the third-low score. Kugler carded a 97 on day one for a two-day total of 195. Raegan Wurm shot an 86 on day one and 88 on day two for a 14th place overall finish of 174. Hayley Rohlin finished with an 89 and 93 to finish 21st at 182.

Wurm finished six spots back of Laura Syltje, of Detroit Lakes, for the state cutoff for individual state qualifiers. The top-six golfers not on the section championship team advanced to state. Syltje finished at 165.

Alexandria's Hannah Boraas led all golfers with a first-place finish at 12-over par 156. Buffalo's fifth and sixth golfers were Kendra Carey, who finished at 212. Natalie Mix shot 224.

Defending section and Class AAA state champion Alexandria overcame a seven-shot deficit after day one to pass Brainerd as team

Girls Golf

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BUFFALO TRIATHLON



The Graniteman stood tall at Sturges Park for the start of Sunday's Buffalo Triathlon. See more Page 13A. (Photo by Rob LaPlante)

First defeat ends season

Buffalo knocks off Orono; falls 19-6 in semis to Chanhassen

By Rob LaPlante
Sports Editor

The same game the Buffalo boys' lacrosse team got a key player back from injury, another key player went down.

Mitch Helmbrecht's end-to-end rush in the opening moments of last Thursday's Section 8 home game against Orono ended the night for one of Buffalo's top midfielders.

The injury didn't impact the final outcome, as No. 3 seeded Buffalo posted a 13-4 victory over the sixth-seeded Spartans. It did, however, impact the following game, a 19-6 semifinal road loss Monday at Chaska against

No. 2 Chanhassen. Owen Carlson made his return from a four-game absence due to injury and registered four goals and one assist against Orono.

Helmbrecht's injury occurred in the second minute of the opening quarter when he suffered a hard hit in the offensive zone. He left the field on crutches and was later diagnosed with a high ankle sprain.

"It was difficult to see Mitch go down like that," said junior defender Griffon Valli. "He's one of our top maddies with dodging and scoring. But I think our offense adjusted very well with him gone."

Buffalo defended more

than normal in the first half, but still led 3-0 after one quarter and 6-3 at half-time.

"The first half wasn't too bad," Valli said. "We were a little slow. We haven't played a game in over a week coming in. There were a couple dropped passes, but we recovered and showed it to them in the second half."

Buffalo possessed pretty much the entire third quarter and held the Spartans scoreless. Goals by Connor Youngquist, Charlie Jerde, and Carlson's third of the game gave the Bison a 9-3

Boys Lacrosse

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BOYS LACROSSE



Buffalo's Jack VanderKooi (right) attempts a move past an Orono defender in the Bison's 13-4 home playoff win last Thursday over the Spartans. Buffalo would suffer its first loss of the season in a 19-6 semifinal loss Monday to No. 3 seed Chanhassen. (Photo by Rob LaPlante)