

## SPORTS

Send your scores and story ideas to sports editor Martin Schlegel

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## BASEBALL

# TRIPP SIGNS

## *with Bemidji State*

BY MARTIN SCHLEGEL  
Sports Editor

Reese Tripp always wanted to play college baseball. From T-ball all the way through levels of machine pitch, Little League and summer ball, he knew he wanted to continue playing baseball after he graduated from Red Wing.

There were schools that reached out to Tripp about possibly playing football, but he had already made up his mind – baseball was the favorite.

After seeing several places, considering whether to play junior college or not, Tripp decided on Bemidji State. He signed his letter of intent to play for the Beavers earlier this month.

"I toured a lot of different schools. Looked at their facilities and college tours and what not. It came down to between (Bemidji State) or I was going to go JUCO with Iowa Central," Tripp said. "The difference between those two schools when I was touring the schools, when I was at Bemidji it felt like I already went there. I just fell in love. They have one of the best facilities I've seen. They have an old hockey arena that's all turf. It just suits me. It just felt like that was the place at the end of the day."

Now that the pressure to find a place to play after high school, Tripp said he feels at ease as practices begin for his final season at Red Wing.

"It was very stressful trying to find a school because you don't want to make that commitment be the wrong choice," Tripp said. "Once I finally committed and realized where I wanted to go, I just took a deep breath. There's not a lot of pressure on me anymore to try and get into a college."

Over the winter, Tripp



Reese Tripp (right) signed to play baseball at Bemidji State.

FILE PHOTO

played with Blizzard Baseball. In a series against IMG Academy in Florida, Tripp was validated for thinking he could compete in college.

IMG Academy boasts players like third-ranked in the MLB Draft rankings by MLB.com Elijah Green and two other top-100 prospects, Jackson Ferris (ranked 18th) and Brady

Neal (ranked 67th).

"These are going to be MLB players, and we stuck with 'em," he said.

Tripp joins 11 others from various locations to sign letters of intent to play for the Beavers. He doesn't know many of them well but is familiar with a few having played against or known

through others.

Reflecting for a moment on his high school career thus far, Tripp said having played multiple sports helped him greatly. Playing football in the fall and previously basketball, the physicality keeps you in shape. So too does the mental side of things.

"Being able to go out there

compete helps for when you're at the plate and miss a pitch or you miss a ground ball, I think that's big in the other sports that I play," Tripp said.

He's not sure what position will be open but was told there likely would be a corner infield and corner outfield opening. Whichever position he plays,

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## WEIGHTLIFTING

# Personal bests



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Red Wing weightlifter Oliver Jensen records a new clean and jerk record of 103 kg.

## Red Wing weightlifters compete in championships

BY MARTIN SCHLEGEL  
Sports Editor

Four members of the Red Wing Weightlifting Club qualified for the Minnesota High School Weightlifting Association State Championships. Oliver Jensen, Isaiah Jensen, Noah Montgomery and Cameron Wichser each represented in the championships.

The event was held at Moorhead High School March 12.

Montgomery came into the championships ranked fourth at 61 kg body weight, under 16 years old in the final rankings of the winter season. Oliver Jensen held the No. 1 position at 67 kg, under 16. Isaiah Jensen ranked fourth in the 61 kg, 16-plus. Cameron Wichser came in with the third ranking at 81 kg, 16-plus.

In a qualifying event Feb. 19 in Lakeville, Oliver Jensen set a new Minnesota state high school record in the clean and jerk by lifting 103 kg. His total between the two lifts in that event,

See Competition Page B2

## FOOTBALL



FILE PHOTO

Lake City's Justin Wohlers has committed to attend Winona State next year. He is unsure of his plans for his freshman football season.

# Following his heart, Wohlers commits to Winona State

## Teammate Dather commits to River Falls

BY MARTIN SCHLEGEL  
Sports Editor

After a fantastic football season, Justin Wohlers began receiving offers to play football. He then was hopeful he'd receive some to play basketball as well. As the basketball season elapsed, Wohlers began having more conversations with his parents.

Around the midpoint of the basketball season, he was realizing where he needed to be.

"The more I thought about it, my heart told me I needed to be under the lights on the field," Wohlers said.

Next decision was where to play. Wohlers had four offers to play football and decided to

commit to Winona State.

The campus feel, the business program and the growing football program all interested Wohlers.

He especially liked the coaching staff. Brian Bergstrom, hired in December, was previously the defensive coordinator at South Dakota

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## WOMEN'S HOCKEY

# Heise among three finalists for Kazmaier Award

BY MARTIN SCHLEGEL  
Sports Editor

Last week the USA Hockey Foundation announced the three finalists for the 2022 Patty Kazmaier Award. The list was trimmed from 10 players to three. Lake City's Taylor Heise was among the three finalists. The other two are senior forward Gabbie Hughes from the Minnesota Duluth and Ohio State's senior defenseman Sophie Jaques.

Heise, a senior forward with the University of Minnesota and Red Wing graduate, led the NCAA in points with 66 (29 goals, 37 assists) in 39 games played. She ranks second in goals and tied for fifth in assists.

In the past month, Heise was named First Team All-American, WCHA Player of the Year and WCHA Offensive Player of the Year.

The Kazmaier Award is given out to the top player in NCAA Division I women's hockey. The award winner will be announced on the NHL Network 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 26.

Readers can reach Martin Schlegel at [mschlegel@ourourkemediagroup.com](mailto:mschlegel@ourourkemediagroup.com).



PHOTO BY BRAD REMPEL / GOPHER ATHLETICS

Taylor Heise (front left) from Lake City, and Red Wing graduate, is a top-3 finalist for the top award given to Division 1 women's hockey.

## SPORTS CALENDAR

## SATURDAY, MARCH 26

## Baseball

Ellsworth at Elmwood-Plum City (scrimmage), 11 a.m.

## Softball

Lake City at Austin (scrimmage), 8 a.m.

TBD vs Goodhue (scrimmage) (Rochester Sports Stadium), 7 p.m.

## MONDAY, MARCH 28

## Baseball

PEM at Z-M (scrimmage), 4 p.m.

## TUESDAY, MARCH 29

## Baseball

Ellsworth at New Richmond, 4:30 p.m.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 31

## Softball

Ellsworth at Red Wing (scrimmage), 5 p.m.

Stewartville at Goodhue, 5 p.m.

## FRIDAY, APRIL 1

## Softball

Z-M vs multiple schools at Dundas Dome (scrimmage), 4 p.m.

## Track and Field

Z-M at PEM, 4:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, APRIL 2

## Baseball

Lake City hosting invitational, 10 a.m.

Dates, times and locations subject to change



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Red Wing weightlifter Cameron Wichser lifts 93 kg in snatch at the state championships on March 12.

## COMPETITION PAGE B1

184 kg, also set a new state record.

"He's not far from going after the snatch record as well," head coach John Drewes said. "All these kids have been diligent over the last few years about regular, goal-oriented training, and it has paid off."

At the state championships, Montgomery finished in fourth place with his best lifts of 56 kg for snatch and 72 kg for clean and jerk to give him a total of 128 kg, a new personal best. The winner in his class was Caleb Grawe of Northfield who lifted a total of 151 kg.

Oliver Jensen took first place in his class. His successful lifts were well above the others in his weight class with winning lifts of 82 kg for snatch and 104 kg for clean and jerk for a total of 186 kg. Once again, he set new state records in clean and jerk and total weight, breaking his own record set the month prior.

Isaiah Jensen ended in fourth place. He had lifts of 60 kg in snatch and 90 kg in clean and jerk for a total of 150 kg. The winner, Zach

Frederich from Lakeville South, lifted 165 kg total.

Jensen had near identical results in the clean and jerk. The difference was in snatch.

"What kept Isaiah out of contention for a medal was that the other three ahead of him each snatched well over his 60 kg," Drewes said.

Wichser had won at the state championships the previous year and moved up to the 16-plus age group. He earned third place this time, lifting 93 kg in snatch and 118 kg in clean and jerk for a total of 211 kg. First place went to Mitchel Myers of Lakeville South who lifted a total of 240 kg, the state record holder in the weight class.

"This all came out as I had hoped. One could not expect more from these guys. Each one had personal best lifts," Drewes said. "Other major players in the MNHSWO such as Northfield, Burnsville, Cannon Falls, Lakeville South, Moorhead, Little Falls, etc. had far more qualified for this event than we did, but our four will stack up quite nicely against the best four from any of those much larger school programs."

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## WOHLERS PAGE B1

State University. Offensive coordinator Isaac Fruechte, who previously coached the offense at Northern State working with the quarterbacks and wide receivers as well. Both coaches made the decision much easier for Wohlers as he believes the transition will be seamless.

"They want to run a spread offense. It's a lot of what we (Lake City) did," he said of the comfortability.

Wohlers had to weigh which program was going to be a good fit for his situation. He'll be recovering from an ACL tear this spring and summer, possibly into the fall as well.

"What school is going to take me under their wing the best?" Wohlers asked himself. He said he has a lot of trust

and belief in the program. He may explore sitting out in the fall and take a medical redshirt. A lot of what might happen or when is undetermined at this point, but Wohlers is confident he'll be supported well at Winona State and can succeed at the next level.

### Dather commits

Lake City's Zach Dather committed to University of

Wisconsin-River Falls, joining teammate Jordan Huth as new incoming commits. Dather was a speedy receiver and tight end for the Tigers, catching 23 passes for 337 yards and four touchdowns.

River Falls is coming off a program-record season for wins with nine and ended ranked 20th in Division III football dot com poll.

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Tripp said he's comfortable in any of those spots having played right field and third base often.

Bemidji State has begun its 2022 season and is currently 3-14 overall. The Beavers play in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. Red Wing teammate and senior pitcher Andrew Ball signed his letter of intent in November to play for Augustana, also a part of the NSIC.

Red Wing began practices and are scheduled to begin the season in Austin for a doubleheader April 9. Tripp said he, like many others on the team, are looking forward to seeing their potential from last season carry over.

"I think if everyone stays healthy and we get after it every day, we have a very good baseball team that will compete long into June," Tripp said. "Hopefully, we can do something in the state tournament."

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