Sports

Pierz girls end incredible season with a second place finish

Sports Editor mcrecord.sports@apgecm.com

The Pierz girls basketball team traveled to Brainerd to face the Pequot Lakes Patriots, March 11, in the section 7AA Championship Game.

The Pioneers fought hard on the neutral court, but lost 70-54.

The Pioneers were on fire to start the game, scoring the first eight points to give them an early lead, all by Katie Leidenfrost, but the Patriots started playing aggressive defense.

Pequot Lakes forced a number of turnovers after that, to narrow the score to

Pierz had a hard time getting the ball down the court due to the aggressive style of defense the Patriots displayed, having to pass the ball multiple times before getting to half-court.

Despite the Patriots' stout defense, the Pioneers kept their lead for the first part of the first half, but 34-28, but the Patriots were and they responded to with eventually the PL defense fouled and drained both of would get lucky and steal the free throws. the ball, quickly closing the

Pioneer Kiara Olesch hit a evened it out, scoring two of beautiful 3-pointer to try to their own right after. give her team a more comfortable lead, but the Patriots responded by going on a 5-point run to take their first back into the game, point by lead of the game, 18-15.

ramp up their aggressiveness on defense, pressing them as soon as they could.

Alyssa Sadlovsky was able to get open and sink a 3-pointer to tie the game, 3-pointer, in an attempt to

let up on the defense, forcing immediately matched it with another turnover on the en- one of their own, making suing possession and scor- the score 52-33. ing on a drive to the basket for two points.

After each team exseveral more too aggressive. changed points, and the first half was winding down, the Patriots 54, with the Pioneers plac- ping said. "When you spend held a 31-23 lead.

It was a wild finish to the 7AA tournament. first half. Olesch scored on the Patriots responded with out the season.

The Pioneer girls basketball team with the second place plague after the March 11 game against Pequot Lakes. Team members include front row (from left): Ashley Kimman, Britney Schommer, Kiara Olesch, Katie Leidenfrost, Kenna Otte, Alyssa Sadlovsky, Lyndsey Strohmeier and Head Coach Matt Poepping. Back row: Mackenzi Mitchell, Samantha Brau, Emma Walcheski, Kara Bakke, Cameryn Herold, Kyla Krych, Kaleah Olesch, Lily Riley, Madelyn Gaffke, Assistant coach Jeremy Monson, Elissa Pawlu, Assistant Coach Becky Herman and Assistant Coach Scott Herold.

their own 2-pointer and

Olesch scored again, on a With the score 13-12, two points. But the Patriots

The half would end with the score, 30-38.

point, but needed to come The Patriots tried to out firing in the second half to make up the ground.

That was not the case, as the Patriots came out firing, scoring nine straight points.

Sadlovsky sank get the Pioneers back into The Patriots still did not the game, but the Patriots

> The Pioneers were unable to do much to close the gap, the Patriots' defense was just

The final score was 70ing second in the section as much time with these kids

Head Coach Matt Poep-

"I will always remember a free throw. Then Olesch this team. Everything that sank a 3-pointer, making it was thrown at them this year a positive attitude," Poepping said.

"Outsized on almost evdrive to the basket, scoring ery night, they consistently out hustled and outworked opponents. We ran up against a great Pequot Lakes team tonight, and give credit to them, they played and The Pioneers inched shot the ball well tonight," Poepping said.

> In Pierz' final game, it was only fitting that the team's seniors, Olesch and Leidenfrost, were two of the three top scorers for the Pio-

Olesch was tied with Sadlovsky with 15 points, and Leidenfrost, was right behind both of them, with 12.

Coach Poepping praised both of his seniors for being an integral part of the team's playoff run.

"Kiara and Katie will be missed, they are special leaders and great ladies to have in our program," Poepas coaches do they almost feel like your own. I hope another drive to the basket ping praised his team for that bond never breaks and resulting in a 2-pointer, but how they fought all throught they continue to come back and feel like they are part of the Pierz girls basketball program."

It was the first time since 2007 that the Pioneers girls basketball team had made it to the finals.

The Pioneers finished the game this year, the Pioneers place finish.

ing loss in the championship

season with an impressive are primed to make a return 23-7 record and a second next year, with coming back most of their players, hope-Despite the heartbreak- fully to win it all.



Pioneers' Kiara Olesch (3) making a layup over Pequot Lakes defender, Morgan Eckes (15), in the championship game.



Flyers Tyler Olson (middle) on the first place podium after winning state for the third year in a row, in the 109kg class with a 101kg Snatch and a 135kg Clean and Jerk.

Flyers weightlifters travel to state, Olson three-peats as state champion

By BLAKE BARTELS Sports Editor

mcrecord.sports@apgecm.com

The Little Falls weightlifting team competed at High School, March 12, and second or third.

won state in the 109kg class, finished in second place, and with a 101kg Snatch and ninth-grader Micah Laska a 135kg Clean and Jerk. finished in third place. With that victory, Olsen has claimed the state champion qualifying and winning three years in a row.

derson, earned a second complishments from this place finish, while Lindy Welinski and Maizee Kathrein earned a third place fin- performance next season.

The JV weightlifters earned a second place title in state as a team, behind Lakeville South.

Tenth grader Emma the state meet at Moorhead Goertz placed third. Ninth graders Avery Selinski and performed very well, with Ryan Mikkelson both finmany lifters placing first, ished with a first place victory. Ninth-graders Brody The Flyers' Tyler Olson Lutzke and Bode Kapsner

With so many lifters state, it seems difficult for Fellow Flyer, Avery An- the Flyers to top their acseason, but they will work to try to top their incredible





216 SE 1st Street

Little Falls, MN 56345

(320) 632-2345

Sports

Pioneer boys take down EG, fall to Esko in the quarterfinals

By BLAKE BARTELS Sports Editor mcrecord.sports@apgecm.com

The Pioneer boys basketball team hosted the Evof the section 7AA playoffs.

The Pioneers trounced their opponent in a 54-37

oneers in scoring, with 11 each.

Virnig went a perfect 5-of-5 on field goals,, all of them coming on two points, as well as retrieving five rebounds.

Pierz moved on to the where it faced the Esko Eskomos in Hermantown, March 12.

Unfortunately for the Pioneers, the Eskomos were too much to handle, and they lost handily, 103-53.

games of the season, the 26 games were decided by Pioneers gave up the most a single digit. Even though points all season.

His brother Ian Oberfeld, each one of them."

was right behind him with 12 points.

Kahl praised his team's performance this year.

"I'm proud of our boys eleth Gilbert Golden Bears, for sticking it out during the March 10, in the first round tough times and never giving up," Kahl said. "I want to thank our seniors Andy Winscher, Ben Virnig and Zach Jones for being great Ben Virnig and Noah leaders. Those boys played Oberfeld both led the Pi- their hearts out and I cannot thank them enough. Also, I want to thank my coaching staff - Andy Leidenfrost, Dylan Pittman and Marcus Artner. They are great coaches and even better people."

The Pioneers played in section 7AA quarterfinals, many games that were nailbiters or close finishes. But, they came away with a loss more than they would have liked to.

"I have never coached a team before that played in so many close games," Kahl In one of their toughest said. "Fifteen out of our we didn't win all of those Noah Oberfeld led the games, I hope our boys Pioneers in scoring, with 16. learned something from

make the team tougher next

games by single digit points, their season with a 10-17 extend their luck to make a ing on getting better each Pierz Head Coach Joe but Kahl believes it will only record. They played well in deep playoff push. the first round of the play-

The Pioneers finished Bears, but were unable to starts the off-season focus-

Pierz looks to make it offs, upsetting the Golden even further next year, as it



Submitted photo

Booster Club hosts successful 'Lindy Taco Challenge'

The second annual Little Falls Lindy's Dance Team Booster Club Taco Challenge was held March 10, at the Falls Ballroom. The judge's choice winner was Sanchez Burrito, with the people's choice winner being the Falls Ballroom. The third annual Lindy Taco Challenge will be held in March of 2023. Pictured with the Lindy Taco Challenge traveling trophy are (from left): 2022-23 Lindy's Dance Team captains Emma Hershey and Ella Hershey, Sanchez Burrito owners Yunior Sanchez and Fredi Valle, 2022-23 Lindy's Dance Team captains Abby Hershey and Paige Fellbaum.



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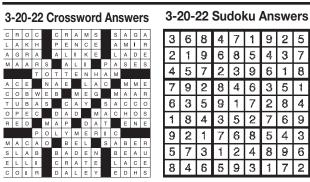


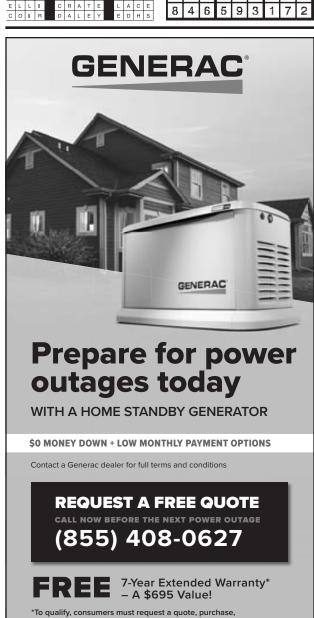
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Pierz native wins NCWA national wrestling title

Pierz native Brenna Andres, left, won the National Coaches Wrestling Association (NCWA) National Wrestling Title and is shown with Coach Lou Orr. Representing Winona State Wrestling Club, she traveled to Allen, Texas, and came away with the title after winning three straight matches. Andres is seeded fifth at 116-pounds opened up with a (4:12) pin over Jasmin Soclopez Ottawa-Arizona, in the semi-final round she defeated Mikayla Jardine (#1 seed) of Big Bend CC 7-1, then in the finals she won 8-2 over Kira Emma Texas-Arlington (#2 seed). Andres also won the Great Lakes Regional Qualifier in Toledo, Ohio, to qualify for the national tournament.





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Congratulations to the

Flyer Olympic Weightlifting Team - competed at the state meet at Moorhead HS on March 12

The JV Lifters (Boys and Girls combined) earned 2nd place in state as a team behind Lakeville South



10th grader Emma Goertz -**3rd Place**

9th Grader Avery Selinski -1st Place - State Champion

9th Grader Rylan Mikkelsen -1st Place - State Champion 9th Grader Micah Laska -**3rd Place**

9th Grader Brody Lutzke -

2nd Place

8th Grader Bode Kapsner -2nd Place

Varsity

Tyler Olson - State Champion for the 3rd year in a row -109kg Class, 101kg Snatch, 135kg Clean & Jerk Maizee Kathrein earned a

3rd Place finish Avery Anderson earned a

2nd Place finish Lindy Welinski earned a

3rd Place finish.

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