

Sports

Pioneers keep playoff hopes alive after wins over Pillager and Melrose

By BLAKE BARTELS  
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The Pioneers baseball team faced Mora at home, May 26, and came away with a narrow 7-6 victory. Ben Virnig recorded three RBIs in just one hit. Kirby Fischer recorded two hits on three at-bats, one being a double. He scored once and drove in a run. Reese Young took the mound for five innings. He struck out eight batters and walked six. He gave up three earned runs on one hit. The Pioneers then faced the Pillager Huskies, Tuesday, May 31, getting a 7-0 shutout victory in the first game of the Section 6AA Tournament. Virnig led his team in RBIs again, with two. In four at-bats, he recorded two doubles, a single and a score. Fischer recorded two hits, both doubles, on two at-bats, as well as two scores and a stolen base. Andy Winscher pitched for the Pioneers, striking out 12 batters, walking two and giving up just one hit. The Pioneers moved on to the next round of the tournament, where they played Melrose, Wednesday,



(060522-PierzBaseball)

Pierz's first baseman, Ben Virnig (right), holds a runner from Melrose at first during the Pioneers' 10-9 victory, Wednesday, June 1.

June 1, in St. Cloud. It came down to the final inning, but the Pioneers held off the Dutchmen in a 10-9 win. The Pioneers scored four runs in the first inning, but the Dutchmen responded with five in the second and three more in the fourth. The Pioneers managed

to chip away at their opponent, gradually closing the lead. With the game on the line and the Pioneers down by one, they scored two runs in the bottom of the seventh for the go-ahead win. At the plate, Fischer recorded two hits on four at-bats. He drove in two runs and scored once. Jeremy

Bingesser drove in two runs after landing one hit. Virnig finished the game as the winning pitcher after pitching 1.3 innings. Bingesser pitched the other 5.66 innings. Following the win, the Pioneers were back in St. Cloud, Thursday, June 2, for their next playoff game.

Staff photo by Blake Bartels

Patriots crush Braves in first playoff game

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The Upsala/Swanville Patriots baseball team hosted Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa, May 26, beating the Jaguars 6-4. Riley Johannes recorded two hits on three at-bats, a double and a home run. Bryce Binek drove in two runs on one hit, as well as a score. On the mound, Micah Ripplinger struck out one batter, walked two and gave up just two runs, one earned, on three hits. The Patriots improved to 18-2, and faced the Benson Braves in the 6A Quarterfinals, Tuesday, May 31. The Patriots ran away with the game, winning 10-0.



(6-5-22 USA Baseball 1)

The Patriots' Jeremy Mugg touches home plate after his three-run home run, with his teammates waiting to celebrate behind him.

If the Patriots had any nerves in their first playoff game, they didn't show it. After getting three quick outs, the Patriots took the plate. Shane Lambrecht hit a double into right field to drive in the team's first run. Cooper Thieschafer followed it up with another double into right field, putting runners on second and third. Tyson Leners took first after being hit by a pitch, loading the bases. Luke Harren hit a line drive past the infield, driving in two runs and making it to second base, giving the Patriots a 3-0 lead before they had one out. Jeremy Mugg took the plate and crushed the ball, sending it over the fences by over 50 feet, for a three-run home run.

With the Patriots up 6-0 early, it seemed that there were no nerves at all. "It's always good to put up six runs in the first," Head Coach Adam Gerads said. "It helps defensively, too. You get a six run lead, you can relax and play better." The Patriots kept the Braves from getting in scoring position for the first two innings. It wasn't until the third that the Braves had a runner reach second base. But the home team didn't let them get any farther. A ground ball to the shortstop, Levi Lampert, held the runner at second. Lampert gunned the ball to Mugg, the first baseman, for the out. Mugg saw that the runner at second was trying to make it to third, so he threw the ball across the diamond to Harren at third for a double play to end the inning. The Patriots scored one run in the fourth, courtesy of a wild pitch, and two more in the fifth, courtesy of Binek and Lambrecht. Mugg drove in the final run of the night in the sixth, to end the game 10-0. Mugg had the best performance at the plate. He recorded one hit but drove in four runs, including the home run. "He's got that raw power," Gerads said. "When he hits the ball, he hits it hard and it's good to see that ball go over the fence." Harren and Lambrecht drove in two runs on three hits. Harren also scored twice. On the mound, Rip-



(6-5-22 USA Baseball 2)

Luke Harren runs to third after a hit to left field in Tuesday's 10-0 win over Benson.

plinger pitched for the first three innings, giving up just one hit. He struck out five batters and walked one. The Patriots played their

Staff photo by Blake Bartels

Patriots' Mettler and Young qualify for state

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The Upsala/Swanville Area track and field team traveled to St. John's University, Wednesday, June 1, in competition for state. The Patriots had two athletes qualify for state, senior Nicholas Mettler and sophomore Alyssa Young. Mettler won the discus with a toss of 137' 9". His throw was over 10 feet farther than his competition. Mettler also finished 13th in the shot put, throwing the rock for 40' 5 3/4".

Alyssa Young had the second best performance in the triple jump, with a jump of 34' 3.5". Young broke her own team record as well as earning a trip to state.

Young also finished seventh in the 100 hurdles, with a time of 17.89. She also finished ninth in the 100 prelims, with a time of 13.46, but was unable to advance to the finals.

Joseph Guthrie placed third in the long jump with a jump of 20' 5" and fifth in the high jump, clearing 5' 9". Guthrie was just five inches shy of tying for first place in the long jump.

Madison Tschida finished the meet with a couple of sixth place finishes, in the 100, with a time of 13.22, and the 200, with a time of 27.76.

Mettler and Young will travel to St. Michael-Albertville High School, Friday, June 10, to compete in the state tournament.

Yourczek, Vannurden, Carlson and Walberg headed to state

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The Royalton track and field team competed at St. John's University, Wednesday, June 1. Four Royals athletes advanced to state, Mya Yourczek, James Vannurden, Aurora Walberg and Connor Carlson.

For the girls, Yourczek qualified in the triple jump and the shot put. She had the best performance in the triple jump, with a jump of 34' 4 1/4". She took first by 3/4 of an inch. Yourczek placed second in the shot put, with a throw of 35' 11 3/4", just shy of first by six inches.

Walberg placed fourth in the high jump, but hit the state qualifying mark, with a height of 5' 1". Her jump was just two inches out of first place.

For the boys, Vannurden took first in the high jump, clearing 6' 1", and setting a new personal record.

Carlson ran the fastest time in the 400, finishing in 52.23, edging out St. Cloud's Jacob Eickhoff, by .08 seconds.

The Royals qualifiers will travel to compete in the state tournament, Thursday and Friday, June 9-10.

This Week in Record Sports June 5, 2022



Photos captured by Blake Bartels, Sports Editor

Golf

**Little Falls Women's**  
•WEEK 4, MAY 31 — Morning Division: Low gross, Kae Holmen 44; low net, Kae Holmen 28. Closest to the pin #6, Kae Holmen; low putts, Kae Holmen 15. Team leaders: 1. Happy Hackers; 2. Walkie Talkies; 3. Golf Buddies. Evening Division: Low gross, Jessica Warzecha 44; low net, LaRae Bjorge 33. Longest putt

#5, Carmen Johnson; Closest to the pin #6, Carin Bzdok. Team leaders: 1. River Bums; 2. Par Pirates; 3. Chip n' Nails and Mulligans Please (tie).  
**Canadian Cup**  
•WEEK 4, JUNE 1 — 18 hole low gross, Brian Mackinac 76; low net, Brent Schulte 69. Northeast low gross, Dean

Erdman 35; low net, Eric Bell 33; Nine-hole southwest low gross, Ryan McDuffee 37; low net, Kyle Hoggarth 33; Closest to the pin #3, Ethan Ballou, pin #13, Jordan Hansel. Longest putt #9, Tom McQuillan. Longest putt #14, John Stumpf. Closest to the pin on drive #2, Justin Piotrowski; closest to pin on drive #18, Jason Dreiling. Sandbaggers of the Week: Kyle Hoggarth and Eric Bell.

**Thursday Seniors**  
•JUNE 2 — First place: Gary Gruber, Glen West, Dewey Meyer. Second place: Tom West, Dave Lundeen, Ken Sczublewski, Dan Marquart. Closest to pin #6, Gary Gruber. Longest putt #9, Tony Kummer.



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Sports

Morris, Brezinka and Kimman earn Section 5A titles, advance to state

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The Pierz track and field team traveled to St. John's University, Wednesday, June 1, in competition for state. The Pioneers had three athletes qualify for state, Andrew Morris, Kolby Brezinka and Ashley Kimman.

For the boys, Morris finished as the 5A Section Champion in the pole vault, clearing 12' 6", beating out his competition by six inches.

Brezinka earned the 5A Section Champion title in the shot put, throwing the rock for 48' 3 3/4". His throw was eight inches farther than his competition.

Kimman arguably had the best performance of the meet for the girls, earning the Section 5A Champion title in the high jump, 100 hurdles and the 300 hurdles.

In the high jump, Kimman cleared 5' 3". In the 100 hurdles, she won in a near photo finish, just .04 seconds ahead of the second place finisher, with a time of 15.26. In the 300 hurdles, she ran a 47.21, .19 faster than the second fastest time.

The boys took Section 5A second place as a team and the girls took fourth as a team.

The Pioneers 5A Section Champions will travel to compete in the state tournament, Thursday and Friday, June 9-10.

Flyers take sixth, Pioneers, eighth in Cardinal invite

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The Little Falls and Pierz and boys golf teams traveled to Brainerd, Tuesday, May 31, to perform in the Cardinal Invite.

Out of 15 teams, the Flyers took sixth, with a total of 342 strokes, and the Pioneers placed eighth, with a total of 352 strokes. Pequot Lakes took first with a 309.

For the Flyers, Richie Varriano finished in 16th, with an 82. Nathan Boser took 21st, with an 84.

Tying for 28th was Nathan Kray and Luka Avery, who both finished with an

88. Right behind them was Cullen Moe, who finished in 33rd for 89 strokes.

Hayden Johnson took 48th, finishing in 93 strokes.

For the Pioneers, Logan Herold finished in eighth place, with a 79. Lance Otremba was right behind him in 10th, with a stroke count of 80.

Alex Banick finished with a 94, to place 51st. Jacob LeBlanc was 61st, finishing with a 99. Right behind him was Connor Gotvald, who took 64th, with 100 strokes.

Tyler Theis rounded out the scoring for the Pioneers, taking 70th, with 104 strokes.

Cardinals beat CGB in semi-final play

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The Upsala Cardinals softball team hosted Brandon/Evansville, May 26, beating the Chargers 6-1 in the Section 6A Tournament.

At the plate, the Cardinals spread it around on the stat sheet. Molly Leners, Isabel Ripplinger, Abby Klein, Taylor Soltis and Madalin Koetter all drove in a run. Brenna Graves and Ripplinger hit triples.

On the mound, Isabelle Leners pitched seven innings. She struck out 11 batters, walked two and gave up one run on two hits.

Right after their win over the Chargers, they played the New York Mills Eagles and beat them 10-1.

Molly Leners recorded three RBIs on two hits, including a double and two scores. Roske, Ripplinger and Isabelle Leners all recorded two RBIs as well.

Ripplinger hit a double and a triple, Isabelle Leners hit a triple and Roske hit a double.

Isabelle Leners also pitched seven innings, striking out 13 batters and walking two. She gave up just one unearned run on one hit.

They moved on to face Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley, Wednesday, June 1, where they came away with a 3-2 victory.

It was a defensive battle, as the Cardinals only mustered three hits to the Wolverines' seven, but Upsala managed to do more despite having fewer hits.



Submitted photo

FAB supports Little Falls Ski Club with a \$10,000 donation for a groomer

The Flyer Athletic Boosters (FAB) donated \$10,000 to go toward a groomer for the Little Falls High School Ski Club. On hand for the donation were front row (from left): Jon Vetter, Conner Grant, Alexander Oberton, Ethan Yorek, Elizabeth Ahlin and Coach Mattia Hendrickson. Back row: Tim Bjorge, Steve Bell, Allison White, Debra Yliniemi-Ahlin, Greg Rutten, Kolbi Grant, Molly Nelson, Dr. Christopher Bell and Janine Johnson.

Sobieski's record stays perfect at 5-0

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The Sobieski Skis shut out the Pierz Bulldogs 10-0, May 29, in Victory League action. The Skis held the Bulldogs to just one hit while they recorded 12.

Alex Gwost hit a three-run home run. Dan Marod recorded a home run as well as a double to drive in two total runs.

Jake Kapphahn pitched four innings for the Skis, striking out three batters and not allowing a single hit.

The Skis played the Riverdogs, May 30, crushing them in an 11-1 victory.

The Skis recorded three home runs, from Collin Eckman, Dusty Parker and Kapphahn. Parker and Kapphahn recorded four RBIs each.

Gwost pitched four innings for the Skis, striking out five batters and walking four. He gave up one run on two hits.

Sobieski improved to 5-0 as they traveled to Flensburg to face the Falcons, Sunday, June 5, at 12:00 p.m.

Rebels get two in a row

The Fort Ripley Rebels notched two more wins. Their first was a 10-7 victory against the St. Wendel Saints, Sunday, May 29.

Riley DeRosier drove in four runs on two hits, with both of them being home runs.

Nick Jelacie drove in three runs on two hits, one of them being a home run,

as well as scoring two runs.

Bryce Flanagan drove a ball over the fence as well. He recorded three total hits, two RBIs and two runs.

On the mound, Ethan Branum pitched five innings, striking out seven batters and walking two. He gave up just four runs on nine hits.

They hosted the Opole Bears, Monday, May 30, and beat them 7-2.

Brett Kramer went a perfect 3-for-3 at the plate, hitting a home run and driving in three runs.

Flanagan took the mound for the Rebels, pitching nine innings, striking out 10 batters and walking six. He allowed just one earned run on four hits.

The Rebels now stand at 3-1 and host the Pierz Lakers, Sunday, June 5, at 1:30 p.m.

Upsala splits last two games

The Blue Jays came away with a 2-1 road win over the Riverdogs, May 28.

Brandon Welinski recorded four hits on five at-bats, one hit being a double.

Brady Burggraff and Haden Chuba drove in the team's two runs.

Brock Cichon pitched 10 innings, striking out six batters and walking four. He allowed just one run on five hits.

They lost 1-0 to the Pierz Lakers in their next game, May 30. No stats were available.

The 2-3 Blue Jays' next game is Sunday, June 5, at home against the Opole Bears at 1:30 p.m.

Royalton falls to 2-5

The Riverdogs lost 2-1 at home to the Upsala Blue Jays, May 28.

Ethan Walcheski recorded two hits on four at-bats. Zack Cekalla drove in the team's only run.

On the mound, Zach Leibold struck out six batters and walked three. He gave up just two runs and allowed 12 hits in 10 innings.

Royalton lost another game, this time 11-1 against Sobieski, May 30.

Grayson Suska was 2-for-2 at the plate and scored the Riverdogs' only run.

Suska also pitched 3.2 innings, striking out two batters and walking two. He gave up eight runs on 13 hits.

The Riverdogs' record fell to 2-5. They hosted the St. Mathias Devils, Saturday, June 4.

Swanville loses four in a row

The Swans lost 8-1 to the Pierz Brewers, May 29. No stats were available.

The Swans lost again the following day, May 30, to the Pierz Lakers, this time it was a 14-1 loss. There were no stats available for this game.

The Swans dropped their fourth in a row and fell to 1-6 on the season. They hosted the St. Wendel Saints Saturday, June 4.

Flensburg drops to 0-4

The Falcons were shut out by the Pierz Brewers, May 29, 10-0. No stats were available.

The 0-4 Falcons are still looking for their first win as

they host the Sobieski Skis, Sunday, June 5, at noon.

Brewers beat Swans

The Pierz Brewers traveled to Swanville, May 29, beating the Swans 8-1 on their own field. No stats were available.

The Brewers got their second win in a row, and look to get their third, as they travel to St. Mathias, Sunday, June 5, to face the Devils at 4:30 p.m.

Bulldogs lose two in a row

The Pierz Bulldogs were shut out 10-0 by the Sobieski Skis, May 29.

Austin Gohl recorded the team's only hit.

George Toops pitched four innings for the Bulldogs, striking out two batters and giving up one run on four hits.

The Bulldogs drop their second in a row to fall to 3-2 on the season. Their next game is in Foley, Sunday, June 5, at 1:30 p.m.

Lakers win close at home

The Pierz Lakers beat the Blue Jays at home, May 29, in a low scoring 1-0 game. No stats were available.

The Lakers played the Swans, Monday, May 30, crushing their opponent, 14-1. No stats were available.

After losing their first game, the Lakers find themselves at 4-1 on the season. They traveled to Nisswa, Friday, June 3, to face the Lightning.

Flyers beat Sauk Rapids, fall to Willmar, Royals lose in first round of BB tourney

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The Flyers fell to the Roci Spartans, 6-5, May 26. They held a 5-1 lead in the bottom of the seventh, but they failed to stop the Spartans' last second comeback of five runs.

Riley Czech and Carter Oothoudt both drove in two runs for the Flyers. Zach Gwost recorded a triple.

Gwost pitched four innings, giving up zero runs on four hits. He struck out six batters and walked one.

The Flyers played the Sauk Rapids Storm, May 27, beating them 7-1.

They kept the Storm

scoreless until the final inning, when they finally got on the board. The Flyers defense didn't budge after that, closing out the game.

George Moore drove in two runs on three hits, one of them a double. He scored once and recorded a stolen base.

Owen Bode recorded a double to drive in two runs for the Flyers, as well as a stolen base.

Matt Filippi recorded one hit, but that hit was a solo home run.

Moore pitched for the Flyers, striking out three batters and only giving up one run on four hits.

In their next game, the Flyers fell to Wilmar, 10-1,

in the Section 8AAA tournament Tuesday, May 31.

Zach Gwost drove in the team's only score, hitting 2-for-3.

On the mound, Gwost pitched for 3.1 innings. He struck out seven batters and walked four. He gave up seven earned runs on six hits.

The Flyers played Detroit Lakes, Thursday, June 2.

Royals finish season

The Royals played Staples-Motley, May 26, but lost 2-4.

Jacob Leibold and Jameson Klug both drove in a run for the Royals.

Cal Ollman pitched three innings for the Royals, strik-

ing out six batters and walking four. He gave up three runs, one earned, on six hits.

They faced the Albany Huskies in the Section 6AA Tournament, Tuesday, May 31. They lost 7-2.

The Royals only mustered three hits, from Will Gorecki, Gabe Gorecki and Ben Albright. Albright and Gabe Gorecki drove in a run each.

Albright pitched 3.1 innings, striking out four batters and walking six. He gave up four earned runs on five hits.

The Royals finished their season with a record of 7-11.

Softball

• LITTLE FALLS TUESDAY OPEN MEN'S (May 31) — Stafki Construction 11, Hilmeron Collision 5; State Farm 18, Hilmeron Collision 12; Wiczek's Floors 17, Stafki Construction 16; Wiczek's 18, Farmers and Merchants State Bank 18;

F&M Bank 14, Johnny C's 1; State Farm 19, Johnny C's 15.

• LITTLE FALLS WOMEN'S (June 1) — Johnny C's/Lindy's Scoop 23, Cans R Us 7; Johnny C's/Lindy's Scoop 8, Coors 23; Coors 23, Cans R Us 10.

Have a News Tip?

Do you have any news that Record readers should know about or would like to hear? If so, call the Record News Department at (320) 632-2345





