

Sports

Buckman steamrolls St. Stephen, wins 6-2 after impressive defensive performance

By BLAKE BARTELS
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The Buckman Billygoats faced the St. Stephen Steves, Saturday, Aug. 13, in the Region 8C Victory League Baseball Tournament. The Goats cruised to a 6-2 win over the Steves, led by their stout pitcher Matt Tautges and stingy defense.

The Goats recorded four innings of three batters up and three batters down. They outhit their opponent 13 to five and didn't give up a hit until the fourth inning.

In the first, Noah Boser hit a ground out but drove in the team's first run.

In the second, Lane Girtz hit a two run single into right field that increased the Billygoats' lead to 3-0.

The Steves managed to get on the board in the fourth after a solo home run by Mat Meyer, making the game 3-1.

Both teams played solid defense for the next two innings until, in the seventh inning, the Billygoats drove in three more runs to extend



(8-21-22 Buckman Weber pic)

Buckman's shortstop Aaron Weber fielded a ground ball during the Billygoats' 6-2 win over the Steves, Aug 13.

their lead.

Boser hit a double deep into right field, driving in Girtz to make it 4-1. Later in the seventh, Matt Kummet and Travis Kahl hit back-to-back RBI singles to give the Goats a comfortable 6-1

lead.

The Steves managed to score once on an RBI single in the top of the eighth, but the Buckman defense didn't break. The Billygoats walked away with a 6-2 win.

Tautges pitched a com-

plete game, striking out eight batters and giving up just two runs on five hits.

At the plate, Girtz and Boser drove in two runs each. Boser finished with three hits on five at-bats and Girtz finished with two hits

on five at-bats.

Following the win, the Billygoats played the Pierz Lakers, Sunday, Aug. 14, at 1:30 p.m. for the third place in the Region 8C Tournament.

Lakers come out swinging in 5-1 win over Lumber Jacks

By BLAKE BARTELS
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The Pierz Lakers jumped to a quick lead in their win over the Foley Lumber Jacks, Saturday, Aug. 13, during the Region 8C Victory League Baseball Tournament. In the 5-1 win, the Lakers scored all five of their runs in the first inning.

The first run came from Paul Herman, who scored on an error. Peter Herman then drove in two more after hitting a double to give the Lakers a 3-0 lead. Brady Petron hit a double of his own, driving in Peter Herman. Noah Cekalla hit a single past the infield, putting runners on first and third.

With one out, Cekalla sacrificed himself in an attempt to steal second, while

Petron scored on a delay, giving the Lakers a quick 5-0 lead.

It was all defense for both teams after the first. Lakers' pitcher Preston Rocheleau pitched seven innings, striking out 11 batters and allowing just four hits before being relieved by Cekalla in the eighth. Cekalla struck out six batters and gave up one run on one hit.

The lone run from the Lumber Jacks came in the eighth.

Paul Herman, Peter Herman and Cekalla all recorded two hits, with Peter Herman driving in two runs.

The win over the Jacks gives the Lakers a shot at third place in the tournament. They played the Buckman Billygoats the following day, Sunday, Aug. 14, but lost 4-1.



(8-21-22 Lakers Diers pic)

Pierz's Ryan Diers (15) and Foley's Brandon Buesgens (19) waited for the pitch from Preston Rocheleau (22) in Aug. 13 game.

CHI St. Gabriel's and Schlenner Wenner Sporting Clays winners

The Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce's 17th annual Sporting Clays event was held Tuesday, Aug. 16, at LeBlanc's Rice Creek Hunting and Recreation with 52 shooters participating. The winning teams are as follows.

The Competitive Division winner was CHI St. Gabriel's Health, breaking 176 targets with the team comprised of Tracy Heideneich, Matt Gav, David Seel-

en and Nate Schueneman.

High Score Casual Division winner was Schlenner Wenner and Co. breaking 144 targets with team members Ryan Finberg, Brian Schellinger, Cody Cook and Joe Berg.

There was a three-way tie in the flurry shoot ending with Schlenner Wenner and Co. breaking 39 of 40 targets. There was a tie for top female shooter between Madison Bates, shooting on

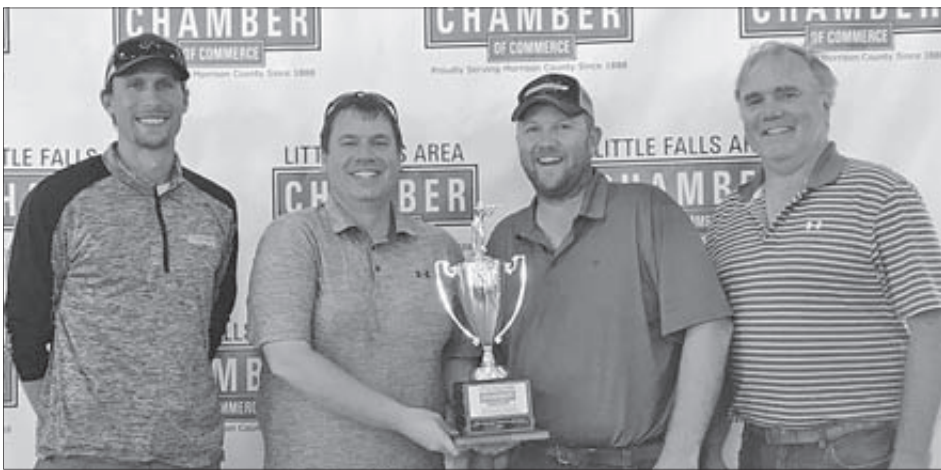
Magnifi Financial's team and Kendra Fischer from Barrett PetFood Innovations, with scores of 32 of the 50 targets and there was also a tie between Mike Fulford, Seaview Farms and Rob LeBlanc shooting on the Dahlheimer Beverage team for top male shooter, both breaking 49 out of the 50 targets.

The 18th annual Sporting Clays even for next year is Tuesday, Aug. 15, 2023.



Submitted photo

The Competitive Division team winner CHI St. Gabriel's Health included (from left): Nate Schueneman, Matt Gav, Tracy Heideneich and David Seelen.



Submitted photo

Casual Division team winner Schlenner Wenner and Co. included (from left): Brian Schellinger, Ryan Finberg, Cody Cook and Joe Berg.

Buckman Billygoats take third place in Region 8C Tournament after 4-1 win over the Pierz Lakers

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The Buckman Billygoats and the Pierz Lakers battled it out for third place in the Region 8C Victory League Baseball Tournament, Sunday, Aug. 14. Buckman came out on top, winning 4-1 over Pierz. Both teams moved on the play in the Class C State Tournament.

Pierz jumped ahead first, scoring the game's first run in the third on a Chad Weiss RBI single, which drove in Mitch Weitalla.

Buckman responded by scoring twice in the bottom of the fourth. Aaron Weber and Matt Kummet both drove in a run on singles.

The Billygoats scored two more runs in the seventh, to put them up 4-1. With the bases loaded, Lane Girtz was walked in and Noah Boser hit a sacrifice fly to bring in the fourth run.

Todd Robinson started on the mound for the Billygoats, pitching five innings.

Robinson gave up one run on two hits. He was relieved by Nathan Ehnstrom, recruited from the Aitkin Steam, in the sixth. Ehnstrom pitched the remainder of the game, striking out two batters and kept the Lakers to just three hits.

For the Lakers, Bryce Flanagan, recruited from the Fort Ripley Rebels, pitched the majority of the game. In five innings, Flanagan struck out two batters and gave up two runs on five hits.

Weiss and Brady Petron also spent time on the mound. Weiss pitched three innings, allowing two runs on three hits and Petron struck out two batters and gave up just three hits.

The Lakers will play the Watkins Clippers in Faribault, Saturday, Aug. 20, at 4:30 p.m., in the first round of the Class C State Tournament.

The Billygoats will play right after the Lakers game, against the Cannon Falls Bears, at 7 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 20, in Faribault.

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Photos captured by
Blake Bartels, Sports Editor

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Sports

Little Falls alum work behind the scenes for Minnesota Vikings

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Chad Lundeen and Paul Martin graduated from Little Falls High School in 1993 and 2000. They were both talented athletes, with Lundeen playing hockey and football and Martin playing football, basketball and golf.

Sports played a big role in their lives growing up, but they never expected to be working for an NFL franchise, let alone the same team they grew up watching and cheering for every Sunday.

Both Lundeen and Martin work behind the scenes for the Minnesota Vikings. Lundeen is vice president of operations and facilities and Martin is the director of team operations.

“We do our jobs, and we do them in a manner that allows us to have the football operations run smoothly for the team and it allows the players, coaches and scouts to focus on football,” Lundeen said.

Lundeen explained the coaches are not concerned about how the field is lined or how the field looks. The players don’t check to see if the goal posts are set up or if clock is ready. They just walk out and everything is set up.

“If nobody knows exactly all the things you do or what you do, you are probably doing it well,” Lundeen said. “That’s the way we like it. We want them to just focus on football.”

“It’s one of those jobs that is pretty wide ranging,” Martin said. “Our role in this department is to support the coaches, players and personnel so that they can concentrate on learning, coaching and playing football.”

Martin said it can be something small, such as setting up catering breakfast for the coaches and players in the offseason or coordinating multi-million dollar charter agreements and hotel fares for away games in Philadelphia or Las Vegas.

Martin has been a part of the Vikings organizations for 18 seasons and Lundeen has been there for 25 seasons. Both Little Falls graduates got their start as interns.

Lundeen said during his final year at Mankato, he was still unsure as to what he wanted to do. He had a business marketing degree and was undecided as to his career path.

It wasn’t until his hockey coach suggested that he stay on and get his master’s in sports management that he got his start.

“I had been a part of a team ever since I was probably four years old,” Lundeen said. “This would have been the first time I would have been done with sports or an organized team. I wasn’t quite ready to graduate to that in life. That’s when I really figured out that this is what I want to do.”

So he met with the athletic director at Mankato and took the role of grad assis-



Submitted Photo

Chad Lundeen and Paul Martin during a fundraiser held by the Vikings in 2018.

tant for two years. Lundeen was told he also needed to do an internship and, at that point, he knew he wanted to explore a career in professional sports.

Martin graduated from the University of Minnesota, Morris, with a sports management degree. During that time, he worked for the Vikings as an intern from April to December of 2005. He was eventually offered a full-time position for the Vikings in 2006.

On top of the trips to Buffalo and Miami, the Vikings take a trip across the pond, to the United Kingdom, to play the New Orleans Saints, Oct. 2.

Martin said if the game were played in New Orleans, it would have been no big deal, but since it’s an international game, they have been working on the logistics since May, when the team’s schedule was released.

Some of the things Martin and Lundeen do go unnoticed, and that’s how their job is supposed to be. They are in charge of not only hotel and air fare, but also the transportation of equipment and make sure everything is running smoothly so the players and coaches can perform.

While Martin oversees away games and takes care of the staff away from home, Lundeen is in charge of security for the Vikings facility and the grounds which the Minnesota Vikings call home.

Lundeen said the heart of what Martin does is organizing all the details of those road trips.

“We complement each other and help each other,” Lundeen said. “While he might be focused primarily on the road trip, my role is making sure that our home game venue is ready to go. We have preseason week two at home this year, so I’m making sure all aspects of our home game, from the condition of the field to the

technology systems and all different moving parts on game day are ready to go.”

Both men have been present for some of the craziest moments in Vikings history. Martin was on the field, standing in the tunnel during the Minneapolis Miracle.

“You could not have had a better view in the whole stadium than what I had,” Martin said. “I was looking right down the field at Case (Keenum) and I watched the corner whiff on (Stefon) Diggs.”

When the Metrodome roof collapsed in 2010, Lundeen had to figure out where the Vikings would host their home games. They ended up having to play a “home” game in Detroit against the New York Giants.

“That was a crazy period of time because then we came home for our next home game,” Lundeen said. “We tried to play outdoors at TCF Bank Stadium where the Gophers play.”

They had to clear the field of snow, turn the water back on and set up concessions in just four or five days. But Lundeen was also involved in the design and setup of the Vikings’ new stadium, U.S. Bank Stadium, and practice field TCO Performance Center.

“These are “once in a career” type of projects that we completed in 2016 and 2018,” Lundeen said. “We are enjoying the opportunity and humbled to be able to work in these two state-of-the-art buildings.”

Lundeen and Martin grew up in a small town and got the opportunity to work for one of the most historic teams in America’s most popular sport. Both of them knew they wanted to work in the sports field in some way, but neither of them saw themselves being a part of the team they cheered for since their childhood.

Flyers’ new head volleyball coach Trisha Spencer brings passion and experience to LF



(8-21-22 Flyers Volleyball)

Staff photo by Blake Bartels

New Flyers HC Trisha Spencer coaching up Arabelle Hanfler, left, and Avery Herdering, right, during a practice.

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The Flyers volleyball team enters the 2022-23 season under new management. On July 22, Trisha Spencer was named the new head coach for Little Falls.

“We are very excited to have Coach Spencer as our new head coach of Flyer Volleyball,” Little Falls Athletic Director Kevin Jordan said. “She has had a great amount of past coaching experiences and our student athletes will really enjoy the passion that she has for the sport of volleyball.”

Spencer grew up playing volleyball in Foley for the Falcons, but she didn’t fall in love with the sport until she became a coach in 2002. Her first stint as a coach was for the Falcons’ seventh grade team before moving up to the JV, where she coached for three years alongside

Sandy Stevens and Rachel Duerr, two mentors that she still cherishes to this day, she said.

She eventually walked away from coaching to focus on her wedding photography business that had steadily been growing over the years. She coached on and off again for several different teams before her daughter Halle Reis, who plays for the Flyers, suggested that she coach her team.

“I heard Mellissa Miller was coming back as the assistant varsity coach and Halle said, ‘Mom you two would get along so great.’ So the spinning wheels in my head began.”

Spencer decided to step up and teach her daughter and the rest of the Flyers everything she had learned over the past 20 years, as well as spend some quality time with her daughter and the other young ladies she grew to adore.

“I knew in my heart that these girls deserve a coach that is going to stay for a while. And once summer sessions began, I fell right back into routine. It’s been a whirlwind of an adventure already, and I know it’s just begun.”

Spencer is excited to join the Flyer community. She plans to use her past experience as a coach and player to give the Flyers a competitive edge in every game.

“I expect great things this year. I have eight seniors and they are all hard-working, kind hearted, and willing to do whatever it takes to become the best volleyball player and team they are capable of being. They, alongside a few talented underclassmen, will hold their own against any team. Win or lose, our goal is to give our fans something to cheer about.”



(8-21-22 Lakers Herman pic)

Staff photo by Blake Bartels

Pierz’s Pete Herman rounded third base and headed for home in the Lakers’ 5-1 win over Foley, Aug. 13.

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Golf

Little Falls Women's

• WEEK 14, AUG. 6 — MORNING DIVISION: Low gross and net, Diane Koole 45 and 31. Play of the Day, Dianna Schulte; longest drive #2, Teri Hoggarth, low putts Jodi Weaver 16. Team leaders: 1. Walkie Talkies, 2. Mississippi Queens, 3. Lady Drivers. EVENING DIVISION: Low gross, Shelly Kircher 39; low net, Carmen Johnson 30. Play of the Day, Margie Molt; longest drive #2 Carmen Johnson. Team leaders: 1. River Bums, 2. Par Pirates, 3. Havin' Fun.

Canadian Cup

• WEEK 15, AUG. 17 — 18 hole low gross, George Fortier 70; low net, Jeff Udy 67. Northeast low gross, Dean Erdman and Jon Vetter 36; low net, Jon Vetter 28; Nine-hole southwest low gross, Jeff Udy 36; low net, Kyle Hoggarth 32. Closest to the pin #3, Chris Smith; pin #13, Brent Schulte. Longest putt #5, Jeff Udy; #14, Jack Schulte. Closest to the pin in fairway #4, Ken Lukasavitz, #10, Dick Culshaw. Sandbagger of the Week: Jon Vetter.

Softball

• LITTLE FALLS TUESDAY MEN'S (AUG. 15) PLAYOFFS — Pont's Treefrogs 17, Oberg Roofing 14; Mala Mills Pirates 18, State Farm 15. CHAMPIONSHIP GAME: Mala Mills Pirates 21, Pont's Treefrogs 11.

• LITTLE FALLS THURSDAY CO-ED PLAYOFFS (AUG. 11) — The Decades 14, Scentsy 9; The Decades 16, Dingmann's Locker 5; ServiceMaster 9, GoldSmith Jewelers 8; Insurance Brokers/Johnny C's 17, ServiceMaster 16. CHAMPIONSHIP GAME: Insurance Brokers/Johnny C's 15, The Decades 10.