

HOCKEY

# Blizzard dominate in fourth straight win

By Eric Morken  
Alexandria Echo Press



Hadland

The Alexandria Blizzard won a fourth-straight game on Friday night as the Blizzard pilled up the offense in an 8-1 win over the Minnesota Loons (1-14, 2 points).

Alexandria scored two in the first period and three in each of the second and third. The Blizzard outshot the Loons 63-35

overall. Ryan Hadland led a balanced effort as he scored two goals and added an assist. Ethan Moerke, Alex Hedenreich, Matt McIntyre, Joe Gronholz, Michael Debrito and Sean Kenny all had a goal, as well. Kaden

Peterson, Matt Scribner, Benjamin Tschida, and Wyatt Johnson all added two assists.

Christopher Brown got the win in net with 34 saves and just one goal allowed as Minnesota's Tye Kusilek scored his team's only goal. The

Loons' Payton West took the loss after allowing eight goals and getting peppered with 63 shots.

It was the lone game of the weekend for Alexandria. The Blizzard will go to Mason City on Nov. 13 and 14 to face the Toros. Mason City (9-4-1, 19

points) is in second place in the West Division of the NA3HL standings, while the Blizzard have moved into third place, one point ahead of the Willmar WarHawks (6-6-1, 13 points).

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VOLLEYBALL ROUNDUP

# Seasons end for local programs

By Eric Morken  
Alexandria Echo Press



Hartshorn

The Osakis volleyball team was in its first season back playing the postseason at the Class AA level after being part of the Class A field in recent years.

That Silverstreaks came into the Section 6AA tournament on Oct. 28 as the No. 11 seed as they went to 6th-seeded Milaca trying to extend their season. Instead, it was the Wolves who advanced to play third-seeded Staples-Motley in the quarterfinals.

Milaca (22-6) ended Osakis' season with a 12-16 overall record. The Wolves swept the Sil-

verstreaks around very close first and third sets where Milaca prevailed by 26-24, 25-15 and

27-25 finals.

It was the final match for six seniors who were a big part of this Silverstreaks team in Lara Drum, Lexi Froemming, Mackenzie Holmquist, Alexis Johanson, Hayleigh Niehoff and Kali Schoeck.

MILACA 3, OSAKIS 0  
OSAKIS - Alexis Johanson - 8 kills, 18 digs; Greta Faber - 35 digs; Hayleigh Niehoff - 1 ace, 4 kills, 1 assist, 11 digs; Josee Hartshorn - 1 ace, 5 kills, 2 blocks, 24 assists, 10 digs; Kali Schoeck - 1 ace, 3 kills, 1 block, 19 digs; Kiley Kranz - 5 kills, 5 digs; Kylee Lebrun - 5 digs; Madison Lipke - 6 kills, 3 blocks, 2 digs

**Panthers edge B-E**

Brandon-Evansville had swept Little Eight Conference rival Parkers Prairie in the final match of the regular season, but the Panthers took advantage of a second chance on Oct. 27.

Brandon-Evansville (14-11) was seeded fourth in the South subsection of the Section 6A tournament. Fifth-seeded Parkers Prairie went into Evansville in the playoff opener and won a five-setter, winning the fifth set 15-12 after also taking set one 25-23 and set three 27-25. The Chargers won 25-23 in the second and 25-17 in the fourth.

"It's always hard to

have the season come to an end, especially at home, but we are proud of the improvement and drive the girls have exhibited throughout the season," B-E head coach Kelly Olson said.

Jada Lego had 16 kills to lead the Panthers. Cora Johnson added 13.

"We had lots of players getting good swings in because our serve stepped up, allowing our setter to move the ball around," Parkers Prairie head coach Amy Revering said. "Defensively, our block was getting a lot of touches on the ball. It has been our focus since we played B-E last week.

The win sent Parkers Prairie on to the

section quarterfinals against top-seeded Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa. The Jaguars (22-7) swept the Panthers by scores of 25-10, 25-19 and 25-19. Parkers Prairie put together a solid season with an overall record of 17-12.

PARKERS PRAIRIE 3, B-E 2 (25-23, 23-25, 27-25, 17-25, 15-12)  
B-E - Sydney Schaefer - 1 ace, 7 kills, 37 assists, 15 digs; Kylee Dingwall - 18 kills, 1 block, 1 assist, 14 digs; Taylor Suchy - 1 kill, 27 digs; Taylor Yeats - 7 kills, 3 blocks, 25 digs; Kendall Hoidahl - 1 dig; EmmaLee Brethorst - 3 aces, 10 kills, 4 digs; Olivia Otto - 1 ace, 2 kills, 26 digs; Gretchen Bredeberg - 2 aces, 6 kills, 1 block, 7 digs; Kaytlyn Patrin - 1 kill, 3 digs

**Top-seeded Paynesville sweeps WCA**

West Central Area had its season ended against the North's top-seeded team out of Section

3AA as Paynesville won 25-10, 25-16, 25-16 on Nov. 1.

The Knights are in their first season playing at the Class AA level in the section volleyball tournament, and that kept them from getting a home playoff match despite a 22-7 over record. WCA won its tournament opener at fourth-seeded Litchfield by scores of 26-24, 21-25, 25-22 and 25-18.

WCA 3, LITCHFIELD 1  
WCA - Macy Grosz - 17-17 serving, 2 aces, 24 assists, 20 digs; Mya Foslien - 15-15 serving, 1 ace, 17 digs, 14 kills, 1 block; Lexi Hunter - 7-8 serving; Whitney Westrom - 14-15 serving, 4 aces, 4 assists, 9 digs, 5 kills, 1 block; Halle Foslien - 11-13 serving, 7 kills, 3 blocks; Elizabeth Rustan - 19-22 serving, 2 aces, 10 kills, 2 blocks; Addison Staples - 2 assists, 2 kills, 2 blocks; Madelyn Westrom - 2 assists, 12 digs; Kaitlyn Hansen - 29 digs

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VOLLEYBALL

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as part of an undefeated run through the regular season against section opponents. Sauk Rapids-Rice won by that same score in Melrose to secure just its second trip to the state tournament in program history. The Storm's only other section championship came in 1988.

"We had a goal of making it to state all season, and we came in just wanting to achieve that goal," Storm sophomore middle hitter Ava Athman said. "That's what really gave us the fire to push through tonight."

Senior Darci Peterson helped set the tone for Sauk Rapids in the first set with a long serving run that guided her team to an eventual 25-18 win. Athman had a perfectly-placed tip to put that win away, and she added another tip in the third set to secure a 25-18 victory there too.

The Cardinals' lone win came in the second set when they dominated from start to finish. A Maggie Anderson kill made it 19-9, and Alexandria rolled from there to even the match at 1-1 with a 25-13 win.

"We played our game," Alexandria head coach Mary Byrne said of that second set. "We didn't get caught up in the emotion on the other side of the net and the environment. We stayed very focused and played our game. We looked very sharp."

Alexandria just could not sustain that for long enough stretches in the final two sets. When the Storm played in system, senior setter Kiernyn Hirdler put the ball on the net to multiple hitters who all played with a lot of confidence.

"I just think this whole week of practice, we were looking in the future a little bit, but we did have our minds straight on what we needed to get done and what we needed to do to succeed in this game," Alexandria senior libero Tessa McGrane said. "We just fell short of our goal, and Sauk Rapids played without any fear. They



Photos by Eric Morken / Alexandria Echo Press  
Alexandria's Madeline Buysse, left, and Lilly Thul reach for a block against Sauk Rapids-Rice in the Section 8-3A championship match on Saturday.

went out there and knew what their plan was and they did it. They're a lot different team than when we last played them. Their hitters were going up with all their might. They knew they had nothing to lose. Their defense was flying everywhere."

Byrne felt it was evident in the energy that the Storm played with how much they wanted the win.

"Every time they went up, you could tell they wanted it bad," Byrne said. "They just had a little bit more drive than we did tonight."

The fourth set played out as tight as any all night as neither team separated itself by more than three points from the early stages on.

Athman had a kill that gave the Storm a 23-21 lead, but Anderson

answered with a kill of her own to make it 23-22. An Alexandria error made it 24-22 as the Storm served for match point.

The Cardinals got a perfect serve receive up to setter Kiya Issendorf, who went to the hot hand in Anderson. Her hard-hit kill attempt went just wide as the Storm celebrated the upset win.

Twitter video  
"I'm really proud of what they did this season," Byrne said. "Those seniors took us to another level where we haven't been. It didn't end how we wanted to, but it wasn't our night. We can't focus on that. The kids played hard. We just didn't get the plays when we needed it."

Anderson finished her standout career for the Cardinals with a team-best 15 kills on Saturday. Freshman Hadley

Thul had 14, and senior Charlotte Lempka finished with 8 on a night when Issendorf tallied 38 assists.

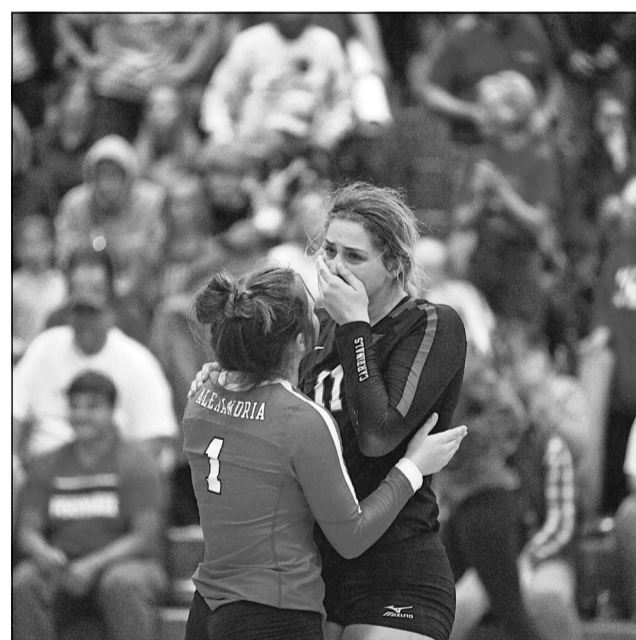
"I'll definitely remember the culture," McGrane said of this team. "It felt like a family. That feeling is different than any other season, and it can't be forgotten."

The Cardinals will say goodbye to seven talented seniors on this varsity roster in McGrane, Hailie Kent, Erika Wentworth, Cora Larson, Addison Boesl, Anderson and Lilly Thul. They helped Alexandria to one of its best seasons in recent history and set a tone that the Cardinals hope can be carried over into the future.

"Our underclassmen, they've had this experience now, and I think they're going to be a lot hungrier for wins in



Alexandria freshman Hadley Thul reaches high for a tip in the Section 8-3A championship match against Sauk Rapids-Rice on Saturday.



Alexandria's Tessa McGrane, left, consoles fellow senior Maggie Anderson after Sauk Rapids-Rice won a 3-1 match against the Cardinals in the Section 8-3A championship on Saturday. Anderson had a team-high 15 kills in the final match of her standout career for the Cardinals.

these types of matches next year," Byrne said. "The seniors did a great job of leading us to get to this final match and laid it all on the line. I'm disappointed we didn't win, but I'm not disappointed in the players. They really played hard for me all

year."  
SAUK RAPIDS-RICE 3, ALEXANDRIA 1  
ALEXANDRIA - KILLS - Madeline Buysse - 4; Charlotte Lempka - 8; Kiya Issendorf - 2; Hadley Thul - 14; Anderson - 15; Lilly Thul - 1; ACES - Hadley Thul - 1; Erika Wentworth - 2; Cora Larson - 1; BLOCKS - Lempka - 3; Lilly Thul - 3; Issendorf - 1; Buysse - 2; Hadley Thul - 3; ASSISTS - Issendorf - 38

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