

SOFTBALL



Kelly Humphrey / Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd Warrior second baseman Maren Ceynowa turns a double play for the final two outs in the Section 8-4A Championship game against St. Michael-Albertville Thursday, June 2 in Brainerd.

READY FOR CASWELL

No. 2 seeded Warriors to face East Ridge in state quarters

By **Jeremy Millsop**
Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd

Even when it's good it might not be good enough.

It's been 11 years since the Brainerd Warriors last visited the state softball tournament. Perhaps that's why opponents couldn't pull the trigger and give the last remaining unbeaten Class 4A team the No. 1 seed for the state tournament which will begin 9 a.m. Thursday, June 9.

The Warriors landed the No. 2 seed, despite having the top Quality Results Formula with 215 points. White Bear Lake, which was voted the No. 1 seed with a 21-3 record, had a QRF of 202.3.

Brainerd is just one of two unbeaten teams remaining in Minnesota. Proctor, in Class 2A, is the other. The Rails got the No. 1 seed for the Class 2A Tournament.

"I would say surprised, but being from outstate and from Section 8-4A and understanding what usually happens without state sections I guess I was happy

with the two seed," Warrior head coach Shane Jordan said. "It could have been much worse."

Brainerd will open the state tournament, the eighth appearance in program history and first since 2011, against unseeded East Ridge. The Raptors are 17-6 with a QRF of 177.9 which is good for ninth in the rankings. East Ridge eliminated the previous No. 1 ranked Rosemount 7-1 in the Section 3-4A Championship.

"We know they knocked out the team that was ranked No. 1 in the Coaches' Association Poll all year in Rosemount," Jordan said. "We expect that they're playing very well."

East Ridge opened the season with losses to White Bear Lake and Forest Lake, which Brainerd defeated and is the No. 4 seed in the Class 4A State Tournament, before rattling off a 10-game winning streak. That included a 4-3 win over Cretin-Derham Hall, an 8-0 win over Centennial, which Brainerd also beat and is the No. 5 seed in the state tournament, and a 7-4 win over White Bear Lake.

The Raptors then suffered losses to Park of Cottage Grove, C-DH and Forest Lake before finishing the regular

season with three wins. They then topped Burnsville and Hastings and Rosemount in the Winner's Bracket of the section tournament before beating Rosemount one out of two games to advance to state.

This will be the second state tournament for East Ridge which also advanced in 2019.

Brainerd enters the state tournament with a 24-0 record. It defeated Centennial 5-0 May 16 and Forest Lake 2-1 May 20. The Warriors took care of business by defeating St. Michael-Albertville 3-0 in the Section 8-4A Championship game Thursday, June 2.

"I think we're playing very confident, team-centered softball and that's a winning formula," Jordan said. "Everyone is committed to doing their role and their job with the greater good in mind. I think we can play with anybody. We've proven that all year. We played a tough schedule and played in tough games so I think we're playing really well and we can compete with anybody."

Brainerd has allowed just 24 runs all season. Eight of those runs came in back-to-back wins against Elk River and St. Francis in the Forest Lake Tournament on the

CLASS 4A STATE TOURNAMENT

▶ **Who:** No. 2 Brainerd (24-0) vs. East Ridge (17-6)

▶ **What:** Class 4A State Quarterfinals

▶ **When:** 9 a.m. Thursday, June 9

▶ **Where:** Field 3, Caswell Park, North Mankato

▶ **Next:** State Semifinals 3 p.m. Thursday, June 9 on Field 3; Consolation Semifinals 3 p.m. Thursday, June 9

▶ **Finals:** Consolation Championship 9 a.m. Friday, June 10; Third-place game 11 a.m. Friday, June 10; State Championship 1 p.m. Friday, June 10

Other teams: No. 1 White Bear Lake vs. Lakeville South; No. 4 Forest Lake vs. No. 5 Centennial; No. 3 Chanhassen vs. Hopkins

first weekend of the season. Brainerd has 11 shutouts, including six in its last eight games.

Olivia Tautges handled all the postseason pitching duties. In 15 starts and 19 appearances, she's allowed 52 hits and 29 walks. Those translated into 16 runs, 12 earned, in 99 innings pitched. She's struck out 163 batters in that same time for a 0.848 ERA.

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AREA BOYS GOLF

Seeling leads Patriots to state

SARTELL — Tyler Seeling didn't win the individual battle, but he won the war as he led the Pequot Lakes Patriots to the Section 6-2A Team title and a trip to the Class 2A State Tournament.

Seeling fired a second-round 74 Tuesday, June 7, for a two-day 149, which was one stroke away from an individual title won by Kimball's Luke Ashbrook.

But Seeling's 149 at Blackberry Ridge Golf Club along with Cooper Johnson's 7th-place 160, Anthony Armstrong's 14th-place 165 and 170s from Michael Oseland and Tollef Birkeland helped the Patriots to a one-shot victory over St. Cloud Cathedral.

Three birdies, including back-to-back birds on holes 8 and 9 helped Seeling improve upon his opening round 75. She shot matching 37s for both nines. Pequot's Logan Fogarty was the only other Patriot to improve on their opening round score.

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AREA GIRLS GOLF

Birkland, Patriots win S6-2A

SARTELL — Genevieve Birkland is a section champion and her Pequot Lakes Patriots are headed back to the state tournament.

Birkland fired a second-round 85 Tuesday, June 7, to finish with a two-day 161 and tie with Albany's Abby Thelen for the Section 6-2A Individual title at Blackberry Ridge Golf Club.

The freshman's score along with Morgan Krieger's third-place 167, Annie Neva's fourth-place 171 and Charlee Sullivan's 16th-place 189 catapulted the Patriots to a 16-stroke section team win.

"After yesterday, we were sitting in a very good spot so coming into today I just told the girls to play to their potential," Pequot head coach Savannah Smith said. "They had nothing to lose and they played to their potential. They took some risks and got some rewards and we ended up going to state again."

Pequot's Kate Stephens placed 17th with a 192 putting five Patriots in the top 20.

"It's fun because every day at practice we are pushing each other to get better," Smith said. "You never know who is going to come out on top. We keep climbing and pushing the limits. That's what makes our team such a strong team."

Little Falls' Abby Turkowski shot a 176 to finish sixth individually but land the third individual state spot. Emily Virnig of Pierz and Staples-Motley's Mallory Uselman both shot 178 to tie for seventh and grab the fourth and fifth individual state spots.

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TRACK AND FIELD

Warriors prepping for 1st ever Class 3A meet

By **Conrad Engstrom**
Brainerd Dispatch

Eighteen Brainerd athletes in fourteen events will be headed to the newly-minted Class 3A state track and field meet Thursday, June 9, at St. Michael-Albertville High School.

The Class 3A prelims are set for 9 a.m. Thursday with the Finals at 4 p.m. Saturday, June 11.

Of the 18 athletes, 11 are girls and seven are boys, who will be on the bus to state.

Junior Brenna Deason is back to state in three events. She ran a 100-meter dash in 12.41 to finish second in the Section 8-3A meet and pole vaulted to a first-place 10-foot-4.

Last year, Deason was eighth in the 100 dash in 12.29 and 12th in the pole vault at 10-0 at the Class 2A State meet.

"I'm really excited to see Brenna compete in the 100-meter dash again," Warriors girls head coach Ashley Rut-

CLASS 3A STATE TOURNAMENT

▶ **Who:** 11 Brainerd girls, 7 Brainerd boys

▶ **What:** Class 3A State Track and Field prelims and Finals

▶ **When:** 9 a.m. Thursday, June 9; 4 p.m. Saturday, June 11

▶ **Where:** St. Michael-Albertville High School

man said. "I know last year she ended up eighth and this year she is hoping to improve at the state level. As far as her goals, I know she would love to improve her time in the 100 and get on that podium. She's super competitive and seems to rise to the occasion in big meets.

"In the pole vault, her conference meet performance puts her in the position where she can be competitive and I think for her to get back to that height would help her get some confidence in that event."

Deason is also the anchor of



Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd's Track and Field state qualifiers Andrew Albright, left, Lily Birks, Kate Stadum, Molly Hagelie, Myah Nelson, Brenna Deason, Gavin Hoelzel, Hanna Caughey, Annelise Baird, Brooke Wenz, Bridget Collins, Emily Bastian, Madelyn Miller, Dillon MacLaughlin, Brandon Stark, Baden Bastian, Michael Howe, and Thomas Ruhl (not pictured) gather on Monday at Adamson Field.

the 4x100 relay team which also qualified for state with a 49.48 time at sections.

The team of junior Kate Stadum, senior Myah Nelson, junior Molly Hagelie and Deason will look to build off

the Warriors' third-place finish at last year's state meet.

The only difference is Stadum, who was an alternate last year. She replaces Madi Genz who graduated last year.

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WARRIORS ATHLETE OF WEEK



Steve Kohls / Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd Warrior Katie Foley tees off at the driving range Monday at the Cragun's Legacy Courses.

"I HOPE SHE IS SUCCESSFUL ALL THE WAY AROUND."

TODD PERSON

Firing on all cylinders

Warriors' Foley heading into state

By Jeremy Millsop
Brainerd Dispatch

Brainerd
Katie Foley found a brand new approach to the game she grew up playing.

The six-year Brainerd Warrior girls golf varsity veteran is from a golf family. Her two older brothers were Brainerd varsity veterans. Her father, Chris, owns his own golf instruction school. Her mother Amy helps at the golf school during summer youth clinics. Golf is a family affair for the Foleys.

But this year Katie Foley was a new version of herself.

Last fall, she signed her National Letter of Intent to play golf and continue her education at the University of St. Thomas. Having that to fall back on, Foley approached her senior season with a fun-at-all-costs approach, including at the Section 8-3A Tournament.

"I've played Rich Spring before and I was excited just to enjoy my last sections and I knew that I could eat that course up if I needed to," Foley said. "I really was just focused on good shots and knew I wouldn't be too far off of the lead. Even with the conditions, everybody was going to play how they were going to play. I was really just trying to enjoy my last section tournament and went in knowing that I could play really well."

Foley finished second in the two-day event with 158 to advance to

her third Class 3A State Tournament. She opened with a first-round 78, which had her in second right away. She opened with a front-nine 40, but a birdie, 2, on the par 3 sixth hole propelled Foley.

"She had two chip-ins on the first day," Brainerd head coach Todd Person said. "One was on the par 3 sixth hole, which is a tough hole. It was into a side wind and all the girls were having a hard time hitting the green. She was maybe 10-15 feet short of the green and the pin was in the back and pitched that in for a two, which certainly gained strokes on the field."

"Then she had another one later in the round and those were both huge stroke savers."

Foley said her chipping "was on par," no pun intended.

"I work a ton on my short game and I feel like the last year or two that's been my main focus — putting and chipping," Foley said. "It was just fun to see the chips go in. I had been waiting all year to chip in again. Normally, I have a few a season and then I got two in my last section tournament, which is just so fun to do. It was great."

I hope she is successful all the way around.

Foley's second day began with another front-nine 40. She birdied the par 5 third hole. She carded another 40 on the back nine with four bogeys and five pars to finish the event

KATIE FOLEY



Foley

Sport: Girls' golf
Year: Senior
Age: 18
Height: 5-foot-2
Career highlight: Her three state appearances or first time shooting under par last year at Bemidji Country Club
Grade-point average: 3.5
Favorite class: Aviation

Favorite food: Sushi
Favorite movie: "Breakfast at Tiffany's"
Favorite TV show: "The Office"
Favorite website or app: TikTok or Snapchat
Favorite restaurant: The Classic Grill at Madden's
Future plans: Attend the University of St. Thomas. Major in business finance with a minor in fashion apparel and play golf for the Tommies
Favorite athlete: Nelly Korda
Parents: Chris and Amy Foley

just two strokes off the winner, Hannah Boraas of Alexandria.

"You really just have to stay focused and know that you're not out of it if you have a bad hole," Foley said about playing in contention.

"It gets tougher on Day Two to play under the pressure. I wasn't dropping as many putts on Day Two as I would have liked. Trying to mentally recover from that was tricky around those greens. There were tough pin placements out there."

"Really I just knew I wouldn't be too far off because I had a good Day One. I was really just focused on finishing strong and enjoying my last round."

In last year's state tournament, Foley tied for 31st with a two-day 163. She shot rounds of 80-83. But this year could be better.

"I think the area she's improved on just this year is her length off the tee, which is a huge difference," Person said. "She's always been a really good driver of the

golf ball by keeping it in play. She's just gained a lot of distance this year. With that, her short game has just been solid and I think that was really the difference for her out on the section days."

"I think that she can be a top 10 finisher. She's got all the tools that she needs to be there. It's just going to come down to whether the putts drop."

Foley has been a top-10 golfer all season. In Brainerd's regular-season finale May 18 at The Classic at Madden's, Foley fired a third-place 81 to help the Warriors to a team title, the first team title at their home invite in program history. In that round, she shot nines of 40-41 on the tough Scott Hoffmann design.

Foley finished fourth in the final round of the Central Lakes Conference Championship May 17, at Eagle Creek Golf Club. She shot a 79 to go with her opening-round 78 to earn all-conference honors and

OTHER NOTABLE PERFORMANCES

Ethan DeRosier, boys lacrosse, scored two goals against Becker and added three more against St. Michael-Albertville. Taylor Madison, boys lacrosse, scored two goals against Becker.

Avery Mulholland, girls lacrosse, scored four goals against Rocori and scored three more against St. Michael-Albertville. Brynne Folden, girls lacrosse, scored three goals against Rocori.

Olivia Tautges, softball, hit a three-run home run and pitched the victory against St. Michael-Albertville.

Cayden Kleffman, baseball, hit a two-run home run in a 3-2 loss to Rogers.

Andrew Albright, boys track and field, won the Section 8-3A triple jump title and advanced to state in the shot put and 110-meter hurdles.

Hanna Caughey, girls track and field, advanced to state by placing second in the discus and shot put at the Section 8-3A meet.

Turner Person, boys golf, advanced to state after finishing fourth in the Section 8-3A Tournament.

help Brainerd to second place in the final team standings.

"Being committed to St. Thomas and knowing you're playing college golf next year has helped with my approach this year," Foley said. "Some of it, too, is developmental. I've come along with my golf game and how I approach things has changed. Mentally I've come a long way in the last year."

"I think, too, I've worked hard and really focused on getting my body stronger with training. I hit the ball better and I'm just constantly working at it. Mentally, you're always going to need to improve and this year I was just really focused on having a great senior year and enjoying my time with those younger girls on the team, who I've loved playing with. My best friend Anna England, I've just had so much fun with her on the course."

Being a senior captain was an important title for Foley this season. As a seventh-grader, she was welcomed onto the varsity and looked up to her older teammates. She wanted to make sure she left that same impression on her younger teammates.

"It's been great having Katie on the team for the last several years," Person said. "She makes sure that she includes everybody. She has a great work ethic and spends a lot of time at the driving range and the practice green and things like that. The other girls see that and realize that's what it takes."

"We wish her the best of luck. Not only at the state tournament here, but as she moves on to play Division I golf in college. I hope she is successful all the way around."

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**Congratulations to this week's
Warrior Athlete of the Week
Katie Foley**



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Brainerd, MN 56401
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Watch her interview online at brainerddispatch.com.

SOFTBALL

From Page B1

Olivia Tautges' sisters will be available if she gets in any trouble. Emma Tautges owns a 0.7 ERA with 14 strikeouts in 20 innings pitched.

As good as Brainerd's pitching has been, its defense has been equally up to the task. The Warriors have committed just 17 errors and own a .962 fielding percentage.

"I hope we show up at Caswell Park in Mankato and we look as loose as we have all year because it's worked," Jordan said. "Even though it may not look like it, our team is very focused and confident.

"I really attribute that to our leadership. Our four captains, who continually just remind everybody that if a mistake is made, the next play is coming at you and you need to be ready so put it behind you."

Olivia Tautges leads Brainerd's potent offense with a .471 batting average, a .553 on-base percentage and a 1.118 slugging percentage. Brainerd has hit 19 home runs, with 12 coming from the senior. She leads the team with 48 RBIs to go with 25 runs.

Getting on base in front of Tautges has been the speedy

duo of Josie Kappes (junior, centerfield) and Kasia Kroll (senior, right field). Kappes is hitting .425 with a .533 on-base percentage. She is second to Kroll in runs scored with 31. She leads the team with three triples and 16 walks.

Kroll is hitting .463 with a .464 on-base percentage. She's scored a team-high 32 times.

Brainerd's lineup doesn't get any less potent after Olivia Tautges as Emma Tautges (senior, first base) is hitting .442 with a .545 slugging percentage in the cleanup slot. She has 23 RBIs and 18 runs scored with six doubles and a triple.

Meghan Smith (senior, third base) is hitting .414 with a .614 slugging percentage. She's second on the team with three home runs to go with 19 RBIs and 26 runs scored.

Elsa Borchert (sophomore, left field) is hitting .328 with a .484 slugging percentage. She's driven 19 runs and scored 23 times herself.

"I think it's super important to be balanced one through nine," Jordan said. "It's also important to be able to succeed at all phases of the game whether it's small ball, bunt the ball, advance the runners and run the bases well and also have kids who hit to gaps or even over the fence. 1-9 We have the ability to do all of those things. I think we're a tough team to play against."

Mya Tautges (Freshman, shortstop) scored two of Brainerd's three runs in the

section final. She's hitting .361 with a .541 slugging percentage. She has 15 RBIs and 4 runs scored.

Sophomore Lacy Busch has come on in the last part of the season to secure the designated player spot. She drove in a run during the section title game. She's hitting .364 in just 11 plate appearances. Busch and Molly Weiland split time during the regular season. Weiland is hitting .259 with eight RBIs.

Maren Ceynowa (Sophomore, second basemen) rounds out the lineup with a .404 batting average and a .615 slugging percentage. She's driven in 15 runs and scored 10 times. She has four doubles, two triples and a home run to her credit.

Junior Sophie Mattson handles the catching duties. She has no errors on the season.

Pinch runners Abby Anderson and Addison Hillman have combined for 20 runs scored.

"I just really hope that they embrace the moment and have fun with it and understand that this truly is a gift to be playing more games together and to be playing in June," Jordan said. "I just hope we relax and have fun like we have all year."

"It's a game. We play a game with good people and good friends. We're playing for our community and I just want to go there and have a lot of fun and I think the girls want to do the same thing."

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TRACK

From Page B1

"I'm just really excited to see those four compete," Rutman said. "This season there has been some frustration about where their times have been and it kind of came all together at the section meet and we wanted it too. Brenna is a great anchor for that relay. She's powerful, explosive and the rest of her teammates set her up for success. I would love to see that team on the podium again."

"Myah Nelson has been on this 4x100 since she was a freshman and has been a key player in this 4x100 relay for a long time. Molly Hage-lie was there last year as well and has worked really hard to be on the stage again."

Senior Andrew Albright is another Warrior who will compete in three events at state.

Albright won the triple jump at sections in 44-6, finished second in the shot put at 56-8 and ran the 110 hurdles in 15.31 to qualify in all three events.

"He'd be your prototypical decathlete," Warriors boys head coach Rod Reuer said. "Which you normally see at the collegiate level, you don't normally see that at the high school level. He started out as a long and triple jumper. Through his maturity and growth, he's got the strength that we pushed him to a couple more events because we needed to get more out of him. He's not a runner, so we pushed him to shot put and he's turned into one of the best shot putters

in the state. With hurdles, in Minnesota, you can only be in three field events or three running, so we told him to try hurdling and he's turned into being a pretty good hurdler."

Returning to state is the boys 4x800 relay team of senior Michael Howe, senior Baden Bastian, senior Thomas Ruhl and sophomore Brandon Stark.

Three of the four competed last year at state and finished sixth in 8:04.35. Ruhl, who is the Warrior Male Athlete of the Year, anchors the relay with Bastian as the starter. Howe replaced Ethan Klisch from last year's relay team.

"We haven't really run them together much as the season progressed," Reuer said. "We knew having three of the four backs is a pretty good nucleus and we were looking for that fourth piece. Michael Howe rose to that occasion and it was fun to finally put it together at the section meet. They had a chance to go to the Hamline Elite Meet to show our stuff, so we knew we had a shot."

Stark won't just be running in the 4x800 at state as he also qualified in the 400 dash with his second-place time of 50.33.

"He picked up where he left off last year," Reuer said. "He's been dealing with an ankle injury, so he hasn't gotten the full training, but we are keeping him rested and ready to go. Hopefully, he can peak and have his best race at the end of the season."

The girls 4x800 relay team of junior Emily Bastian, eighth grader Annelise Baird, fresh-

man Brooke Wenz and sophomore Bridget Collins also made it to state with a 9:52.81 time.

"When looking at our 4x800 we are a pretty young team and two of the members were brought up as eighth graders and so this is a really big jump," Rutman said. "Emily Bastian has historically been a 400 runner and this year we dabbled in putting her into the 800 a few times and she had some strong performances and held up there for the remainder of the event. Bridget Collins has been on varsity since a seventh grader and we've been waiting for her to be on this stage for awhile."

Senior Hanna Caughey returns to state in both shot put and discus. She got second place in both events at sections with a 114-10 throw in the discus and a 38-0 throw in the shot put.

Caughey was in a car accident prior to sections and Rutman said it was a relief that she qualified.

Last year, Caughey finished sixth in the shot put with a throw of 38-2.5 and seventh in the discus at 120-8.

"I know at the end of the last year the state meet ended with performances that she wasn't too excited about," Rutman said. "For this year, I know she's trying to go after big marks. She'd love to get 40-0 in the shot and break the school record in the discus."

Freshman Madi Miller ran the 1600 run in 5:17.28 to qualify for state and senior Lily Birks cleared the high jump in 5-2 to get to state as well.

"For Lily, it's a pretty big deal she's here," Rutman said. "She's battled some pretty significant injuries throughout the year, so for her to make the state meet is kind of incredible. She's pretty consistent at jumping at 5-2, it would be nice if she could get an inch or two more and be more competitive in the high jump."

"When talking about Madi, she's so young, but she's not a novice when it comes to running competitively. She has some really big goals in the mile to be more competitive and she had an incredible section race. It's truly a highlight to get to that state meet and to continue that momentum would be very exciting."

Junior Dillon MacLaughlin ran the 200 dash in 22.65 to reach state and junior Gavin Hoelzel pole vaulted in 12-7 to qualify, too.

"Dillon had a legit shot in the 100 as well, but he really got out and went for it in the 200," Reuer said. "For him, it's going to be his first state meet and his goal will be to advance to the finals on Saturday."

"Gavin had a great section meet in the pole vault. He really came along well in his technique and had a good conference meet. Unfortunately, Gabe Wagner had a hamstring injury and couldn't height, so that took out one of the top competitors, but Gavin found a shot and he took it."

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individuals not on that team advance to state. Herold shot a 79 Tuesday for a two-day 160, which placed tied him for seventh overall and sixth among none Pequot players.

Team scores: 1-Pequot Lakes 315-325 — 640, 2-St. Cloud Cathedral 329-312 — 641, 3-Albany 327-326 — 653, 4-Staples-Motley 327-338 — 665. Section Champion: Luke Ashbrook (Kimball) 148. Pequot Lakes results: Tyler Seeling 75-74 — 149, Cooper Johnson 78-82 — 160, Anthony Armstrong 80-85 — 165, Michael Oseland 82-88 — 170, Tollef Birkeland 82-88 — 170, Logan Fogarty 92-84 — 176. Pierz results: Logan Herold 81-79 — 160, Lance Otremba 81-87 — 168. Staples-Motley results: Carter White 77-81 — 158, Grant Bestland 83-78 — 161, Peyton Mithun 81-83 — 164, Keller Anderson 86-96 — 182, Thomas Johnson 105-108 — 213. Next: Class 2A State Tournament at Ridges at Sand Creek, Jordan, 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 14.

SCOREBOARD

AREA EVENTS

Wednesday, June 8
BASEBALL
Section 8-3A Final
At St. Cloud
No. 2 Alexandria vs. No. 6 Little Falls 4 p.m. 6 p.m. (If necessary)

TV AND RADIO

Wednesday, June 8
BASEBALL:
MLB: Detroit at Pittsburgh, 11:30 a.m., MLB
MLB: New York Yankees at Minnesota, 6:30 p.m., BSN, KKIN-FM (94.3), KUAL-FM (103.5), WYRQ-FM (92.1), KWAD-AM (920)
BASKETBALL:
NBA Finals: Game 3: Golden State at Boston, 8 p.m., ABC
SOCCER:
UEFA Nations League: Belgium vs. Poland, 1:30 p.m., FS1
SOFTBALL:
College World Series: Game 1, 7:30 p.m., ESPN
TRACK AND FIELD:
College men: NCAA Outdoor Championships Day 1, 6:30 p.m., ESPN2

BASEBALL

Table with columns for Professional MLB, American League (East, Central, West), National League (East, Central, West), and Victory League standings (North/East Division, South/West Division).

BASKETBALL

Table with columns for Professional NBA Finals, WNBA Eastern Conference, Western Conference, and Sunday's Games.

HOCKEY

Table with columns for Professional NHL Playoffs and Sunday's Games.

SOCCER

Table with columns for Professional MLS Eastern Conference, Western Conference, and Victory League Schedule.

BASEBALL

Victory League Schedule
Friday, June 10
St. Clair Wood Ducks at Nisswa Lightning, 7:30 p.m.
Foley Lumberjacks at Pierz Brewers, 7:30 p.m.

GIRLS

From Page B1

The top team and top five individuals not on that team advance to state. Team scores: 1-Pequot Lakes 336-350 — 686, 2-Albany 361-341 — 702, 3-St. Cloud Cathedral 402-375 — 777, 4-Pierz 409-417 — 826.

Section Champion: Abby Thelen (Albany) 161, Genevieve Birkeland (Pequot Lakes) 161. Little Falls results: Abby Turkowski 88-88 — 176. Pequot Lakes results: Genevieve Birkland 76-85 — 161, Morgan Krieger 82-85 — 167, Annie Neva 86-85 — 171, Charlee Sullivan 92-97 — 189, Kate Stephens 97-95 — 192, Bahati Gibbs 106-103 — 209. Pierz results: Emily Virnig 91-87 — 178, Kari LeBlanc 102-104 — 206, Tiffany Virnig 113-107 — 120, Kaylee Gruber 103-119 — 222, Addie LeBlanc 116-120 — 236, Joleen Weyer 119-123 — 242. Staples-Motley results: Mallory Ueselman 90-88 — 178, Bo Erholtz 91-93 — 184. Wadena-Deer Creek results: Kayla Meeks 97-109 — 206. Next: Class 2A State Tournament at Ridges at Sand Creek, Jordan, 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 14.

GOLF

From Page B1

Staples-Motley's Carter White fired a Day Two 81 for a two-day 158 that placed him fifth individually to advance to state. The freshmen led the Cardinals team to fourth place with a 665. Grant Bestland finished ninth with a 161 and Peyton Mithun was 13th at 164.

Pierz's Logan Herold was one stroke shy of advancing as an individual. The top team and the top five

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AMATEUR BASEBALL

Buckman needs extras to get past Randall

RANDALL — Joe Kahl scored on a wild pitch to score the winning run in the 11th inning for the Buckman Billygoats in a 2-1 win over the Randall Cubs Saturday, June 4.

Todd Robinson pitched all 11 innings for Buckman and struck out seven. He allowed six hits and one run.

Travis Kahl recorded a double and Jack Suska had two hits for the Billygoats.

Buckman 2 7 0
Randall 1 6 0
WP: Todd Robinson. LP: Nicolas Henry. 2B: Buck-Travis Kahl

Buckman 15, Royalton 2

ROYALTON — The Buckman Billygoats stacked 17 hits in their 15-2 win over the Royalton Riverdogs Sunday, June 5.

Buckman 15 17 1
Royalton 2 4 3
WP: Aaron Weber. LP: Grayson Suska. Nisswa 2 5 0

OPOLE — Ty Swenson ripped a two-run single to score the only runs for the Nisswa Lightning in their 2-1 win over the Opole Bears Saturday, June 4.

Kody Ruedisili and Aaron Jenkins each had doubles for the Lightning in the win.

Aaron Jenkins pitched a complete game for the Lightning and struck out six.

Nisswa 2 5 0
Opole 1 1 0 1
WP: Aaron Jenkins. LP: Jake Nelson. 2B: N-Kody Ruedisili, Aaron Jenkins.

Lakers 7, Nisswa 0

NISSWA — Ryan Diers launched a home run for the Pierz Lakers in their 7-0 win over the Nisswa Lightning Friday, June 3.

Kody Ruedisili tallied the only hit for Nisswa, a double in the first inning.

Noah Cekalla picked up the win on the mound for the Lakers.

Lakers 7 10 1
Nisswa 0 1 2
WP: Noah Cekalla. LP: Sam Jensen. 2B: N-Kody Ruedisili. HR: L-Ryan Diers.

Fort Ripley 3, Lakers 2

FORT RIPLEY — Nick Jelacie ripped a two-run double for the Fort Ripley Rebels in their 3-2 win over the Pierz Lakers Sunday, June 5.

Bill Sather had an RBI-double to help the Rebels build a 3-0 lead.

The Lakers scored two in the seventh and left the bases loaded. Brady Petron and Luke Girtz scored the runs for Pierz.

Bryce Flanagan picked up the win and pitched six innings with five strikeouts. Preston Rocheleau was tagged with the loss and struck out 10 over eight innings.

Rochleau, Girtz and Paul Her-

man each had two hits for the Lakers.

Lakers 2 6 0
Fort Ripley 3 4 0
WP: Bryce Flanagan. LP: Preston Rocheleau. SV: Brett Kramer. 2B: FR-Nick Jelacie, Bill Sather.

St. Mathias 6, Royalton 5

ROYALTON — Zach Houle singled home the go-ahead run for the St. Mathias Devils in their 6-5 win over the Royalton Royals Saturday, June 4.

The Riverdogs tied the game with four runs in the bottom of the sixth highlighted by a two-run home run by Cole Jendro.

Kamden and Kolton Happke each had two-run singles for the Devils in their five-run top of the fifth.

St. Mathias 6 7 0
Royalton 5 5 3
WP: Braxton Tautges. LP: Zach Leibold. Sobieski 11, Brewers 1

LITTLE FALLS — Jake Kapphahn went 2-for-5 with a double and pitched 5.2 innings to get the win for the Sobieski Skis in their 11-1 victory over the Pierz Brewers.

Scott Litchy and Thomas Miller also had doubles for the Skis, who tallied 13 hits total.

Miller went 4-4 with two RBIs. Dusty Parker went 2-3 with three runs scored and three RBIs.

Ryan Stuckmayer tallied two hits for the Brewers in the loss.

Brewers 1 4 1
Sobieski 11 13 0
WP: Jake Kapphahn. LP: Rylee Rauch. 2B: S-Jake Kapphahn, Scott Litchy, Thomas Miller.

Sobieski 18, Flensburg 0

FLENSBURG — Collin Eckman and Zach Opatz each blasted home runs for the Sobieski Skis in their 18-0 win over Flensburg Sunday, June 5.

The Skis plated 10 runs in the top of the seventh inning. Scott Litchy allowed one hit and struck out eight over seven innings to get the win.

Jake Kapphahn, Eckman, Dusty Parker and Gabe Hirsch all had two-hit games for the Skis.

Sobieski 18 12 0
Flensburg 0 1 3
WP: Scott Litchy. LP: Gerard Kokett. 2B: S-Jake Kapphahn, Collin Eckman, Gabe Hirsch, Riley Hirsch. HR: S-Collin Eckman, Zach Opatz.

Foley 19, Bulldogs 2

FOLEY — Alex Foss picked up the win for the Foley Lumberjacks in their 19-2 victory over the Pierz Bulldogs Sunday, June 5.

Charles Hackett, Drew Beier and Josiah Peterson all had three hits.

Brewers 5, St. Mathias 3

ST. MATHIAS — The Pierz Brewers tallied seven hits in their 5-3 win over the St. Mathias Devils Sunday, June 5.

AMATEUR BASEBALL

Bees drop 3 in tournament

ST. STEPHEN — The Brainerd Bees lost three games in the Omann Insurance Invitational June 4-5 in St. Stephen.

In the first game, the Bees lost 6-5 to Forest Lake on a two-run home run in the bottom of the 12th inning.

Eric Martin pitched eight innings stuck out eight and allowed no earned runs. Brian Voigt was tagged with the loss and pitched three innings with four strikeouts.

Eli Robertrts and Adam

Devall each had two-hit games for the Bees with Adam Braun and Gunnar Wicklund each tallying an RBI.

In the second game, the Bees fell to Hastings 6-0.

Wicklund went 2-for-3 with two doubles and Roberts also had two hits and a one double.

Mason Argir was tagged with the loss and pitched four innings with four strikeouts.

In the third game, the Bees suffered a 14-1 loss to

the Minneapolis Cobras.

Mason Argir, Tom Fairbanks and Phil Zynda all recorded doubles in the loss.

Nolan Notch pitched four innings and struck out three.

Brainerd 5 8 2
Forest Lake 6 8 2
WP: Jackson. LP: Brian Voigt.
Brainerd 0 6 0
Hastings 6 5 0
WP: Jeske. LP: Mason Argir. 2B: Brd-Gunnar Wicklund (2), Eli Roberts.
Minneapolis 14 11 1
Brainerd 1 5 3
WP: Liam. LP: Nolan Notch. 2B: Brd-Mason Argir, Tom Fairbanks, Phil Zynda. Overall: Brd 1-4. Next: Brainerd at Hamel 7 p.m. Friday, June 10.

OVER 50 BASEBALL

Harvest sweeps opening games

Terry Brink, Jamie Lado-

ceur, Gary Thompson and Frank Weber each had three hits in the St. Mathias Harvest sweep of the Crystal Cubs 15-12 and 13-3 Sun-

day, June 5.

Charlie Weber picked up the win in Game One with Neil Sather notching the save.

Scott Schmidt pitched a

complete game in Game Two.

Next, the Harvest is the annual father-son tournament Sunday, June 19, at Mathias Park.

AREA GOLF

Giovanni's regains lead at Cragun's

EAST GULL LAKE — Giovanni's Frozen Pizza regained a thin-slice lead over Reichert Bus Thursday, June 2, in the men's league leaderboard at Cragun's Legacy Courses.

Giovanni's owns 154 points to Reichert Bus' 153.5. Brainerd Eye is in third place with 151.5 points followed by Lakes Financial at 14.8.

Matt Ruis and Scott Imgrund had low gross scores while Carter Reece and Craig Holm were low net scorers.

Brian Bemander and Dan Vickerman were pin hunting Thursday while Jarod Carlson and Scott Bender drained the longest putts.

Josh Bacon, Ross Sheidecker, Jamie Ledin and Dave Eutke.

Rodney Harris was closest to the pin and Hoppe made the longest putt. Steve Juranek's 37 was the low gross and Eutke and Tom Freece both shot 31s for low net.

Madden's couples

PEQUOT LAKES — Jim and Louise Hunt teamed with Dave and Sharon Eutke to win the 2x2 couples scramble event Wednesday, June 1, for the Madden's Couple's night.

Judy Pryor, Carol Vogt and Wayne and Lynn Carner placed second.

Carol Vogt was closest to the pin and Dae Eutke made the longest putt.

Whitefish women

PEQUOT LAKES — Myra Faust finished first for the first flight in the individual low net game Wednesday, June 1, for the Whitefish Women 18-hole League.

Paula Gulliford finished second and Cathy Munger was third behind Faust.

Cheryl Bontrager won the second flight with Kathy Coombs in second and Joi Brandt placing third.

Winning the third flight was Marguerite Baker. Enga Wodziak placed second and Sally Eckman third.

Munger, Helen McGrath, Gulliford and Barb Hanson each carded a birdie.

MGA news

PEQUOT LAKES — Claudia Pilot of Grand View

Lodge and playing partner Brenda Williams of Wind-song Farm finished fourth in the championship flight of the MGA Women's Senior Four-Ball Championship Monday, June 6, at Whitefish Golf Club.

The duo shot 11-over for two rounds. Christine Dean and Adele Peterson shot a 3-under to win the two-day event.

The team of Cathy Mungger and Nancy McEnroe of Whitefish Golf Club placed fifth in Flight One.

Debbie Enger and Joan Hasskamp placed second in Flight Two.

Sue Seher and Helen McGrath of Whitefish Golf Club finished fourth in Flight Three followed by Jeanne Mooty and Lori McCormick of Minikahda Club and Whitefish in seventh place.

Roxanne Thompson and Maxine Riches of Madden's Resort and Whitefish placed fifth in Flight Five.

In Flight Six, The team of Katie Deeg and Jean Buller of Golden Eagle and Grand View Lodge placed third in Flight 6 ahead of Dianne Schafer and Lisa Hurt of Golden Eagle and Lisa Hurt.

Holes-in-One

Mark Gonnion, Nisswa, aced the 136-yard second hole of The Classic at Madden's June 2 using a pitching wedge.

Adam Knochenmus, Bagley, aced the 314-yard seventh hole at Madden's Pine Beach West June 4 with a driver.

CORRECTION

In the area girls golf story published Tuesday, June 7, the Brainerd Dispatch mistakenly reported Pillager's Rya Glas the best performer for the Huskies at the

Section 6-2A meet. Kimberly Keefe, who carded a 101, was the top Pillager finisher. The Dispatch regrets the error.

2022 BRAINERD LAKES AREA GOLF COURSE GUIDE

			Number of Holes	Driving Range	Short-Game Practice Facility	Twilight Time	Pro Shop Available	On-Course Beverage Service	On-Site Lodging	On-Site Dining
BREEZY POINT RESORT Traditional Golf Course	218-562-7166 breezypointresort.com/traditional-golf-course-brainerd	18				2	✓	✓	✓	✓
BREEZY POINT RESORT Deacon's Lodge	218-562-6262 breezypointresort.com/deacons-lodge-golf-course	18	✓	✓		2	✓	✓	✓	✓
BREEZY POINT RESORT Whitebirch	218-562-7177 breezypointresort.com/whitebirch-brainerd-golf-course	18	✓	✓		2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Crosslakes Golf Course	218-692-4653 crosslakesgolf.com	27	✓	✓		3	✓	✓		✓
Emily Greens	218-763-2169 emilygreens.com	18	✓	✓		3	✓	✓		
Golden Eagle Golf Club	218-763-4653 golfgoldeneagle.com	18	✓	✓		3	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northwood Hills Golf Course	320-692-4325 golfmillelacs.com	18		✓		3	✓	✓		✓
Wildwedge Golf Course	218-568-6995 wildwedge.com	9	✓	✓			✓		✓	
Whitefish Golf Club	218-736-9055 whitefishgolf.com	18	✓	✓		3	✓	✓		✓

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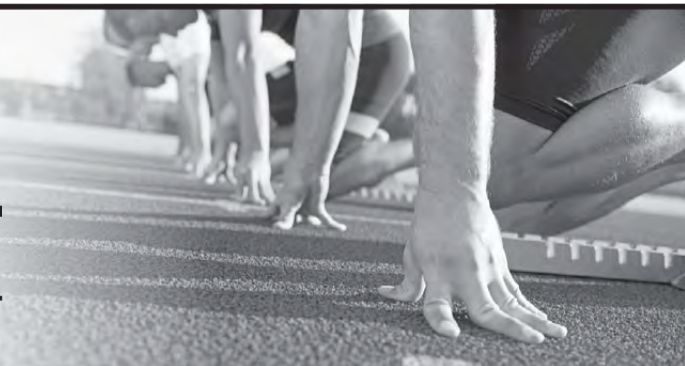


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AREA BASEBALL

Dykhoff 1-hitter keeps WDC's hopes alive

ST. CLOUD — Josh Dykhoff tossed a one-hitter to pitch the No. 3 Wadena-Deer Creek Wolverines back into the Section 6-2A Championship with a 5-1 victory over No. 8 Eden Valley-Watkins in the Section 6-2A Loser's Bracket Tuesday, June 7. Dykhoff struck out 15, and walked one over seven innings. At the

plate, he went 3-5 with a triple, two runs scored and an RBI. Payton Rondestvedt also tripled, drove in a run and scored and Connor Davis doubled and scored for WDC. **EVW 11 0 WDC 5 8 3** WP: Josh Dykhoff. LP: Neimen. 2B: WDC-Connor Davis. 3B: WDC-Dykhoff, Payton Rondestvedt. Overall: WDC 21-4. Next: Wadena-Deer Creek in the Section 6-2A Championship at Putz Field, St. Cloud 4:30 p.m. Thursday, June 9.

EVW 8, Pierz 3 ST., CLOUD — A seven-run third inning propelled the Eden Valley-Watkins Eagles to an 8-3 upset victory over the No. 2 seeded Pierz Pioneers in the Section 6-2A Loser's Bracket Tuesday, June 7. Andy Winscher was 2-4 with a run and an RBI. Kirby Fischer was 1-1 with a run for the

Pioneers. Louis Gruber scored Pierz's other run. Reese Young was tagged with the loss. He allowed all eight runs, but just three were earned. He gave up five hits and four walks and struck out four over three innings. Jeremy Bingesser struck out four in three innings of no-hit relief. He did walk two.

EVW 8 5 1 Pierz 3 6 3 WP: Nolan Geislinger. LP: Reese Young. Overall: Prz 18-6.

Proctor 4, Aitkin 3 DULUTH — Zack Ehnstrom hit a three-run triple, but the No. 4 seeded Proctor Rails forced extra inning and topped No. 3 Aitkin 4-3 in Section 7-2A Loser's bracket Tuesday, June 7. Craig Ashton went 2-3

with a run. Carson Kullhem suffered the loss, but allowed just four runs, three earned on five hits and four walks. He struck out three over seven innings pitched. The loss ends the Gobblers' season with a 20-4 record. **Proctor 4 6 0 Aitkin 3 8 2** WP: Kennan Reyelts. LP: Carson Kullhem. 3B: A-Zack Ehnstrom. Overall: 20-4

Correa nears return for Twins

Ryan likely to make rehab start

By Betsy Helfand
St. Paul Pioneer Press

MINNEAPOLIS - Carlos Correa went through a full workout on the field on Tuesday ahead of the Minnesota Twins' night game. Joe Ryan threw a bullpen. So did Josh Winder. Things went well for all three of them.

That's the good news. The bad news is that while the Twins await their returns, they have to play the New York Yankees and then the Tampa Bay Rays.

Correa's return is the most imminent. The Twins are hopeful that the star shortstop, who tested positive for COVID-19 while on the last road trip and was sent home, will be ready to play on Wednesday.

What could change that?

"If I wake up feeling like (expletive), that would be it," Correa said. "But besides that, I should be good to go."

Correa said he dealt with a massive headache, chills, sore throat, runny nose and cough while out. Those symptoms have subsided, but he still has some fatigue, he said, which is why the Twins held off on activating him immediately.

Correa said the first two days back at the ballpark working out

were tough on him, but he felt better than he thought he would on Tuesday, leaving him optimistic about returning soon.

Ryan, who also just recently recovered from COVID-19, said he now has thrown three bullpens, the last coming on Tuesday.

"No fatigue in the 'pen," Ryan said. "It felt good. Changeup was good, slider was good, curveball was good. Got some good work in there and the fastball was good."

Twins manager Rocco Baldelli said the plan right now was for Ryan to make a rehab start, though he cautioned that the plans could change and they would wait to see how he recovered over the next couple of days.

Winder (shoulder impingement) also felt good about his bullpen and the progress he has made over the course of the last week. Winder was placed on the 15-day injured list with a right shoulder impingement on May 21, and he said initially he was trying to get a grasp of what was going on and what hurt his shoulder, as well as what kind of workload he could manage. Over the past week, he said he has been throwing consistently as he worked toward getting back on the mound.

"I think the plan right now is to slowly build



Nick Wosika / USA Today Sports

Minnesota Twins shortstop Carlos Correa throws to first base for a force out against the Kansas City Royals on May 28 at Target Field in Minneapolis.

back and see where that goes," Winder said. "Nothing is set in stone yet. There's still some conversations to be had. Today was the big day for me, so I wasn't really looking past this bullpen. We've got to get this out of the way first, and then we can kind of think about the rest later on."

Fellow starter Bailey Ober joined Ryan and Winder on the injured list on Monday with a groin strain, a recurrence of an issue that landed him on the injured list earlier this season. Baldelli said it was his understanding that Ober had not been pitching through injury, but had recovered to 100 percent before reinjuring his groin.

The Twins are also missing Sonny Gray (pectoral), and their starting pitching depth has been stretched thin in recent days — rookie

Cole Sands was added to the roster to make the start on Tuesday in place of Ober.

To make room on the roster for Sands, the Twins put yet another player on the injured list — Kyle Garlick, who strained his left hamstring in Toronto.

"Once we can finally pencil them back in, regardless of who we're talking about, once you get past the first name and the second name and the third name and they start coming back ... I think it will be a pick-me-up for the rest of the group," Baldelli said. "There've been some guys out there who've been pushing through this, and a few that have been healthy and have played the entire time. It's not easy to do when everyone else kind of drops off or gets hurt."



Photos by Brad Rempel / USA Today Sports

New York Yankees designated hitter Giancarlo Stanton, left, celebrates his first inning home run with left fielder Aaron Hicks against the Minnesota Twins on Tuesday night at Target Field.



Minnesota Twins center fielder Byron Buxton doubles against the New York Yankees on Tuesday at Target Field.

Yankees break game open late, beat Twins 10-4

By Betsy Helfand
St. Paul Pioneer Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota Twins pitchers played with fire all night. They finally got burned. In a game where the New York Yankees were clogging the bases — thanks in large part to nine walks by Twins pitching — the Twins still managed to stick with them for a majority of the night.

That is, until the seventh inning. Anthony Rizzo's three-run home run off of Tyler Duffey in the top of the seventh broke open a close game, helping lead the Yankees to a 10-4 victory on Tuesday night at Target Field.

Rizzo's blast came with two outs after the Twins had opted against pitching to Aaron Judge — who hit his league-leading 22nd home run earlier in the game — instead, putting him on via intentional walk. It's the second straight game in which Duffey has served up a three-run homer. On Sunday in Toronto, Duffey allowed a blast that turned what would have been a blowout victory into a nail-biter.

The right-hander, who in the past has been one of the Twins' most reliable relievers, now has a 6.55 earned-run average this season.

The Yankees broke away in the seventh after threatening to do so in earlier innings. In the fifth, after Juan Minaya allowed a single and later in the inning three straight walks — the last forcing in a run — rookie Yennier Cano came in and struck out Judge to keep the game in check.

Cano walked a pair of batters himself in the sixth inning, before working out of the jam. The Yankees had runners on in every inning except the ninth, and began the game by scoring three runs off rookie Cole Sands — two on Judge's home run and one on a Giancarlo Stanton shot — in the first inning.

The Twins chipped away at the lead, though never recovered. They scored a run in four of the first five innings, and they came within a run multiple times but never led.

Twins manager Rocco Baldelli was ejected in the bottom of the seventh inning for arguing after a pitch that missed Max Kepler's bat was ruled a foul ball, keeping a potential double play in place and not allowing the runner on first to potentially advance. Kepler did eventually ground into a double play.

Luis Arraez was removed late in the game with right shoulder tightness.

Lightning cruise past Rangers

Eastern Conference Finals even at 2-2

Field Level Media

TAMPA, Fla. — Ondrej Palat had a goal and two assists to help the Tampa Bay Lightning earn a 4-1 win against the visiting New York Rangers on Tuesday night, leveling the Eastern Conference finals at two wins apiece.

Pat Maroon, Nikita Kucherov and Steven Stamkos also scored while Andrei Vasilevskiy made 33 saves for the Lightning, the two-time defending Stanley Cup Champions who lost the first two games of the series in New York before winning the past two at home.

Artemi Panarin scored and Igor Shesterkin made 27 saves for the Rangers, who scratched center Ryan Strome shortly before the game because of a lower-body injury and lost center Filip Chytil to an upper-body injury late in the second period.

Strome was a 21-goal scorer during the regular season, and Chytil had three points in the first two games of this series.

Game 5 in the best-of-seven series is scheduled for Thursday night in New York.

The Lightning took a 1-0 lead at 2:38 of the first period.

Tampa Bay fourth-line



Nathan Ray Seebeck / USA Today Sports

New York Rangers goaltender Igor Shesterkin (31) saves a rebound shot from Tampa Bay Lightning right wing Corey Perry (10) in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference Final on Tuesday in Tampa, Florida.

right winger Zach Bogosian skated through the right circle, cut between New York teammates Ryan Reaves and Justin Braun, then tried a backhand from in close. That shot was saved, but Maroon skated in and swiped the bouncing puck past Shesterkin.

Maroon is trying to become the only active NHL player with four Stanley Cup titles.

Tampa Bay moved ahead 2-0 at 13:07 of the second period.

The Rangers lost possession trying to come through the neutral zone, and Palat passed to Kucherov for a breakaway goal.

It was the 50th point at home for Kucherov in the past three postseasons, as he joined Mario Lemieux and Wayne Gretzky as the only players to accomplish that feat over the past 35 years.

Stamkos put Tampa Bay ahead 3-0 at 4:56 of the third, scoring from

in close off another feed from Palat.

Vasilevskiy was denied his second shutout of this postseason when the Lightning went on a power play and pulled Shesterkin for a two-man advantage and Panarin scored with 3:33 left.

Palat scored into an empty net with nine seconds remaining to make it 4-1.

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Bradbury hopes extra pounds helps him stick with Vikings

Minnesota center gained 10 pounds in offseason

By Chris Tomasson
St. Paul Pioneer Press

EAGAN, Minnesota — Starting with the 2011 NFL draft, players who were first-round picks began to have fifth-year options in their contracts that had to be picked up or declined after a third season. In the first decade under the rule, the Minnesota Vikings didn't invoke such options on five players and none ended up returning for a fifth year with the team.

Center Garrett Bradbury is hoping that trend will change.

Last month, the Vikings elected not to pick up the \$13.202 million option on Bradbury for the 2023 season, putting him in line to be a free agent in March. However, the Vikings then would have the option to re-sign Bradbury, who was the No. 18 overall pick in the 2019 draft.

"Absolutely," Bradbury said Tuesday after

the first day of a mandatory minicamp about wanting to remain with the Vikings past 2022. "I love it here in Minnesota, me and wife (Carson) do. This is an unbelievable locker room, and I think this coaching staff (under new coach Kevin O'Connell), it's pretty easy to buy into what these guys are selling."

Bradbury did stress that he doesn't want to get too far ahead of things. After all, he will need to prove this season he is a player worthy of being re-signed.

"All I'm doing is trying to get better, learn this system, and look forward to having a good year," said Bradbury, who will be paid a base salary of \$2.25 million in 2022.

Since 2011, other first-round picks who did not have their fifth-year options picked up by the Vikings were quarterback Christian Ponder, wide receiver Cordarrelle Patterson, quarterback Teddy Bridgewater, wide receiver Laquan Treadwell and cornerback Mike Hughes. Ponder, Patterson and Bridgewater departed as free



Jeffrey Becker / USA Today Sports

Minnesota Vikings center Garrett Bradbury (56) before the snap against the Chicago Bears during the second quarter Jan. 9 at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.

agents after their fourth seasons. Treadwell was waived before his fourth year but was re-signed and played out the season. Hughes was traded shortly after his option was declined.

Bradbury's option was not expected to be picked up for such a lucrative sum. Since it was declined, Bradbury said he has had no discussions with new general manager Kwesi Adofo-Mensah or O'Connell about his long-term future, saying all discussions have been

with his agent.

"It's kind of cliché but you control what you can control," Bradbury said of his option not being picked up. "And I've got this fourth year, and I'm excited with these new coaches and lot of familiar teammates to go out and have a good year and help the Vikings win a lot of games."

Bradbury started all 32 games his first two seasons and the first seven last year before missing two games while on the COVID-19 reserve list and then being benched

for two other games in favor of Mason Cole. Bradbury did start the final six games after Cole was moved to right guard and Cole then missed the final three games with an elbow injury.

A rap on Bradbury, ranked by Pro Football Focus last year as just the NFL's 29th-best center, has been being overpowered at times by big nose tackles. Bradbury didn't deny after last season that he needed to "be more consistent," and he set out to do something about that.

"I'm putting on weight," he said. "I probably put on 10-plus pounds since last season, so I'm feeling really good. I'm going to continue to work ... in the weight room."

The 6-foot-3 Bradbury said he played at 295 pounds last year and now weighs between 305 and 310. He spent the offseason working out with Vikings guard Ezra Cleveland and tackle Blake Bradel at Exos in Phoenix, and going to local restaurants.

"Lifting and eating," Bradbury said of his off-

season. "Beef and ice cream. Just eating everything that I can."

When Bradbury returned to Minnesota for spring drills in April, the weight he put on was noticeable.

"He's definitely gotten bigger, and we're excited to see what he can do this year," tackle Christian Darrisaw said.

New offensive line coach Chris Kuper said he's been pleased with Bradbury so far in spring drills, saying the "communication part is easy for him" and he's been "very demonstrative" with his calls. But Kuper stopped short of saying Bradbury definitely will be the starter, saying that will "get sorted out" in training camp.

"They're all pushing each other," Kuper said. "Garrett's taken every rep with the (first team). He's been doing a great job."

Bradbury said also taking snaps at center in the spring have been Chris Reed, Jesse Davis and Austin Schlottman. He expects to face competition in camp, and said he welcomes it.

Vikings receivers went to bat for McCardell

Position coach retains his role as a new era begins

By Dane Mizutani
St. Paul Pioneer Press

EAGAN, Minn. — With so many changes this offseason, Keenan McCardell didn't know what to think.

On Jan. 10, the Minnesota Vikings fired coach Mike Zimmer after missing the playoffs for the second consecutive season. On Feb. 16, the Vikings hired coach Kevin O'Connell in a move that signaled a new direction for the franchise.

Meanwhile, the 52-year-old McCardell was left to wonder about his future. It wasn't until a couple of weeks after the Vikings introduced O'Connell that McCardell found out he would be staying in the Twin Cities.

"We had a great opportunity to get together and talk about what he wanted from the posi-



McCardell

tion," said McCardell, the Vikings' receivers coach last season. "He believed in me. He had a lot of friends of mine that called him and said I was a really good coach."

As if that wasn't confirmation enough for O'Connell, receivers like Justin Jefferson, Adam Thielen, and K.J. Osborn, among others, went to bat for McCardell this offseason. They liked his coaching style and wanted him to stick around.

"He's an awesome coach, and I really love him because he played the position and has been in our shoes," Osborn said. "He keeps it real with all of us. He's easy to talk to about anything."



Courtesy / Minnesota Vikings

Minnesota Vikings wide receiver coach Keenan McCardell talks with Justin Jefferson during a practice in Eagan, Minnesota.

"We're really excited to have him back."

The fact that his players vouched for him meant a lot to McCardell.

"It shows what kind of (receivers) room we have," he said. "We take care of each other. We look out for each other."

We make sure that it's a family in there. That's how we feel."

That said, McCardell said he hopes his resume speaks for itself. He spent 16 seasons as a receiver in the NFL, emerging as a star with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

No doubt his experience as a player has helped McCardell as a coach. He can relay information authoritatively day in and day out, which has been extremely helpful in teaching a new scheme that puts a lot of stress on the receivers.

"We put a lot on those guys," offensive coordinator Wes Phillips said. "We're not going to just spell it out and have the longest play calls known to man. Everything is coded. Everything has the ability to get up to the line of scrimmage and go fast. Ultimately, that's what we want so we can put pressure on the defense when we choose to. I think Keenan McCardell has done a phenomenal job. I couldn't be more pleased with him and the job he's done with those guys getting him up to speed."

Asked about the new scheme, McCardell said it excites him because it puts the onus on his players to step up.

"We have to put the ownership on us to make the passing game work," McCardell said. "It's like we are in control. We've got to hear it, see it, run the routes and make the plays."

Briefly

Offensive linemen Austin Schlottmann and Vederian Lowe weren't spotted at TCO Performance Center in Eagan on Tuesday afternoon as the Vikings opened up mandatory minicamp. Meanwhile, Osborn missed practice with an undisclosed injury, and fellow receiver Ihmir Smith-Marsette was on the sidelines wearing a walking boot.

Woods won't play in US Open

Mickelson, Johnson to participate

Field Level Media

Tiger Woods, citing his body's need "to get stronger," announced Tuesday that he will not play in next week's U.S. Open at Brookline, Massachusetts.

"I previously informed the USGA that I will not be competing in the US Open as my body needs more time to get stronger for major championship golf," Woods wrote on Twitter. "I do hope and plan to be ready to play in Ireland at the JP Pro Am and at the Open next month. I'm excited to get back out there soon!"

Woods withdrew from last month's PGA Championship at Southern Hills after three rounds. It marked the first withdrawal from a major in Woods' career.

Woods, 46, shot 1-under-par over the final five holes in the third round in Tulsa, Okla., to avoid recording a score in the 80s for the third time in a major. Still, it was his worst round ever at a PGA Championship.

Woods clearly strug-

gled to make it through 18 holes on his rebuilt right leg, the result of a devastating injury sustained in a single-car crash in February 2021.

The Open Championship will be played July 14-17 at St. Andrews in Scotland.

Mickelson, Johnson cleared to play

Phil Mickelson and Dustin Johnson can compete in the U.S. Open next week after the United States Golf Association announced on Tuesday that it will not punish those who joined the LIV Golf Invitational Series.

Six-times major champion Phil Mickelson, former world No. 1 Johnson and 2017 Masters champion Sergio Garcia are among the exempt golfers for the U.S. Open who are also scheduled to compete this week at Centurion Club outside London in the inaugural LIV Golf event.

The USGA said the U.S. Open field criteria was set prior to entries opening earlier this year and it would not

be fair for those who earned a spot in the year's third major via exemption and qualifying to change that criteria once established.

"Regarding players who may choose to play in London this week, we simply asked ourselves this question — should a player who had earned his way into the 2022 U.S. Open, via our published field criteria, be pulled out of the field as a result of his decision to play in another event? And we ultimately decided that they should not," the USGA said in a statement.

Johnson earned a 10-year exemption after winning the 2016 U.S. Open. Mickelson secured a five-year exemption from his PGA Championship triumph last year while Garcia earned a spot after qualifying for the 2021 season-ending Tour Championship.

The USGA said its decision regarding the June 16-19 U.S. Open outside Boston should not be construed as the national govern-

ing body supporting an alternative organizing entity, nor supportive of any individual player actions or comments.

Both the PGA Tour and DP World Tour have declined requests from members who had asked for releases to compete at Centurion where \$25 million is up for grabs, including \$4 million for the winner. It is unknown whether those competing in the lucrative breakaway circuit's first event will face punishment.

The decision by the USGA means Mickelson, who has finished runner-up a record six times at his national championship, will get another chance to complete the career Grand Slam of winning golf's four majors.

Johnson, speaking to reporters at Centurion prior to the USGA announcement, said he resigned from the PGA Tour and hoped he would be allowed to play the majors, which are not run by the PGA Tour.

Lynx fall to Liberty as New York's Ionescu reigns supreme

By Frank Rajkowski
Special to the St. Paul Pioneer Press

NEW YORK — For the second time in three days, the Minnesota Lynx struggled to find answers for Sabrina Ionescu.

The first time didn't cost them. The second one Tuesday night certainly did.

Ionescu finished with 26 points as the New York Liberty pulled away in the second half to beat the Lynx 88-69 at the Barclays Center in front of a crowd that included WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert.

Kayla McBride finished with 13 to lead Minnesota.

The Lynx (3-9) had beaten the Liberty 84-78 on May 24 at Target Center and 84-77 this past Sunday in Brooklyn despite 31 points from Ionescu. Minnesota was going for the season sweep Tuesday, but those efforts were thwarted by a big night for New York from 3-point range.

The Liberty (4-8), who finished 4 for 30 from beyond the arc in the loss to the Lynx on Sunday, finished 12 for 33 Tuesday. That included a 4 for 4 performance from Ionescu, the third-year

pro out of Oregon.

Minnesota — which went just 3 for 22 from 3-point range — led by as much as three twice in the first quarter, including at 17-14 after a pair of free throws by forward Jessica Shepard with 3:42 to play. But the Liberty ended the quarter on a 14-2 run to jump on top 28-19.

Minnesota turned the ball over six times in the first quarter, leading to nine New York points. The Lynx finished with 12 turnovers in all.

Minnesota pulled within one on a basket by guard Aerial Powers with 3:14 remaining before halftime. But New York guard Sami Whitcomb hit two of her three first-half 3-pointers down the stretch, then Ionescu drained a 3-pointer from half-court as time expired to give her team a 45-37 lead.

New York would then outscore Minnesota 29-11 in the third quarter — including 17 of the second half's first 23 points — to pull away for good.

The Lynx return home to face Washington at 7 p.m. Friday at Target Center. It marks the start of a three-game home-

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