

Southern Minnesota

Sport Zone

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
THE REPORTER



Emm Hacker
Mankato East Cougars

SPRING 2024

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Scarlets softball picking up right where they left off

By AHMED HASSAN
Staff Writer

The 2024 softball season is underway for the Mankato West Scarlets.

They've gotten off to a hot start by going 4-1 to begin the season and only losing to New Ulm so far.

Four Scarlet players were named in the Breakdowns top players going into the season. Brooklyn Geerdes and Madelyn Bode were the two Scarlet seniors named in the Super 100 seniors.

Jillian Olsen was named in the top 75 juniors and Lydia Banse was the only sophomore on the squad by being named in the Elite 35 underclassmen.

Bode, who is a senior this year, reflected on her time as a Scarlet.

"This program has meant a tremendous amount to me.

I have grown, learned, and matured through West softball and most importantly made lifelong friendships.

West softball not only provided me the opportunity to play softball but it has also shown me what it takes to be a State Champion," Bode said.

The Scarlets haven't been on a losing streak yet this season, after opening up their season 2-0 by beating Northfield and Faribault.



Courtesy Photo

The Scarlets then suffered a defeat away from home against New Ulm, but rebounded and found themselves on another two-game winning streak after beating Rochester Mayo and Saint Peter.

Longtime head coach of the Scarlets Don Krusemark says the most rewarding part of this season has been "Seeing the improvement of the players along with their work ethic. They are ready to do the extra

work to be great." The Scarlets are no strangers to winning and domination within the Big 9 and the State level. They've been the Big 9 champs 17 times, while being

runners up 11 times. The Scarlets have been runners up at state twice, but have claimed the coveted trophy three times so far in school history, with the most recent coming back in 2022.

Krusemark is no stranger to winning as he has been a part of all the Scarlet State championships, but has also been here through the highs and lows of the program.

"A ton of hard work. A belief that winning a state championship is attainable. Maybe the greatest factor was a team culture that allowed the players to be their best at all times.

I think winning a championship validates the West softball program as an elite program, and winning multiple state championships puts the West softball program in elite company," Krusemark said.

Winning the state championship is a moment that Bode will never forget.

"My favorite memory playing West softball is the feeling after winning state my sophomore year in 2022.

I remember the game up until the last out when we knew we had met our goal.

It was so much fun celebrating with my teammates, family, and coaches and I will never forget that season." Bode said.



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Mankato West baseball begin 2024 season unbeaten



Courtesy Photo

By AHMED HASSAN
Staff Writer

The Mankato West Scarlet baseball team have had a hot start to their season by opening it up on a four-game winning streak and sitting with a 4-0 record.

The Scarlets got their season off with a win against Northfield at home, but found themselves on the road for their next three games facing Faribault, Rochester Mayo and Rochester JM.

The results ended up being wins for the Scarlets.

Head Coach Scott Kaminski is in his second season, and the goal of the season is "to win a state title."

The Scarlets were close to getting their first state championship back in 2022, when they made a run all the way to the State Championship with a heavily senior packed team.

They ultimately fell short to Benilde St. Margaret in the bottom of the ninth to become the 3A state runner-ups.

The Scarlets have been Big 9 champs just twice.

The first one coming in the 2021 season and the second in the 2022 season.

Kaminski says he initially took the head coach position because of what the Scarlets' program has meant throughout their history.

"The history here. A lot of great players have come through

West HS.

One of my passion's is coaching baseball.

When the job opened and knowing all the savages West had in grades 6-12, I knew we could compete year in and year out," Kaminski said.

The Scarlets 2023 season came to an end after making a strong run to the section finals, but ultimately falling to cross town rivals Mankato East in nine innings.

Kaminski said it was one of his most notable memories stating, "The run we made last year in sections was fun.

Watching guys step up and thrive when injuries happen has been memorable."

The Scarlets yet again have a heavy packed senior class with 11 seniors on the team this year- William Vosburg, Talay Sartell, Brody Koberoski, Kaylor Chamberlin, Andrew Scourbys, Adam Timm, Wilson Magers, Mason Durose, Avery Como and Evan Weibers.

"Being able to watch these young men compete on the field is something I enjoy," said Kaminski.

"Most rewarding part of this season is how everyone plays for each other and not themselves.

These guys truly are a team. Knowing their roles and embracing them."

The season is only just getting started with a long road ahead for the Scarlets. The Scarlets are back in action away from home against Albert Lea Monday.

Mankato West track looks to build off last season

By AHMED HASSAN
Staff Writer

The Mankato West Scarlets Track team has had a strong start to the season after a dominant year prior.

The men's head coach for the Scarlets is Alex Wischnack, the women's head coach is Scott Carlson and the pole vault coach for the scarlets is Minnesota State alumni Matthew Kolb.

The Scarlets are also coached by Ashley Hawker, Sam Udermann and Kai Sill.

Senior Jalen Smith has been dominant for the Scarlets this season, as he is putting up big numbers to lead the men's team in the 100 meter dash (11.33) and 200 meter dash (23.45).

Ava Olson and Ruby Marble lead the way for the women's team so far this season in the 100 and 200 meter dash.

Olson leads the team in the 100 meter, with a team leading 13.62, while Marble leads the team in the 200 meter with 26.38.

Kolb has been impressed by what he has seen from Ella Olsen.

"This season I have to say we have a girl out named Ella Olsen, and she came out this year and she's a total natural and PR'd last week and went 9 '3 and is phenomenal and I wish she would've started as a freshmen, it takes time to learn this event," Kolb said.

Besides her 9 '3 season high on pole vault, Olsen recently hit



Courtesy Photo

a 4' 8 " PR for high jump in the Faribault Invitational.

Senior Blake Kirby has been a presence for the Scarlets as a leader this season by leading the boys team in the high jump this season (19' 5") and is a part of the 4x100 group that leads the team with 43.95 PR at the Faribault Invitational.

In 2022, Smith and Kirby were state champions winning the 4x2 and taking sixth in the 4x1.

They made it to state in the 2023 season, placing sixth in the 4x2 and ninth in the 4x1.

"My favorite memories from high school sports and especially track has to be all the laughs and interactions I've had with other athletes and coaches and the camaraderie with others as

well," Kirby said.

"It's always a good time with lots of laughs at practice and events."

Kolb stated his favorite season was in 2004, "They're all great, but you can't dispute when we won it in 2004 and we had a good team getting second in the two years prior."

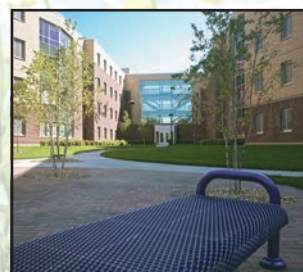
Kirby loves the track program at West as "it means the world to him."

"This program means the world to me as they are what pretty much got me started and in love with sports, the coaches care about us as athletes and humans and want to see us strive in every aspect of life and I think that's a key part of a good program," Kirby said.

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PHOTO MOMENT: Scarlets head coach gets 500th win



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MSU softball gunning for the conference's top seed



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

By HAYDEN LEE
Staff Writer

With a 36-12 record and losing just five games in the last month, the Minnesota State softball team is in hot pursuit of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference's top seed.

With just under two weeks left in the season, the Mavericks sit at no. 3 in the NSIC, behind Concordia St. Paul (34-8) and Augustana, (34-13) who are on a 16-game winning streak.

The Mavericks will have their chance to dethrone the Vikings in their final games of the season, a double-header in Augustana on April 28.

Over the past six games, the Mavericks were on the road against their in-state rivals, St. Cloud State and Minnesota Duluth.

The Mavericks were able to take home a 7-1, 10-5 sweep over the Huskies, but split the series against the Bulldogs, 2-6 and 5-0.

Following those games, they split their home series against Winona State.

In their first game against the Huskies, three first-inning runs were enough to power the Mavericks to a victory, but two runs in the sixth and seventh inning were the dagger in a great game for ace McKayla Armbruster.

Armbruster pitched a complete game where she allowed just four hits, one run and struck out five batters.

She also pitched and won in the following game, giving her 16 wins on the season, compared to just five losses.

In the next game, the Huskies came out and scored the first two runs of the game in their first at-bat.

The Huskies were able to build up a 4-1 lead heading into the sixth inning, but two great rallies in the sixth and seventh innings gave the Mavericks the 10-5 win.

The Mavericks scored all nine of their runs in the sixth and seventh inning runs with two outs.

"We got determined to win and grit it out," said head coach Lori Meyer in a press release posted to the Maverick Athletics website.

"We battled with great at bats and capitalized on their mistakes and had some great baserunning.

It was great for us to score nine runs all with two outs in those final innings."

In their first game against Duluth, the Mavericks would have no such luck coming back against a multi-run lead.

The Bulldogs got up 4-0, courtesy of a grand slam in the first inning and never looked back.

The Mavericks would put up one run in the second and third inning, but those two runs would be the only ones they would score, leading to a 6-2 defeat at the paws of the Bulldogs.

However, they would bounce

back with a 5-0 win in the next game, where Armbruster pitched a two-hit complete game shutout, not allowing a baserunner until the bottom of the fifth.

Ellie Tahlman and Rhyann Fritz led the way offensively with a combined four hits and all five runs batted in for the winning team.

"Our ability to get runners on base and have good at bats set us up for success in game two," Meyer said.

"We were able to get timely hits with runners in scoring position. [Armbruster] pitched great, I love how she competed on the mound. UMD is a tough offensive team to shutout."

Next up for the Mavericks was a Tuesday doubleheader against Winona State, which they split, 2-1 and 0-4. In the first game, the game was scoreless until the top of the third inning, where the Warriors struck first.

The Mavericks would respond in the fifth inning with two runs to seal the game.

The following game saw the Warriors score one run in the first and sixth inning, and adding two more in the seventh while skunking the Mavericks to give them the 4-0 win.

The Mavs will take on three more opponents, including the aforementioned Augustana Vikings before the NSIC Tournament begins May 1.

The other two are Wayne State and Southwest Minnesota State.



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

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A member of Minnesota State

Mankato East Softball looks to win the State



Courtesy Mankato East Softball on 'X'

By LUKE JACKSON
News Editor

The Mankato East Cougars softball season is in full swing as they look to reclaim their throne as reigning champs.

This past year, the Cougars team won the Class AAA state title in a blowout game of 11-0 versus Chisago Lakes.

This year could be another special season for not only the program, but for Mankato sports as the State tournament is being held in Mankato's own Caswell Park.

The team is currently ranked first in the state and is looking to keep its dominant presence in the state.

With the shockingly mild winter Minnesota experienced, the teams have gotten to experience nice weather as soon as the season got under way.

Fields are in full effect and the teams and fans don't have to wait for June to get their fill of prep softball.

The Cougars roster is filled with players returning from last year. One player returning is University of Minnesota commit Kylinn Stangl.

OnDeck Softball has Stangl ranked as a three-star recruit.

Her main position is pitcher

but she can also hold her ground at third base.

Her top throwing speed is 68.

Back in 2022 she also made the USA 15-U roster.

"She's had her sights set on this. She's got a ton of talent, but her work ethic is really good.

That's half of it, sometimes, if not more," head coach Joe Madson said in an article by Mankato's Free Press.

Madson was recently introduced to the Minnesota Fastpitch Coaches Association Hall of Fame during a ceremony at the Kato Ballroom.

He has been teaching English for 33 years and has been coaching for 29.

Throughout his years he has compiled a dynastic record of 540-163.

He also has 12 Big Nine Conference championships and 10 section titles, with five runner-up finishes.

The Cougars have placed third at the state tournament three times and won the consolation bracket three times.

The team seems to be in good hands as the 2024 season is underway.

With eyes set on the state championship, it will be interesting to see who can stop them.

Mankato East baseball in full swing



Courtesy Mankato East Baseball on 'X'

By LUKE JACKSON
News Editor

With a dry winter and a warm start to Spring, the Mankato East Cougars have had an exciting start to their season.

On April 4th, the Cougars won on a walk off in what was their final at bat of the night. They won off an error to win the game 6-5 versus Albert Lea in a Big Nine Conference baseball game at Wolverton Field.

Caden Hansen and Owen Studtmann each had two-run doubles, and Ainsley Stubbs had two doubles. Nathan Bridger pitched a perfect inning to get the victory.

Nicholas Werk has been the

highlight of the team so far. The South Dakota State recruit leading the team to a shutout victory of 8-0 against Red Wing.

In the win, Werk had a triple and three scored runs. Teammates Zach Bosse and Hansen each had a hit and two RBIs.

Last year, the team took second in the section 2AAA state tournament. This year they look to build back to the tournament after losing a good portion of the team.

The Cougars started the season off strong with three straight wins. The first loss was given to them at the hands of St. Peter.

The team lost 6-2 after Drew Simonette notched three hits and scored twice.

"We're like a family and having such a great environment here is going to help us win games. We need to get louder on the bench and quit making mental errors," Hansen said in an article posted by the Mankato Free Press.

There is over one month left of the season which includes 12 games.

They will also play in the section tournament and if they make it, they will try and get another shot at the state title in the MSHSL tournament.

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Maverick men's track and field dominate NSIC



Courtesy Maverick Athletics



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

By LUKE JACKSON
News Editor

The Minnesota State University, Mankato men's track and field team looks to run first to the finish line in the outdoor season.

The team dominated the indoor season. The men took first at all seven of their indoor meets.

Throwing with more power, jumping higher and running faster gave them an easy and dominant win at the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference tournament where they took first place.

They finished with 237 points which more than doubled up second-place finisher Augustana, who finished with 100 points.

Northern State was third with 89 points, followed by MSU Moorhead with 82.

Minnesota Duluth rounded out the top five with 74.5 points.

This was the team's 13th consecutive indoor conference title.

Now the outdoor season is upon us and the Mavs are still looking to control the pace.

Starting the season strong, freshman Jabez Reeves took home Outdoor Track Athlete of the week, while senior James Gilbert won Outdoor Field Athlete of the Week.

Reeves won the 200m dash in a time of 20.77 at the 2024 Cerritos Invitational.

The time ranked him tied for fourth-fastest in NCAA Division II this season. Reeves also won the 100m dash at the Pacific Coast Invitational in a time of 10.37.

He placed second with a time of 10.40 in the 100m dash at the Cerritos Invite.

Gilbert won the long jump at the Pacific Coast Invitational. He leapt 25' 10" (7.87m) to win by nearly a foot.

The mark ranked second in NCAA Division II this season. Gilbert also took second in the long jump with a leap of 7.55m (24' 9.25") at the Bryan Clay Invitational.

At the Holst Invite in St. Paul the team had four champions.

Setting the tone was sophomore Jacob Bennett with a personal best time of 4:02.09 in the 1500m run to top the podium.

Close behind was teammate Leif Larsen to place second.

The junior also had a personal best time of 4:03.42.

Finishing in fifth was freshman Erik Ross, running for 4:13.61, also a personal record time.

Junior Ray Ure also took home a championship title in the 3000m steeplechase, with a time of 9:32.69.

Junior Adam Bohmran had a time of 9:43.45 to finish third.

In the 800m dash, freshman Paul Lins took fourth with a time of 1:56.15.

Lins also ran in the 4x400m relay as the second leg, joined by Bennett, Larsen and Ure to place second with a time of 3:29.02.

For the only field event at the Holst Invite, junior Jed Hansen took first in the pole vault, with a vault in 4.60m (15' 1").

Freshman Blake Wakeling vaulted for 4.45m (14' 7.25") to place second.

At the Dewey Donat Classic, the men's throwers competed in the discus event. Senior Carter Aguilera threw the farthest in the event with a throw of 54.00m (177' 2").

In second, sophomore Oliver Andersen had a throw of 49.33m (161' 10").

Freshman Justin Fretag placed fifth after a throw of 44.10m (144' 8").

Also competing and placing was junior Liam Byrne in sixth, 43.84m (143' 10").

On April 13th, the team took first at the Minnesota State open.

They now have six more meets remaining- two of which are the Maverick Opens.

Afterwards they will see if they are outdoor conference tournament champions and where they rank in the NCAA.

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Saints' seniors take leadership on and off track

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Sports Editor

The St. James Track and Field team coaching staff's commitment to building strong relationships with their athletes over the years is a way that they are able to set high expectations and provide effective leadership that guides them to success.

"Our coaching team aims to create an environment that motivates, values and empowers athletes to excel. We believe in having a team that motivates one another, values clear communication and celebrates progress as key elements to success," said assistant coach Michaela Nordby.

The leadership role at the program isn't only reserved for the coaching staff, older athletes on the roster play their part too.

"Over their years, they have cultivated a tradition where transitioning into juniors and seniors means taking on a leadership role. Each practice kicks off with a dedicated warm-up session led by our senior athletes. In field events, the upperclassmen play a crucial role in helping, coaching and guiding the younger athletes to help them improve," Nordby said.

This season's training had gotten off to a great start for the Saints, as they were able to get outside right away due to the good weather. It has since gotten a bit tougher due to poor weather cutting practices short and even canceling meets.

"During that time, our training sessions had been

intense and focused on improving speed, endurance and technique to prepare for the season," Nordby said.

The evaluation of the progress the athletes are making is done using an iPad. The use of the iPad is an important tool for the Saints' structured approach.

The device allows the coaches to meticulously document athletes' performances.

"In events like long jump, where athletes have multiple attempts, this device enables us to thoroughly review each attempt. After analyzing and discussing the jumps, we can coach what needs to improve for the next jumps. We then extend this process to record running times, throwing and jumping measurements," Nordby said.

To determine which events best suit the athletes, their abilities and interests are taken into account.

"Athletes have the opportunity to specialize in specific events based on their strengths and preferences. At the beginning of the season we do testing, where all athletes try different events and we track the data. After going through the data it gives us some idea of what athletes strengths may be," Nordby said.

Some athletes to look out for include seniors like Levi Miest and Jacob Fiesen. Miest has been great in the mile, while Fiesen has found success in the 400 meter. They are also both exceptional leaders.

The Saints' strengths lie in their dedication, teamwork and spirit.



Courtesy Photo

"We are continuously working on improving our technique, speed and coordination to enhance our overall performance," Nordby said.

Creating an environment where the players feel positivity is how the Saints coaching staff keeps them motivated throughout the season.

"To keep our athletes motivated and focused during training and competition, we implement a combination of goal-setting and positive reinforcement to ensure each athlete feels supported and encouraged. We also talk about keeping the end in mind, meaning we need to perform well at the end of the season and

we're just building now," Nordby said.

Along with having success in competitions, making sure that they are doing their best is part of the Saints' goals for the season.

"The end of the season goal is to make it to the next level, which is sections and state," Nordby said.

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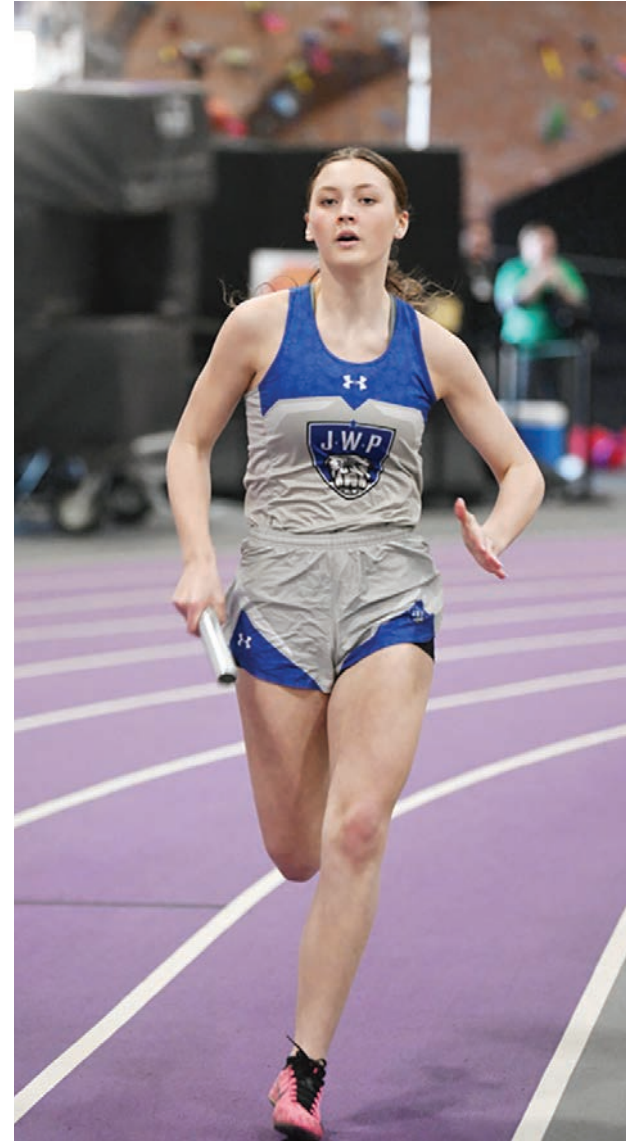
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Maverick baseball catching fire at the right time

By AHMED HASSAN
Staff Writer

The Minnesota State men's baseball team got off to a bad start to begin the 2024 season after losing eight of their first 14 games, which gave them a 6-8 record.

However, the Mavs turned it around in March after winning their series against Northern State, which sparked an electric run of form and they haven't lost a series yet.

The Mavericks have gone 18-4 since that point, and are catching heat in the ladder part of the season.

The Mavs currently have a 24-12 overall record and a 20-6 conference record, which keeps them in second in the conference standings after their two-game series against the University of Sioux Falls.

The Mavericks faced the University of Sioux Falls Wednesday where they split their two-game series.

The Mavs lost game one 5-3, but redeemed themselves in game two winning 10-4.

After the split, MSU Head Coach Matt Magers said he was impressed with his team's play.

"Fischer, Magers, Wickman and Baker showed off their pop at the plate while Matthaides stepped up in relief giving us five quality innings," Magers said in a press release on the Maverick Athletics website.

Louis Magers, Ryan Wickman and Matthew Fleischhacker led the Mavericks in game two with



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

all three players accumulating two runs.

The Maverick offense

has been on a tear recently catching heat in their past eight games (prior to game vs USF)

outsourcing their opponents 110-31, with 16 of those runs coming from homeruns.

The Mavs' batting has also been on fire, averaging a .429 batting average with 112 hits to go along with it.

The Mavericks are dominating the small ball categories, leading the conference in runs, walks, sacrifice flies, hit by pitches and on base percentage.

The Mavs are nationally ranked 12th in on base percentage and 26th in hit-by pitches.

Aidan Byrne, Zach Stroch and Magers have led the Mavs offensively recently, combining for 43 of the Mavs 112 hits over the last eight games.

Byrne raised his batting average from .636 to .424 during the Mavs winning streak, which made it the sixth best in the conference.

Magers and Fleischhacker continue to perform for the Mavs on the mound as the pair have combined for 70 of the Mavs' 97 walks this season, which leads the conference.

Ryan Wickman has been solid on the base path season as he has recently climbed up the rankings in the history books.

He is fifth all-time in MSU all-time steals with 50. Wickman has 19 stolen bases so far on the season.

The Mavericks are back in action Saturday to host Minnesota Crookston in a three-game series at Bowyer Field. The first pitch is scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

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Last go-around for many St. Peter Saints baseball players



Courtesy St. Peter Baseball on 'X'

By HAYDEN LEE
Staff Writer

The 2024 baseball season is off to an up-and down start for the St. Peter high school baseball team.

The Saints are currently 3-2 on the season and do not have a winning or losing streak to this date.

With 11 seniors on their roster, this Saints squad is experienced and ready to take on the best that class 2AA baseball has to offer.

Their first game was a 5-1 win over the Mound Westonka White Hawks Friday, April 5 at Mound Westonka High School.

The Saints scored their first run of the season in the first inning before adding two more in the fifth and two in the sixth.

The White Hawks put up a run in the first inning, but were skunked for the rest of the night.

Four days later, they took on the Hutchinson Tigers in a non-conference game on the road.

The Tigers took home a 6-1 win to drop the Saints to 1-1.

Next up, they played the Mankato East Cougars on the road yet again.

The Saints got the scoring started in the first inning, scoring one run, then exploded for four runs in the fourth inning to take a 5-0 lead heading into the final three innings.

The Cougars got on the board in the bottom of the sixth with their two runs, followed by one run scored by the Saints in the top of the seventh to give the game with a final score of 6-2, Saints. With that win, the Saints moved to 2-1.

To conclude their four-game road stand, the Saints traveled to Stewartville to take on the Tigers.

The Tigers took care of business, 2-1.

Their most recent game came against the New Ulm Eagles, a game they won, 3-1.

The Eagles got the scoring started in the third inning, before one run in the fifth and two in the sixth gave the Saints the advantage that they never relinquished.

With that win, they moved to their current 3-2 record heading into the beef of the season.

Next up for the Saints is a home matchup with Waseca at 5:30 p.m.

PHOTO MOMENT: Fairmont Softball



Courtesy Photo

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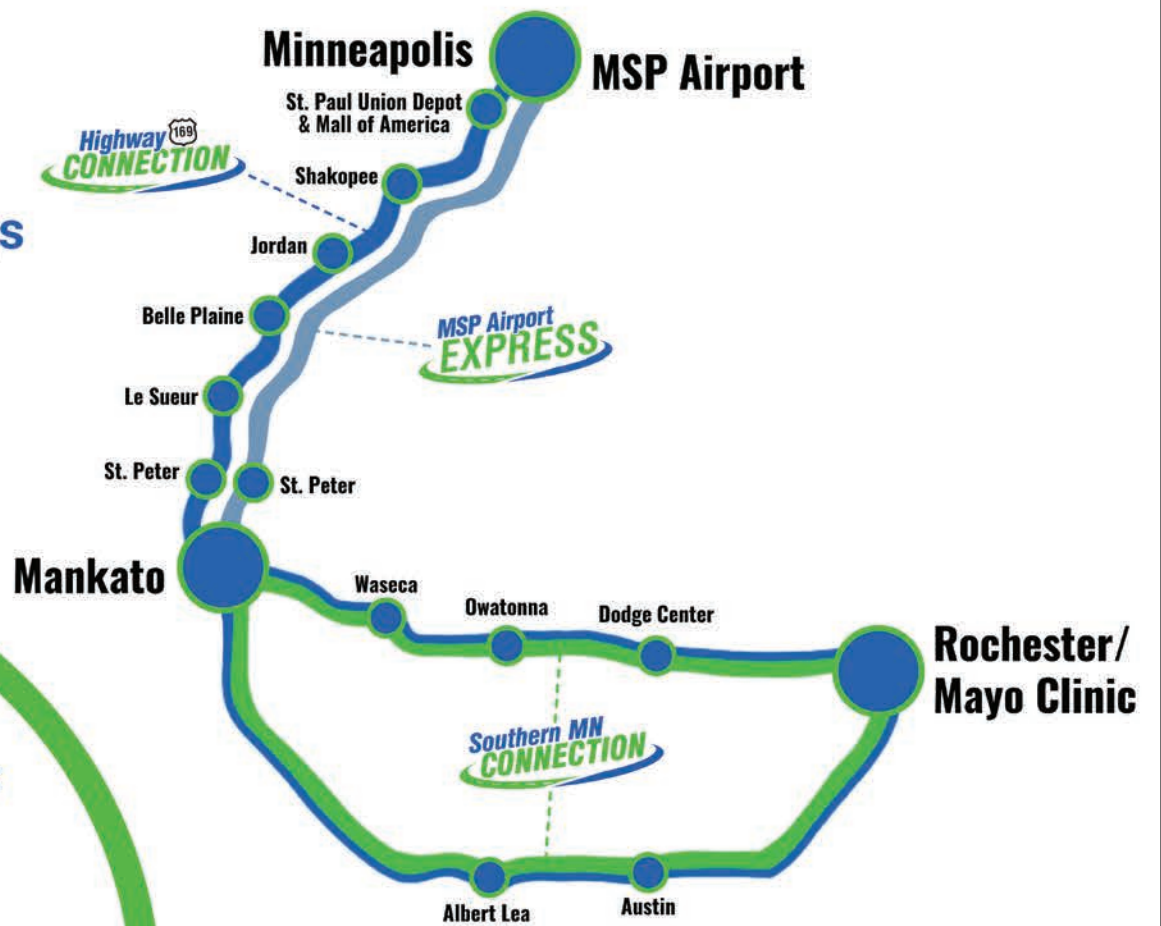




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Cardinals softball look to make noise in the playoffs

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Sports Editor

Despite having quite an inexperienced team, the Fairmont softball coaching staff is happy with what they have seen from their young team thus far.

“We graduated 10 seniors last year, so we knew we’d be a little inexperienced. We had concerns that inexperience might make the beginning of the season rough until we got more accustomed to the varsity game. But we’ve been pleased with the start to the season,” said head coach Cory Hainy.

The Cardinals are 3-3 after their dominant 16-5 win against Worthington in their most recent game. After a slow start which saw them down 3-0 after the first inning, a 10-run third saw the Cardinals take complete control of the game.

A couple of exciting names to look out for this season are senior Navaeh Rahm and sophomore Brylee Miller. They are not only two of the top hitters on the team, but also two top pitchers. They are also three-sport athletes.

The Cardinals coaching staff believes that the most important aspect of a successful program is the relationships that are built between players and coaches.

“We make sure they know we care about them as people and students first, and then as softball players,” Hainy said.

Coaches aren’t the only ones that are making sure that things are going right at practice. Older players take it upon themselves



Courtesy Photo

to show younger players how to do things correctly if need be.

“In the early season practice when we’re stuck inside, all of the players grades 9-12 all practice together. It is always nice to see the older girls showing or explaining drills that the younger girls may not have done as many times,” Hainy said.

The familiarity between many

of the players also contributes to a positive environment.

“Many of the girls have played together for years, both in school ball and in the summer,” Hainy said.

A tool that the Cardinals use to keep track of their player’s performances and additional information is the Gamechanger website.

“We keep track of statistics on Gamechanger and rely on them to aid in monitoring performance, as well as providing additional information in determining playing time,” Hainy said.

One of the ways that the coaching staff keep the players on their toes is by changing drills from time to time.

“We try to change up the drills and activities to keep practices

from being monotonous. We try to stay very upbeat and positive, which is especially important with a younger team,” Hainy said.

Making sure they are peaking at the right time is on the Cardinals’ agenda.

“We want to win at least two section playoff games this year,” Hainy said.

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Minnesota State men's golf wins NSIC

By LUKE JACKSON
News Editor

The Maverick golf team birdied 21 holes in their final round to take first in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference Championship Sunday.

Over the course of the three-day event, Minnesota State shot a 286-296-276—858, the lowest three-round total in league tournament history.

The title marked Minnesota State's first conference crown since the 2017-18 season and the 20th NSIC in program history. Between the NSIC and the NCC, the Mavericks have now collected 31 conference titles. The win secured MSU's place in next month's NCAA tournament.

The top three golfers in the tournament were Mavericks. Max Brud led the tournament shooting -2 in his final round. Ben Laffen and Karson Patten were close behind in second and third.

Brud recorded 12 birdies over the weekend including three championship Sunday.

He became just the eighth Maverick in school history to win medalist honors at the NSIC

championship.

His three-day total of 212 is the third lowest of all-time in the tournament.

"I felt really good all weekend," said Brud in a press release uploaded by Maverick Athletics. "We took advantage of the opportunities we had. Going into this week we had a mindset of being grateful for this opportunity and enjoy our time out on the course."

Throughout the tournament, the average round shot was 76.35. The Mavericks success shows as their average was 72.2.

"I'm really happy with how we started the day going ten under through five holes allowing us to extend our lead," said head coach Alex Schmitz. "We never let up on the gas after that and we got a lot of putts to fall when we needed them. We're excited for the opportunity to represent the conference at the regional tournament."

The tournament was hosted at Adams Pointe Golf Club in Blue Springs, Missouri where the team recently finished third at the preview tournament three weeks ago. At the tournament, the team battled through freezing temperatures and snow. They came back to the course



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

to fair weather and the team showed they had what it takes to win. Their ability to fight and learn the course in the harsh conditions proved to help them

in the final tournament.

Looking ahead, the Mavericks return to action at the NCAA Midwest/Central Super Regional, May 9-11

at KickingBird Golf Club in Edmond, Oklahoma. The event is hosted by Southern Nazarene University.

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MSU women's golf sets eyes on NSIC title

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Sports Editor

The Minnesota State women's golf team has their sights set on the upcoming Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference Championship.

The Mavericks will compete in the tournament on April 26-28 in Smithville, Missouri at the Paradise Pointe Golf Complex.

The two most recent competitions that the Mavs took part in saw them finish in fourth place in the Wayne State College Wildcat Classic, and take home first place in the Upper Iowa University Invite.

In the Wildcat Classic, the Mavs finished with a total team score of 636.

The event was initially supposed to take place over the course of two days, but due to the weather conditions in Wayne, Nebraska, the Mavs had to play all 36 holes in one day.

The winners of the Wildcat Classic Augustana ended the competition with a total team score of 607. AU's Molly Stevens took home top honors on the individual side of things with a total score of 149.

Augustana is the team that MSU measures themselves up



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

against, so not beating them or just narrowly losing to AU was disappointing for them and the coaching staff.

"Augustana's the other really good team in our conference. We beat them last fall once, and they beat us up pretty good yesterday. Sometimes that's golf you know.

We hit some shots and we

were in good position to score and at times we just missed greens or we three putted or I think we let the wind get to us at times," said assistant coach Todd Pfingsten.

Anna Cihak paced the Mavs with a total score of 155, which was good enough for a sixth-place tie on the day.

Other individual

performances for the Mavs in the Wildcat Classic includes Claire Schweim who finished tied for 12th with a score of 158, Kelly Winter finished tied for 20th with a 161 and Sammy Youngquist shot a 162 which gave her a tied 24th-place finish.

Sophomore Ava Olson shot a 168, which gave her a 44th-place tie and freshman Victoria

Woytassek shot a 173, and that gave her a tie in 52nd place.

In the Upper Iowa University Invite, the Mavs won the competition with a total team score of 657.

The Mavs got the victory in a sudden-death playoff hole after being all squared with Winona State University.

This was also an event that saw the Mavs' players have to battle the weather conditions.

Due to the cold and wind, MSU players had to layer up with things such as hand warmers, gloves and stocking caps.

Those items make golfing more difficult anyway, but then they had to deal with a rain delay for well over an hour.

After play resumed, another front came in and it rained for a bit more before things started to clear up.

"In the meantime your grips wet, and now the club's can slip a little bit.

So it was a real challenge. But you know what, our women never gave up.

They hung in there and at the end when we had to make a few putts, when we had to make a few good scores, they did," Pfingsten said.



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Having fun is a top priority at Sibley East track



Courtesy Le Sueur County News

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Sports Editor

For the Sibley East track and field team, the most important goal for all their athletes is to make sure that they are having a good time.

Training for meets this season has mostly been a positive experience for the Wolverines.

"I think it's going well. We have been pretty lucky with the weather and pretty lucky with injuries so far this season.

Although one of our captains to our girls team is out for the season, otherwise the training is going," said head coach Jim Kreft.

Members of the Wolverines' coaching staff monitor the progress and performance of individual athletes throughout the season in two ways.

Firstly, they evaluate the athletes' performances in practice mostly through observation.

The more tangible way they evaluate improvement is by accessing how they fare in their meets based on times and distances results depending on the competition.

When it comes to choosing which competitions certain athletes will be competing in, finding a spot where an athlete can be successful is something that Kreft believes to be one of his responsibilities.

"We start with the individual

interests of each athlete. If there's an athlete that is interested in the long jump, we're gonna have that athlete try the long jump. From there, we think well maybe the high jump is a better alternative than we work with the individual athlete," Kreft said.

The most recent event that the Wolverines took part in was the Waseca Invite.

In the men's varsity 100 meters, senior Tyson Durham finished in sixth place.

Durham ran the distance in 12.25 seconds. In the men's varsity 200 meters, Durham placed second, with a time of 25.25.

The men's varsity 400 meters saw junior Gavin Pomplun finish in 11th place with a time of 1:00.97.

In the women's varsity 100 meters, junior Rachele Wear took home first place with a time of 14.16 seconds. Senior Anahi Farias finished in eighth with a time of 14.83. Liza Reid gave the Wolverines their third top-15 finish with a time of 15.41, which placed her in 11th.

In the women's varsity 200 meters, Wear finished in third with a time of 29.88. Maya Kumar finished in 10th with a time of 32.14.

In the women's varsity 400 meters, sophomore Anna Colling placed sixth with a time of 1:09.80.

St. Peter softball's 15-run game highlights their early season success



Courtesy Photo

By HAYDEN LEE
Staff Writer

Now a 2-2 softball team, the St. Peter Saints are off to a great start offensively, led by their 15-run game in their second game of the year.

Their first game of the season came as a home non-conference matchup with the Hutchinson Tigers, which they won, 6-1.

Their second game, as stated previously, was a 15-0 crushing of the Waseca Bluejays, moving them to 2-0.

However, the very next day, the Saints suffered their first loss of the season against the Belle Plaine High School Tigers, 4-0.

Their most recent game came at home against the Mankato West Scarlets, which was a 6-3 loss. Now at 2-2, they will play their first away game against the Bluejays, who will be looking for revenge.

Following that game, they will be back at home for a doubleheader against the Marshall Tigers on April 25.

Their regular season will conclude on May 17 as things currently stand, an away game against the Mound-Westonka White Hawks.

The Saints are coached by head coach Heidi Niemeyer, who has four assistants.

Danielle Roehrkas, Mackenzie Beey (also the B-squad coach), Jodi Nixon and Kenna West make up the assistant coaching staff.

The Saints roster includes 5 seniors including Madison Kamm, Cali Cross, Riley Rubischko, Isabel Putz and Kali Erickson.

The team's three juniors are Hailey Telshaw, Nora Whippis and Allison Dent.

Auden Anderson is the team's lone sophomore player,

and Piper Winters and Devyn Welp each made the team as freshmen.

The Saints sit squarely in the middle of the South Central Conference, with the Blue Earth Buccaneers in the top spot with a 3-0 conference record and the New Ulm Eagles sit in third place at the moment.

The Saints will look to improve upon their 8-15 record from a season ago, and are already a quarter of the way there with two wins on the year.

If they hope to reach new heights with this team, the offense will have to carry the load.

The defense can be improved, but this group knows their strength.

Look for the Saints to put it together, string together some wins and make some noise in the class 2AA softball scene as the season continues on.

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Minnesota State women's track and field climb NCAA ranks



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

By **LUKE JACKSON**
News Editor

Whether it is running, jumping or throwing, the women's track and field team at Minnesota State University, Mankato is held to the highest standard which propels them to first time and time again.

In the indoor season, the women's team won first place in every meet.

They also took first place in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference Championship and third place in the NCAA Championship.

As they are currently ranked No.5 in the nation, Denisha Cartwright leads the team overall.

Cartwright won her second Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference Outdoor Track Athlete of the Week distinction of the season Tuesday.

Cartwright competed in a trio of California meets over the weekend, winning the 100m

hurdles at two events.

Cartwright ran a time of 12.94 at the Cerritos Invitational and just missed her own national best time of 12.81.

The following day, she ran 13.09 for her second provisional mark of the weekend.

She was also a part of Minnesota State's 4x100m relay team that won the Pacific Coast Invitational.

The team included Adeyah Brewster, Rose Cramer and Tijuanique Morton and the group ran to a time of 44.79, good for an NCAA provisional mark and second fastest in the nation this season.

Cartwright also won NSIC Outdoor Track Athlete of the Week on April 2.

During the 2023-24 indoor season, she won NSIC Track Athlete of the Week five times.

Eilika Lane also took home Athlete of the Week Awards.

She ran the 400m hurdles in 1:00.68 at the USD Early Bird last week and earned a spot on the

MSU all-time top performances list at second overall.

Lane's provisional time ranks sixth in NCAA Division II this season.

At the Holst Invite in St. Paul, two Mavericks had first place podium finishes.

In the pole vault, freshman Hope Stangel took first with a height of 3.65m (11' 11.75"). Senior Madeline Fretag took first in the discus event, throwing for 47.66m (156' 4").

Fretag also placed second in the shot put with a throw of 13.23m (43' 5"), and ninth in the hammer throw. 42.75m (140' 3").

The women on the Maverick track team are nothing short of exceptional and will look to climb the ranks on their journey to both the NSIC Championship and the NCAA Championship.

With only six meets remaining this year, only their times will tell what happens from here on out.

PHOTO MOMENT: St. James Boys Track & Field



Courtesy Photo

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