

FALL SPORTS PREVIEW

September 2, 2021

2021



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Section championship, Battle Ax in Cardinal sights

By Jason Berghorst

The Luverne Cardinals football team hopes some things change while some things stay the same in 2021.

Like high school athletes across the country, LHS players are looking forward to a change back to a more normal season that, hopefully, includes traditional playoffs and a state tournament at the end.

On the other hand, the Cardinals hope to continue their winning ways from 2020, when the team won the Battle Axe game with Pipestone and ended with a 6-1 record, including a 44-6 victory over Sibley East in the Section 3AAA title game.

“We want to defend our section championship and win the Battle Axe, just like every year,” said Luverne head coach Todd Oye when asked about his team’s goals for the 2021 season.

Luverne enters the season with a 41-man varsity roster that includes 11 seniors, 13 juniors, and 17 sophomores.

“Our numbers are a little bit of a concern,” Oye said. “We’ll need some sophomores to step up to varsity roles on Friday nights.”

Luverne does open the 2021 campaign with some experience on both sides of the ball.

Offensively Luverne will be led by senior quarterback Casey Sehr (6’0, 175 pounds), who split reps and started a few games at the position last year.

“Casey is our clear-cut starter and has played a lot of snaps and is



Lori Sorenson photo/fall sports tab feature

Senior Braydon Ripka is expected to play either fullback or tailback on the Cardinal offense. He's pictured with head coach Todd Oye during a practice session in Luverne on Aug. 18.

comfortable at the line of scrimmage,” Oye said.

Henry Hartquist (6’2, 193), Jacob Stroh (6’1, 175) and Connor Connell (6’4, 215) are all sophomores who will back up Sehr at the quarterback position.

Oye said the team is still in the process of filling the center position with junior Andy Halverson (275) leading the competition

so far.

“He played a lot at the end of last season,” Oye said of Halverson.

Other candidates for the center position include senior Jamie McCarthy (5’11, 230) and junior Ross Bergman (6’2, 200).

The center candidates who don’t start at center will likely play as guards. Other guard can-

didates include sophomore Will Serie (6’1, 212) and junior Zach DeBoer (6’2, 200).

Senior Connor Overgaard (6’4, 200) brings the most experience to the line. He has started as a tackle since his sophomore year.

“Overgaard will bring a lot of experience to the offensive line as a third-year starter,” Oye said.

Senior Jordan Friedrichsen (6’6, 210) is another experienced offensive tackle. He started his sophomore year, but he was injured and unable to play his junior season.

Other potential tackles include juniors Gavin Reisch (5’10, 180), Micah Andersen (6’0, 187) and Tyler Gebauer (6’2, 240).

Senior Nathaniel Cole-Kraty (6’0, 202) will return as a starting tight end.

“We’ll run a lot of double tight end slots,” Oye said. Other players vying for playing time at tight end include Connell, junior Riley Sneller (5’11, 180) and junior Anyuon Atem (6’0, 165).

There is also returning talent to carry the ball for Luverne.

Senior Ashton Sandbulte (6’0, 180) returns as the starting fullback.

“Ashton Sandbulte is a big play back with great speed who can make big plays when he has the ball,” Oye said.

Senior Zach Kruse (6’0, 195) will play tailback. Senior Braydon Ripka (5’10, 155) is expected to play either fullback or tailback.

Juniors Tyson Cowell (5’10, 140),

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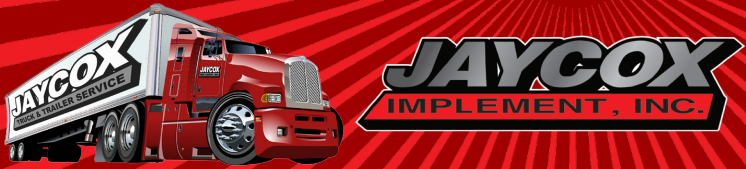
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LHS players are looking forward to a change back to a more normal season that, hopefully, includes traditional playoffs and a state tournament at the end



Jason Berghorst photo/Fall Tab LHS Football

Eleven seniors will lead the Luverne Cardinal football team this season. Pictured are, from left, Ashton Sandbulte, Trygve Gangestad, Casey Sehr, Braydon Ripka, Eli Radtke, Jamie McCarthy, Connor Overgaard, Nathaniel Cole-Kraty, Jordan Friedrichsen, Zach Kruse and Michael Aning.

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LHS football/continued from page 2

Kaleb Hein (5'9, 150) and Gavin Baum (5'7, 135) are also potential backs for Luverne this year.

Junior Gannon Ahrendt (6'4, 156) played a lot at receiver as a sophomore last year and is expected to see a lot of time again this season.

Eli Radtke (6'2, 155) and Trygve Gangestad (5'11, 140) are seniors looking to step into a starting role as receiver this year. Junior Ja'shon Woods (6'3, 145) is also a potential receiver.

Most of the starting experience on the defensive side is found with the linebackers.

McCarthy is a veteran inside linebacker while Kruse and Cole-Kraty are both returning outside linebacker starters.

"The linebackers' trio of Cole-Kraty, McCarthy and Kruse should be the strength of our team," Oye said.

Stroh, Hartquist and Gangestad are all competing for backup linebacker positions.

Projected starters at defensive tackle are Sandbulte and Friedrichsen, with senior Michael Aning (6'2, 382) also vying for time as a defensive tackle.

Overgaard and Halverson are projected starters at defensive ends, with Connell backing them up.

Radtke is expected to be a starting cornerback.

"I expect big things from him his senior year," Oye said of Radtke. "He's worked hard, lifted weights and done all the right things."

Ripka is also expected to start at cornerback with Hein vying for playing time at the position as well.

Starting safeties are likely to be Sehr and Ahrendt, with Sneller also working for playing time.

Sehr will take care of the punting duties, as he did last season. Hartquist is projected as the starting kicker.

The Cardinals will again play in the White division of the South Central district during the regular season and compete in Section 3AAA at playoff time.

Oye lists Fairmont as the team to beat in the section as Luverne attempts to repeat as Section 3AAA champions.

"We want to defend our section championship and win the Battle Axe, just like every year. Our numbers are a little bit of a concern. We'll need some sophomores to step up to varsity roles on Friday nights."

— Todd Oye,
head coach
LHS football

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Samantha McGaffee photo/0902 sports preview football
H-BC seniors on the Patriots’ football team are Gideon Taubert, Donavon Leenderts, Drew Leenderts, Andrew Harris, Austin Allen, (back) Max Scholten, Troy Durst, Oliver Deelstra, Casey Kueter, Ty Bundesen and Cole Baker.

Patriots football will have a new look in 2021

By Jason Berghorst
The Hills-Beaver Creek football team went 7-0 and won the section championship during a pandemic-shortened season in 2020, but the Patriots will look considerably different this season.
“We lost a big core of seniors who had played for us two if not three

years,” head coach Rex Metzger said. “There are a lot of new faces this year.”
The Patriot coach said that the biggest changes will be on the offensive side of the ball.
“I’d say we lost about 90 percent of our offense from last year,” Metzger said. “Our challenge this year will be experience in the skilled positions.”

The Patriots open the 2021 season with a 33-player roster that includes eleven seniors, seven juniors, six sophomores and nine freshmen.
“We have a big senior class this year, which is good,” Metzger said. “Any time you have a nice senior group, that helps with leadership

and mature bodies.”
Coach Metzger said that senior Troy Durst (6’3, 206 pounds) and junior Brayden Metzger (5’10, 200) are both vying to start at the center position.
Projected starters on the of-

H-BC football/see page 10

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H-BC volleyball team and coach look forward to some return to normalcy this fall

By Jason Berghorst

The Hills-Beaver Creek volleyball program is looking forward to a little more normal season in 2021.

Last year, when the team played only 12 games and went 4-8, very little was normal.

It was head coach Dylan Gehrke's first year as a teacher and head coach.

"At first we were told we were going to play in the spring (because of pandemic restrictions), and then all of a sudden in September we found out we were starting in two weeks," Gehrke said. "It was really chaotic last year."

Gehrke said his team is already enjoying the normal pre-season practices and having the opportunity to work on fundamentals.

"We're also looking forward to playing more games and being able to go to tournaments, play out-of-state teams, all those things," Gehrke said.

The Patriots enter the 2021 season with a roster that includes seven seniors, six juniors, ten sophomores and four freshmen.

Four of the seniors return with varsity playing experience.

Kenadie Fick, Taylor Durst, Tess Van Maanen and Sam Moser all saw time on the court last year and are expected to be leaders on the team this season.

"We'll have good senior lead-



Samantha McGaffee photo/0902 sports preview volleyball

Seniors returning to the H-BC volleyball program are Tess VanMaanen, Danette Leenderts, Taylor Durst, (back) Tara Paulsen, Leeanna Gaugler, Samantha Moser and Kenadie Fick. Coach Dylan Gehrke is in his second year at the helm.

"The more experience we get, the more playing time we have, the better we'll be. It just takes time to learn to play with each other. ... I'm excited to see what it looks like when all the pieces come together." — Coach Dylan Gehrke

ership this season," Gehrke said. "All of our seniors will help at the varsity level this year."

The other seniors on the team include Tara Paulsen, Danette Leenderts and Leeanna Gaugler.

While Gehrke said the varsity and junior varsity rosters hadn't been finalized at the time of the interview, he expects some juniors and sophomores to contribute to the varsity as well.

Juniors on the team include Olivia Bork, Taylor Huisman, Malli Ternus, Lexy Drake, Tyrae Goodface and Aspen Shimp.

Gehrke mentioned four sophomores who may also be in the hunt for some varsity playing time.

Lanae Elbers, Brynn Rauk, Grace Anderson and Larissa Steinhoff are all sophomores vying to be varsity contributors.

Gehrke expects the Red Rock Conference volleyball competition to be as competitive as ever in 2021.

"From top to bottom, this conference is just competitive across the board," Gehrke said.

In the meantime, the second-year Patriots coach is simply appreciating the normal start to the season.

"The more experience we get, the more playing time we have, the better we'll be," Gehrke said.

"It just takes time to learn to play with each other. ... I'm excited to see what it looks like when all the pieces come together."



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LHS expecting good things this volleyball season

By Jason Berghorst

“All around, as things come together, I’m really excited for this team.”
That’s how Luverne head volleyball coach Sarah DeBeer sums up her outlook for the upcoming season.

With 20 players on her varsity roster, including 19 juniors and seniors and six returning starters, DeBeer is happy with her numbers and the experience and options that those players provide.

“We’ll have a lot of options for different rotations, depending on our needs,” DeBeer said, “Each team we play might get a little different look from us.”

Six Cardinals return with varsity experience.

Seniors Trista Baustian (5’10) and Reghan Bork (5’9) return as setters.

“We run a 6-2 rotation that involves two setters,” DeBeer said.

Senior Elise Ferrell (5’11) played a lot on the left side last year and returns as a middle blocker this season.

Junior Christina Wagner (6’1) is another returnee with substantial varsity playing experience who will play as a middle blocker.

Kamryn Van Batavia (6’0) returns as a starter on the left side for her junior season.

Senior Macy Stratton (5’6) is a returning libero starter



Jason Berghorst photo/Fall Tab LHS Volleyball

The Luverne Cardinals volleyball team has seven seniors this season. Pictured are (front, from left) Macy Stratton, Morgan Gonnerman and Reghan Bork, (back, from left) Madee Schmuck, Elise Ferrell, Trista Baustian and Grace Sandbulte. Sarah DeBeers is their coach.

and defensive specialist. Morgan Gonnerman (5’5), another senior, is also a projected starter with experience as a defensive specialist.
DeBeer expects a number

of other players to see some varsity playing time this year as well.
Carly Olson (5’5) is a junior defensive specialist/libero who will play in certain

situations.
Anja Jarchow (5’11) is another junior expected to see some playing time as middle blocker and left-side hitter.

Elizabeth Wagner (6’1) is a junior who switched her fall sport to volleyball this year. DeBeer said she expects Wagner to contribute as a right-side blocker and hitter.

“We’re super excited to have her,” DeBeer said of Elizabeth Wagner. “She’s open to learning new things and is such a natural athlete.”

Morgan Ahrendt (6’0) is a sophomore who is expected to see her first varsity playing time as a middle blocker this season.

DeBeer is looking forward to a well-balanced team that should lead to more wins this season.

“Our front row play will be very strong and we have a good mix in the back row,” she said.

“I like how we’ll have a good mix of kids to change up our line-up as needed.”

Luverne competes in the Big South Conference during the regular season and Section 3AA for the playoffs.

DeBeer believes her team could be among the top teams in each in 2021.

“Our goal is to win the conference this year and we could put in a good bid to do that,” DeBeer said.

“Marshall is always strong and Jackson and Pipestone are always competitive. ... But I’d like to think we’ll be in the mix with them this year.”

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Cross country teams look forward to continued success

By Jason Berghorst

As the saying goes, “Two things in life are constant: death and taxes.”

Another constant, at least over the last number of years, is the Luverne girls’ cross country team being in the hunt for a Section 3A championship.

While that looks to be true again in 2021, head cross country coach Pete Janiszeski is expecting good things from his boys’ team as well.

“We’re hoping to have the opportunity for both teams to be at the state meet this year,” Janiszeski said. “That’s only happened three times in my 20 years.”

There is good reason for optimism for both Cardinal teams as the 2021 season begins.

On the **girls’ team**, Luverne returns six of the nine runners who made up last year’s section championship team.

Senior Tenley Nelson, juniors Tiana Lais and Grace Ingebretson, and sophomores Jenna DeBates, Makena Nelson and Kayla Bloemendaal all return from last year’s section team.

Other girls vying for varsity running spots this season include sophomore Brynn Boyenga and freshmen Maria Rops and Andrea Luitjens.

Senior Brooklynn Ver Steeg, who has been with the program since seventh grade, is continuing to recover from a sports injury last year and will likely not be cleared to

LHS cross country/see page 10



Jason Berghorst Photo/Fall Tab Cross Country

Thirteen Luverne Cardinal cross country athletes who qualified to participate at the section meet last season return to compete this fall. Pictured are (front, from left) Grace Ingebretson, Tenley Nelson, Jenna DeBates, Makena Nelson, Tiana Lais, (back) Camden Janiszeski, Ethan Rahm, Sage Viessman, Pierce Cunningham, Owen Janiszeski, Griffen Jarchow, Kayla Bloemendaal and Camden Hoven. Coach Pete Janiszeski expects good outcomes from both teams.



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LHS approaches 2021 tennis season with positive vibe

By Jason Berghorst

Many things will look different for the Luverne girls' tennis team this season. Coach Jon Beers lost seven seniors, including his three top singles players, to graduation last year.

"We lost a lot of great players who played a lot of tennis for us, but so far I'm really pleased with how these returning players are stepping up," Beers said.

The Cardinals enter the 2021 season with 24 athletes in grades 9 through 12 in the program.

The balanced roster includes six seniors, four juniors, seven sophomores and seven freshmen.

Luverne will be led by senior Mia Wenzel, the lone Cardinal player who started at singles last year.

Wenzel played at No. 4 singles last season and will play at No. 1 singles this year.

Olivia Wieneke and Jacey Smith are the other seniors with starting experience from last season.

Wieneke and Smith played doubles last year, but early in the season they are interested in trying both.

Seniors Hope Thorson and Kristin Rud also are trying both singles and doubles.

"This early in the season we are definitely going to try some different lineups and op-



Six seniors return to the Luverne girls' tennis team in 2021. Pictured (from left) are Kristin Rud, Mia Wenzel, Olivia Wieneke, Jacey Smith, Hope Thorson and Rylee Anderson.

tions and see how they shake out," Beers said. "I like all the options we have. It's a good problem to have."

Beers said other players vying for starting singles positions include sophomores Roselynn Hartshorn, Emma

Lusty and Chloe Schoeneman.

The make-up of the doubles teams will likely depend on which Cardinals fill the singles spots.

"When those returning starters don't play singles, they will make up doubles

teams," Beers said.

Wieneke and Smith, Rud and Thorson, junior Katharine Kelm and sophomore Sarah Stegenga, and juniors Tori Hemme and Priscilla Muehr are all pairs likely to start at doubles at times this

season, according to Beers.

Sophomores Morgan Hadler and Rayann Remme, Hartshorn and Cassi Chesley, and senior Rylee Anderson and junior Ella Lanoue are also pairs vying for varsity playing time.

"It's just really hard to say at this point," Beers said after the first week of practice. "We've had a lot of challenge matches this week and some surprises so far."

Freshmen players include Kaitlin Conger, Katia Jarchow, Caitlin Kindt, Nora Louwagie, Emma Nath, Corynn Oye and Augusta Papik.

The Cardinals will also be competing in a realigned Section 3A this season.

Instead of facing teams like Fairmont, Blue Earth Area and St. James Area in the playoffs, Luverne is now in a section with Pipestone Area, Yellow Medicine East, Montevideo, Benson/KMS and others.

"We are excited to play other teams," Beers said.

The coach lists Pipestone Area and Luverne as likely favorites in the section, at least at this point.

"I don't think Pipestone lost as many players as we did," Beers said, "but the more experience our younger players get during the season, the better I feel about our chances at playoffs time."

Jason Berghorst Photo/Fall Tab Tennis



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LHS cross country/

from page 8

run cross country this season, according to Janiszeski.

“We are not quite as deep as last year at the start of the season, but the young girls are looking promising,” Janiszeski said of the girls’ team. “The kids are improving and we had a good summer of work.”

Janiszeski said Luverne would likely be considered a favorite in Section 3A again this year but that there are a number of other schools with solid teams, too.

“It will depend if we can close the gap between Tenley and Jenna and the rest of the team,” he said.

“Last year our three, four and five runners were stronger than the other teams; that’s what we’ll need to do again.”

There are even more returning starters for the Luverne boys’ team with eight of the nine members of the fifth-place 2020 section team returning.

Seniors Griffen Jarchow, Ethan Rahm and Pierce Cunningham, juniors Camden Janiszeski and Camden Hoven, sophomore Ryan Fick, and freshmen Owen Janiszeski and Sage Viessman all return this season.

Other runners vying for varsity spots this fall are juniors Carsen Tofteland, Ashton Eitreim and Logan Ommen and freshmen Leif

“We have a tough section. It all comes down to how much we improve during the season, how we come together as a team and who is running their best when it matters the most.”

— Pete Janiszeski, head coach LHS cross country

Ingebretson, Kaleb Hemme, Eli McLendon and Zach Brown.

“I think we have the right mix of youth and veterans on the boys’ side to make a successful team,” Janiszeski said.

According to the coach, there may be six or seven boys’ teams in Section 3A that will be competitive by the end of the season.

“We have a tough section,” Janiszeski said.

“It all comes down to how much we improve during the season, how we come together as a team and who is running their best when it matters the most.”

H-BC football/

continued from page 5

fensive line include senior Max Scholten (6’3, 242), who started last year, at right guard and senior Donavon Leenderts (5’11, 205) or junior Cody Moser (6’6, 312) at left guard.

The left tight end, senior Casey Kueter (6’2, 200) also is a returning starter.

The right end is expected to be senior Andrew Harris (5’11, 175). Junior Alex Harris (5’11, 180) is the backup tight end.

Senior Oliver Deelstra (6’3, 150), who played wide receiver last year, will be the starting quarterback.

Senior Ty Bundesen (6’1, 180) also takes snaps at quarterback but is expected to be a starting receiver.

Other potential receivers include senior Drew Leenderts (5’11, 150), junior Brock Harnack (5’11, 140) and senior Gideon Taubert (6’3, 160).

Cole Baker (6’1, 160), a senior who played wide receiver last year, is pegged as the starting running back this season.

Junior Luke Fuerstenberg (6’0, 150) is another potential running back. Senior Austin Allen (5’10, 180) is a potential half back.

On the defensive side, Donavon Leenderts and Baker are expected to return as defensive end starters.

Scholten is the projected starting nose tackle, while Durst is vying for spots as a nose tackle or defensive end. Moser is another potential nose tackle.

Kueter is expected to start at middle linebacker, while Andrew Harris and Allen are slotted to play outside linebacker.

Potential backup linebackers include Fuerstenberg, Alex Harris and Metzger.

Deelstra and Bundesen are expected to start at cornerback with Taubert and Harnack also vying for time at the position.

Drew Leenderts is expected to play as

“There are a lot of new faces this year. ... Our challenge this year will be experience in the skilled positions. We have a big senior class this year, which is good. Any time you have a nice senior group, that helps with leadership and mature bodies.”

— Rex Metzger, H-BC head football coach

the safety this season.

Bundesen, who handled some kickoffs last year, is expected to fill the kicking duties.

Coach Metzger said his team’s goals for the 2021 season are to get better as the season goes on and to be playing their best football at the end of the season.

He lists his team along with Mountain Lake Area and Renville County West as potential contenders for the section championship.

“We beat Mountain Lake twice last year, but before that they’ve always kind of had our number,” Metzger said.

He said he hopes to maintain the momentum of the past seasons.

“We’ve won some games the last few years, so we always kind of have that target on our back,” Metzger said of his squad.

“But we have a nice group of seniors this year; I like where we’re at.”



JOHN DEERE



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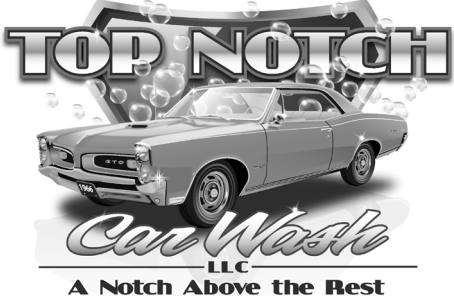


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FALL SPORTS SCHEDULES

2021



FOOTBALL

Sept 2	Redwood Valley	H
Sept 10	Jackson County Central	A
Sept 17	Windom	A
Sept 24	New Ulm	H
Oct 1	Worthington	A
Oct 8	Pipestone	H
Oct 14	Fairmont	H
Oct 20	Waseca	A
Oct 26	Sections - TBD	H
Oct 30	Sections - TBD	H
Nov 5	Sections - TBD	A

CROSS COUNTRY

Aug 27	Beresford	A
Sept 3	Mountain Lake	A
Sept 11	multi-team	H
Sept 16	Multiple@Rochester Eastwood	A
Sept 23	Jackson County Central	A
Sept 28	St. James Area	A
Oct 2	Willmar Invitational	A
Oct 7	multi-team	H
Oct 12	Adrian	A
Oct 19	Big South - Pipestone	A
Oct 28	Sections	A
Nov 6	State Tournament - Saint Olaf	A

VOLLEYBALL

Aug 26	Edgerton	H
Aug 28	Big South - St. James	A
Aug 31	Redwood Valley	H
Sept 2	Triangular	H
Sept 7	Marshall	A
Sept 9	Westbrook Walnut Grove	A
Sept 11	Invitational	H
Sept 13	SW Minnesota Christian	A
Sept 16	Windom	A
Sept 18	Invitational - Jackson County	A
Sept 23	Pipestone Area	H
Sept 28	Worthington	H
Sept 30	St. James Area	A
Oct 5	Jackson County Central	A
Oct 7	Martin County West	H
Oct 15	Adrian	A
Oct 21	Hills-Beaver Creek	A
Oct 29	Sections	H
Nov 2	Sections	H
Nov 4	Subsections	A

GIRLS' TENNIS

Aug 21	Morris Area/Benson	A
Aug 24	Yellow Medicine East	H
	MACCRAY	H
Aug 26	Lac Qui Parle Valley	A
	Montevideo	A
Aug 28	Worthington	A
Aug 30	River Valley	H
Aug 31	Fairmont	H
Sept 7	Blue Earth Area	A
Sept 9	Marshall	H
Sept 14	Worthington	H
Sept 16	Pipestone Area	H
Sept 21	St. James Area	A
Sept 23	Redwood Valley	A
Sept 28	TBD Big South	A
Oct 5	Section Quarters TBD	H
Oct 8	Sections - Gustavus	A
Oct 9	Sections - Gustavus	A
Oct 14	Sections - Gustavus	A
Oct 26	State Tournament	A

HBC VOLLEYBALL

Aug 28	Adrian Tournament	A
Aug 31	Viborg Hurley	A
Sept 11	Luverne	A
Sept 14	Westbrook Walnut Grove	A
Sept 16	MLA-C	H
Sept 21	Red Rock Central	A
Sept 23	Edgerton	H
Sept 27	St. Mary	H
Sept 28	Murray County Central	H
Oct 1	SMSU Tournament	A
Oct 2	SMSU Tournament	A
Oct 5	HLOF	H
Oct 11	Edgerton	A
Oct 12	Adrian/Ellsworth	A
Oct 18	Southwest Minnesota Christian	H
Oct 19	Adrian/Ellsworth	H
Oct 21	Luverne	H

HBC FOOTBALL

Sept 2	GHEC-Truman	H
Sept 10	Madelia	A
Sept 17	HLOF	H
Sept 24	Westbrook Walnut Grove	A
Oct 1	Renville County West	H
Oct 8	Mountain Lake	A
Oct 14	Red Rock Central	H
Oct 20	Edgerton	A



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