

THROUGH MY LENS

T'was the night before football



T'was the night before football and all across the state...

...most players were excited, they could hardly wait...

...it'd be a new season, a fresh start, a clean slate...

...to get back to tackling and hitting - well, that'd be just great...

...but the road is far from easy, success may take a while...

...as it requires a certain type of character - one with grit and one with guile...

...it is a true test of mettle, that is the football player's main trial...

...he'll learn to hold his head high, even if the losses pile...

...but hold on just one minute, there's something you forget...

...we've hardly had time to settle into practice just yet...

...but those coaches and players, they're ready to sweat...

...especially if it means their team much better they'll get...

...now the hopes run high as we all enter a new year...

...and with it will come all the traditions that we hold quite dear...

...the lights and the cameras, the pageantry, the cheers...

...the sounds of the band and smell of the popcorn near...

...so with that, you can see...

...as it is apparent to me...

...it's about time to clamor for the start of the revelry...

...of the new football season, welcome it with me, let's get going in two thousand and twenty three...

Well, there you have it. I tried my hand at poetry as we prepare to kick off the football season on August 1 with the first official day of practice across the state for our gridiron guys (and gals).

No, I'm still not ready for the start of a new season. I still have plenty of summer things to accomplish. Yet, I'll indulge a little this week as our teams kick off their practice schedules.

I attended both the American Legion state softball and baseball tournaments last weekend and really did enjoy getting to see a few friendly media cohorts as well as coaches and players. I guess that means I'll be ready for another sports season soon enough - but that doesn't have to be today, right?

Happy Monday everyone. Enjoy what we have today. WOOT!

BASEBALL BROOKWOOD

Falcon boys continue to make strides forward

By ZACH RASTALL
Sports Writer

Though the wins and losses didn't change much for the Brookwood baseball team, the evidence continues to mount in favor of the Falcons showing signs of improvement for a second-straight season.

This past year Brookwood went 9-13 overall and battled to a 7-7 ending in the Scenic Bluffs. Those totals are nearly identical to the 2022 finish.

However, there were some subtle changes to point out in the 2023 results. First off, Brookwood fell from fourth place in 2022 to fifth this year. The top of the SBC was competitive with each other as Cashton, Hillsboro and Royall all tied for second place with 9-5 records.

The Falcons tied New Lisbon a year ago for fourth place, but were one game better this year. A second-straight season split between the two teams helped shape the middle of the SBC.

In spite of repeating results from last year, Brookwood's baseball team looked to make forward progress in head coach John Hansen's third season. Brookwood was a paltry 1-13 back in 2021 and failed to win a single league game.

Since then, the Falcon nine have shown individual advancements that have led to increased team successes.

Last year the Falcons graduated two All-Conference selections, but managed to develop new talent this year in senior Evan Klinkner and junior Brady Hansen who were voted to the first and second teams, respectively.

Senior Payne Clark and sophomore Braeden Pasch were honorable mentions, meaning that there's some vestige of talent returning next season.

Experience is also a factor going into next year as a number of underclassmen went seeking extra playing opportunities this past summer. A large contingent of players were part of the Tomah Legion baseball teams including the largest group that helped propel the 16U team to a 2-2 finish at the state tournament in Waupun back on the weekend of July 21.

More at-bats and live game situations can only help Brookwood, which went 2-6 against the top four teams in the SBC this year. Although Brookwood took wins against both Hillsboro and Royall, both victories happened in the first half of a doubleheader.

Adding to its postseason resume will also be paramount for showing further progress for the BHS boys. Despite winning opening round playoff games the last two seasons, the Falcons have been absent from a regional title match since the 2015 season when Jack Hansen led Brookwood its second-ever sectional final appearance.



Brookwood's Evan Klinkner helped the Falcons to a second-straight 7-7 finish in the SBC and received 1st team All-Conference honors. Herald photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media.

CLASS 1A LEGION STATE SOFTBALL SPARTA

Historic Hit



Sparta's Kadynce Erickson watches the ball hop into the outfield after drawing contact for the first hit at the first-ever American Legion State Softball tournament in DeForest. Erickson's hit, which came in the top of the first inning of Friday's opening round game against West Salem, was first connection recorded in either of the two divisions. Complete coverage from the Legion state softball tournament will be in Thursday's issue of the Monroe County Herald. Herald photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media.

LEGION BASEBALL ALL-STAR GAME

Legion All-Stars to play in MKE

By CRAIG OTTO
Contributing Writer

Nearly a dozen Coulee Region American Legion baseball players, two coaches, four umpires and a state Hall of Fame inductee will be a part of this year's state all-star game weekend at Milwaukee's American Family Field on Saturday, August 6.

Playing in this year's game are Onalaska's Griffin Schultz, La Crosse's Casey Erickson and Cal Hargrove, Westby's Bo Milutinovich, Viroqua's Griffin Olson and Casey Kowalzyk, Arcadia's Carson Martin and Connor Weltzien, and Prairie du Chien's Maddox Cejka and Caydon Lomas.

Viroqua's Kelly Olson and Prairie du Chien's Nate Cejka are coaching in the game.

Umpires are La Crosse's Rich Kaiser, Kevin Mihalovic, Eric S. Priuer and Greg Rediske.

Longtime Westby manager, business manager and administrator Roger Mathison is being inducted into the Hall of Fame.

The game is played Sunday, August 6th following the Brewers game. Wisconsin is the only state to play a state Legion all-star game at a Major League park.

The Legion state baseball tournaments continue today and tomorrow, July 31 and August 1.

The Class A tournament is being held in Prairie du Chien and will conclude Tuesday.

Prairie du Chien knocked Viroqua, last year's state champs, out of the tournament Sunday afternoon with an 11-1 advantage in six innings. PdC will play today at 4 p.m. against Jackson.

The Class AA tournament will wrap up Tuesday, August 1st also in Ashwaubenon.

The Class AAA, the largest school division, is putting the finishing touches on their state tournament today in Marinette, about an hour north of Green Bay.

Results from the three state tournaments will be in Thursday's edition of the Monroe County Herald.

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