Superfan

Comfrey farmer at every state tourney since 1953

By Bruce Strand

Wendell Fredin was a junior in high school in 1953 when he attended the state basketball tournament for the first time.

A farm boy who played guard for the Comfrey Rockets, he loaded up several buddies in his car, probably a 1947 or 48 Chevrolet to his best recollection, for the 110-mile trip. They got a hotel room and “lived at Williams Arena,” attending every session of the eight-team, one-class tournament Thursday through Saturday, capped by Hopkins beating Hibbing 58-47 for the championship.

Fredin has never left the farm, and never stopped attending the tournament. Now 82, he took in his 67th straight tournament this March.

“I just love high school sports, especially basketball,” said Fredin, who started attending the boys hoops tourney when it was the only big-attendance event in prep sports. With no competition then from NBA or NCAA hoops on TV for attention, Williams Arena was always packed and he had to sit behind one of the posts the old barn used to have.

But now he’s got preferred seating, all the better to marvel at how much the players have improved. “Boy, they can really shoot the ball now,” he said.

If you need a score for any state game since 1953, just ask Wendell. He has saved every tournament program, and in each of them penned in all the scores all of the games. He’s also recorded all the all-tournament picks with a prominent “T” next to their names in the programs.

When he was younger, Fredin was riveted to the radio to listen to the action, especially when a nearby town, Mountain Lake, qualified for five state tournaments between 1946 and 1953.

But once he got his drivers license, the trek to Williams Arena was an annual event. Asked how a farm kid was able to just take off ever March
for three days of hoops, he said his parents were “very friendly” about it, in part because he didn’t ask for much else. “I was a non-hunter, a non-fisherman,” he said. “The tournament was my passion so they let me go.”

The youngest of four brothers, Wendell eventually took over the farm. The products now are corn and beans, but he also fed cattle for 50 years and shipped them to wind up as steaks and hamburgers.

With wife Martha, they raised five girls and four boys there, including children from Martha’s first marriage (she was a widow), all of whom were in sports at Comfrey. Fredin says he’s grateful that all nine still live in Minnesota. His stepson Bill Seuss runs half the operation now and Wendell the other half. But Wendell has become a bit of a city slicker as he and Martha now have a house in town.

Asked if his kids went to state with him, Fredin said that one or two would accompany him occasionally but “mostly they had their own interests like fishing, hunting and snowmobiling.”

Asked what teams he’s found most memorable, Fredin mentioned the dynasties, such as Edina with its run of three straight titles in the one-class tournament in the late 1960’s, DeLaSalle with its 12 crowns and Hopkins with 10, and the little schools he’s particularly loyal go, Southwest Christian with four in a row and Ellsworth with three in a row.

The game that revved him up the most, though, didn’t involve a championship team.

“That Red Lake vs. Wabasso semifinal in 1997, that was the greatest basketball game I ever saw! Wabasso won 117-113. That (Gerald) Kingbird for Red Lake, I think he had 10 points in 20 seconds late in the game.” After Red Lake rallied from 14 points down in the last 1:15 to force overtime, Wabasso won the game that many longtime fans regard as the most exciting ever, but lost in the finals to Hancock 60-58.


“Oh, and Kevin McHale, of course. I got to know him pretty well.”

When Hibbing was playing in the 1976 tournament (they lost to Bloomington Jefferson in the finals), Fredin spotted the future NBA Hall of Famer grabbing a burger in a restaurant with teammates. “Mind if I sit with you guys?” Fredin asked. McHale said sure. “He was a very fine, nice young man.”

The split from a one-class tournament to two, and later four, was fine with Fredin. “It’s more opportunity for more teams,” he observes, “and for me, I like being able to see 64 schools now (32 boys, 32 girls) instead of just eight.”

Now that it’s a four-day, four-class event, and he’s not a young man any more, his habit is to attend the Class A first round on Thursdays and stay over for the Class A and AA semifinals on Friday, then return home and watch all four championships Saturday on TV.

When football and girls basketball state tournaments started in the 1970’s, Fredin, who was also a halfback in high school, got in the habit of attending their state games too, but not every year like boys hoops.

His beloved hometown of Comfrey never made it to state in boys basketball, whether solo or paired (first with Cedar Mountain, now with Mountain Lake) but he was thrilled to attend the girls tourneys when Cedar Mountain/Comfrey got there in 2008 and 2009, and reached the finals in 2009. “They were even better the next year, too,” said Fredin, “but their best player was injured just before tournaments.”

Fredin’s streak is not likely to end any time soon.

“I can’t walk as fast, or as far, as I used to but I still get around pretty good, and I still farm. I can still drive a truck, and a combine, and a tractor. I’ll keep going to the state tournament as long as I can still get around.”
Duke snags Hurt, too

*RJM superstar will play with Jones for Coach K*

By Bruce Strand

With Matthew Hurt committing to Duke recently, the Minnesota Gophers dropped to 0-for-4 in recruiting homegrown five-star prospects in recent years.

The Rochester John Marshall superstar made the announced in a packed RJM auditorium April 19, flanked his parents, brother and sister.

Hurt follows Apple Valley’s Tyus Jones (2014) and Tre Jones (2018) to Duke, which routinely lands the top-ranked recruiting class in the nation.

Minnesota’s most-coveted female player ever, Hopkins junior Paige Bueckers, has committed to UConn, the 11-time NCAA champion that also frequently lands the best recruiting class.

The “U” now hopes to land the next five-star recruits: Minnehaha Academy junior Jalen Suggs and sophomore Chet Holmgren, Prior Lake junior Dawson Garcia and East Ridge sophomore Kendall Brown.

Hurt, a 6-9, 215-pound power forward, nimble as a point guard and a deadly 3-point shooter, averaged 36.8 points and 15 rebounds as a senior, and scored a Class 4A record 3,819 points. He is ranked No. 8 overall, No. 2 at his position, nationally on the 247Sports Composite.

Duke, five-time NCAA champion, stopped one game from the Final Four this year, will lose three one-and-done stars expected to be top-five picks in the NBA draft: Zion Williamson, RJ Barrett and Cam Reddish.

However, point guard Tre Jones elected to stay for his sophomore season. Hurt cited the decision by his fellow Minnesota as clincher in picking Duke over perennial powers North Carolina, Kansas and Kentucky, the others in his top four.

“He’s a great player and does such a good job at getting players the ball.” Hurt said at the press conference, quoted by the Star-Tribune. “I knew how successful he was at Apple Valley, and I wanted to play with him.”

Hurt’s father, Richard, added, “Tre coming back was big. They’ve never played together, but they’ve known each other for years and there’s a mutual admiration between the two of them.”

Duke’s incoming class was ranked No. 11 by 247Sports Composite prior to landing Hurt, which boosted them to No. 1, and if they keep that ranking it would be the fourth straight year. The Blue Devils have signed two other five-stars, Vernon Carey of Florida and Wendell Moore of North Carolina.

At the press conference to announce the decision, Richard Hurt said Matthew also wants to be a “one-and-done” but will stay in college as long as necessary to be prepared for a long NBA career.

Duke’s legendary coach Mike Krzyzewski was, of course, a huge factor. Hurt said that “being able to say I was coached by Coach K means a lot.” Krzyzewski has five NCAA championships and 21 top-ten finishes in his storied career.
BASKETBALL CAMPS
SARTELL COMMUNITY CENTER
Sartell, MN

Monday, June 24 • Director: John Carlson
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
 8:30 am - 12:30 pm AND 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Tuesday-Wednesday, June 25-26 • Director: John Carlson
Session 1: All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
 8:30 am - 12:30 pm • $80/player
Session 2: All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 5-7
 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Monday-Tuesday, July 1-2 • Director: Steve Lingenfelter
Session 1: All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 5-7
 8:30 am - 12:30 pm • $80/player
Session 2: All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Wednesday, July 3 • Director: Steve Lingenfelter
Post Play Camp: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
 8:30 am - 12:30 pm • $40/player

Register Early! Each Camp limited to 48 players • Register Online at WWW.PACESETTERSSPORTS.NET
Questions? Call Pacesetter 320-243-7460 or email info@pacesetternet.com

John Carlson
• Former Litchfield Boys Head Coach
• MN Coach of the Year 2000
• Record 469 - 367
• MN BB Coaches Assoc. Hall Of Fame

Steve Lingenfelter
• Coach at Shakopee High School (MN)
• Veteran Pacesetter camp director
• Played for MN Gophers – Big Ten
• Played in NBA for Washington Bullets
• Won State Championship vs. Kevin McHale in 1976

FREE T-SHIRT!! Register by June 1st for any of these camps to receive a free t-shirt!
Is stat so? Some nifty numbers this year

By Bruce Strand

The MBBN pesters Matt Pederson, the state’s prolific keeper of prep basketball records, for all kinds of statistics each season. Fortunately, the former Starbuck bank officer is happy to oblige. At our request, Pederson sent us a batch of stellar performances from this season, and we picked out a few. Here goes:

Five girls finished with more than 2,000 points and 1,000 rebounds. They are Taylie Scott of Heritage Christian with 2,734 and 1,082, Tori Nelson of Henry Sibley with 2,519 and 1,112, Olivia Lane of Pequot Lakes with 2,434 and 1,570, Makenna Steffel of BOLD with 2,225 and 1,061, and Lydia Sussner of Minneota with 2,197 and 1,261.

Two boys surpassed 3,000 points and 1,000 rebounds. Matthew Hurt of Rochester John Marshall, Mr. Basketball of 2019, rang up 3,819 points and 1,462 rebounds. Isaac Fink of Springfield, another Mr. Basketball finalist, had 3,382 points and 1,243 rebounds. Hurt averaged 36.8 points and Fink 31.3.

Abbey McDonald of Hibbing finished with 2,576 points, which was not quite a family record. Her father, Joel (the Hibbing boys coach), scored 3,292 for Chisholm, the state record when he graduated in 1991.

Three Perham boys had lofty three-point shooting stats — Jenson Beachy with 322 in his career (among 2,270 points), Carter Cresap with a .460 career percentage (128 of 278) and Elijah Morris with a .575 percentage this season (50 of 87).

Katie Tornstrom of Caledonia sank 112 of 300 three-pointers this year.

Gianna Kneepkens, Duluth Marshall sophomore, scored 945 points (31.5 ppg) and already has 1,904 with two seasons left.

Prior Lake guard McKenna Hofschild’s state record 63-point game in a loss to Park Center on Dec. 1 included 24-for-30 on free shots, one short of the record of 25 by Bryane Engen of Sauk Centre in 2003.

Miss Basketball Kacie Borowicz’s 3,551 points for Roseau included blazing free throw shooting: an .844 career percentage (634 of 751) and .882 this year (127 of 144).

Also deadly at the stripe was Ava Hill of Mesabi East, with an .897 percentage (105 of 117) including one 15-for-15 game.

Mountain Iron-Buhl girls reached state for the ninth straight season, tying the record by Minneapolis North and Maranatha Christian girls. Riding eight consecutive state appearances are the Eastview girls, and DeLaSalle and Lakeville North boys.


Class 4A girls champion Hopkins, the lone unbeaten in the state of either gender, set a record with their fifth straight championship game appearance.

The state’s top junior prospects, Paige Bueckers of Hopkins (already committed to UConn) and Jalen Suggs of Minnehaha Academy will enter their senior season with 2,288 and 2,320 points, respectively.

Cambridge-Isanti boys set a state record with 376 three-pointers (in 1,050 attempts), a percentage of .358. Bluejacket junior Henry Abraham has 383 three’s in his career among 2,129 points.

Delano’s Derek Tcham had a 21-for-21 free throw game on Feb. 8 in a 77-71 win over Orono, a state record for most in one game without a miss. Justin Schrupp of Renville County West was right behind with a 19-for-19 game on Feb. 11 in an 88-77 win over Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City.

Trinity at River Ridge shot .414 on three’s for the season (249 of 602).

Jayden Ruberg of Two Harbors topped 50 points three times, with 58, 57 this year and 51 last year.
Girls’ college destinations listed

Following is a list of Minnesota senior standouts and their college choices, compiled by PrepGirlsHoops.com.

- Mariah McKeever, Ada-Borup -- Minnesota-Moorhead
- Hannah Purcell, Annandale -- DePaul
- Destinee Oberg, Bloomington Kennedy -- Arkansas
- Sara Stapleton, Centennial -- Wisconsin
- Taylor McAulay, Centennial -- Drake
- Frannie Hottinger, Cretin-Derham Hall — Lehigh
- Emma Carpenter, Eastview — Minnesota-Crookston
- Abigail Groeneweg, Forest Lake — St. Cloud State
- Kenzie Stumme, Forest Lake — Montana State
- Hannah DeMars, Grand Rapids — Jamestown (ND)
- Tatyrt Rhoades, Minnehaha Academy — Upper Iowa
- Joey Batt, New Ulm — Minnesota-Mankato
- Tori Nelson, Henry Sibley — South Dakota State
- Lariah Washington, St. Cloud Apollo — Eastern Illinois
- Olivia Lane, Pequot Lakes — North Dakota
- McKenna Hofschild, Prior Lake — Seton Hall
- Kacie Borowicz, Roseau — North Dakota
- Kaylee Nelson, Roseville Area — Minnesota-Duluth
- Sara Scalia, Stillwater — Minnesota
- Kallie Theisen, Wayzata — South Dakota State
- Alyssa Daugherty, Zimmerman — Concordia-St. Paul

McKenna Hofschild
Records that have stood for decades

In high school basketball, records generally don’t stand for a long time. However, at the MBBN’s request, Matt Pederson, the state’s basketball record-keeper, has found a batch of them that have lasted for decades.

Since 1926 — Buffalo with one foul in a game, fewest ever, tied by Breckenridge in 1978

Since 1931 — Moorhead with eight consecutive state tournament trips (1924-31), which was tied by Tartan in 2005 and by DeLaSalle and Lakeville North this year

Since 1953 — Bloomington’s Jerome Gleixner with 19-for-19 field goal shooting in one game

Since 1968 — Edina with 69 consecutive wins over three seasons

Since 1972 — New Richland-Hartland’s Curt Peterson with 28 free shots in 33 attempts in one game

Since 1983 — Eight overtimes in one game, by St. Cloud Tech against Little Falls

Since 1988 — Chaska with a .488 three-point percentage for the season (81 of 166)

Since 1991 — Staples-Motley with 21-for-21 team free shot shooting (most without missing), tied in 1999 by Cloquet

Since 1996 — Foley’s David Adams with .786 field goal shooting (118 of 150) in a season

Since 1997 — Monticello’s Joel Przybilla with 267 blocked shots in a season

Since 1997 — Maple River’s Eric Siebrands with .488 three-point shooting (141 of 289) in his career

Since 1998 — Przybilla with 694 blocks in a career

Since 2000 — Tartan’s Jake Sullivan with .898 free throw shooting (703 of 783) in his career

TOUR OF CHAMPIONS CAMPS
“Celebrating our 40th Season”

PACESETTER BASKETBALL CAMPS... Camps for Champions, by Champions!

Monday-Tuesday, June 17-18 • Director: Tom Vix • Grand Meadow
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

Monday-Tuesday, June 17 - 18 • Director: Dave Galovich • Grand Rapids
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

Monday-Tuesday, June 17-18 • Director: Paul McDonald • Grand Rapids
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

Tuesday, June 18 • Director: Wendy Kohler • Paynesville
All-Skills Camp for Girls ONLY

Monday, June 24 • Director: John Carlson • Sartell
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

Tuesday-Wednesday, June 25-26 • Director: John Carlson • Sartell
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

Tuesday, July 2 • Director: Dave Walker • Paynesville
All-Skills Camp: Boys & Girls

Mon-Tues, July 1-2 • Director: Steve Lingenfelter • Sartell
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

Wednesday, July 3 • Director: Steve Lingenfelter • Sartell
Post Play Camp: Boys & Girls

Mon-Tues, July 8 - 9 • Director: Dave Walker • Grand Rapids
All-Skills Camp: Boys & Girls

Tuesday, July 9 • Director: Dave Galovich • Paynesville
All-Skills Camp: Boys & Girls

Mon-Tues, July 8 - 9 • Director: Dave Walker • Grand Rapids
Defensive Camp for Boys & Girls Defensive Skills ONLY Point/Wing/Post

Wednesday, July 10 • Director: Dave Walker • Grand Rapids
All-Skills Camp: Boys & Girls

Thursday, July 11 • Director: Paul McDonald • Grand Rapids
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls

REGISTER ONLINE: WWW.PACESETTERSPORTS.NET
Paynesville Area High School
Paynesville, MN

Tuesday, June 18 • Director: Wendy Kohler
All-Skills Camp for Girls Entering Grades 6-12
8:30 am - 12:30 pm AND 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Wendy Kohler
• Winningest Female Basketball Coach in MN
• Class AAA State Champions - 1997
• 9 state berths
• Minnesota "Coach of the Year" - 3 times
• National Coach of the Year finalist – 2019
• Former President of the MN Coaches Assoc.

Tuesday, July 2 • Director: Dave Walker
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 6-12
8:30 am - 12:30 pm AND 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Dave Walker
• 35 years as HS/College & Semi-Pro Coach
• State Champion: 1993 - 2 state berths
• SWH total career wins
• MN Class AA Coach of the Year (1994)
• 6 time District, Sub-Section, Section “Coach of the Year”
• Directed camps in 9 states
• Kept opponent under 30 points in championship-game

Tuesday, July 9 • Director: Dave Galovich
All-Skills Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 6-12
8:30 am - 12:30 pm AND 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Dave Galovich
• Record: 720-338 - Second active winningest coach in Minnesota.
• State Appearances: 9 times
• Minnesota Class AA Coach of the Year (2004 and 2017)
• MN Basketball Coaches Assoc.
  • Hall of Fame - 2007
• NABC Outstanding HS Coach Award 2019

Register Early! Each Camp limited to 48 players.
Register Online at WWW.PACESETTERSPORTS.NET
Questions? Call Pacesetter 320-243-7460 or email info@pacesetternet.com

“Bringing Top Coaches to You!”

FREE T-SHIRT!!
Register by June 1st to receive a free t-shirt!

CHAMPIONS AREN'T BORN... THEY'RE MADE
PACESETTER
TOUR OF CHAMPIONS
Tesdahl leaving East Ridge for Minnetonka

By Bruce Strand

Bryce Tesdahl, who coached the East Ridge boys to their first state tournament this year, has resigned to accept the same position at Minnetonka.

Tesdahl posted a 52-10 record in two seasons at East Ridge, where he had three Division I prospects in the lineup this year, and two of them will be returning.

Before that, Tesdahl coached New Prague to a 43-13 record in two seasons, for a total of 95-23 in his first four seasons as a head coach.

He will replace Ryan Freeberg, who resigned after three seasons at Minnetonka with a 39-42 record.

Tesdahl, who played for Crosby-Ironton High School and Bemidji State, is the grandson of former Chisholm coach Bob McDonald, the state’s all-time leader in coaching wins.

Whoever takes over at East Ridge will inherit two of the state’s best players in 6-10 junior forward Ben Carlson and 6-7 sophomore guard Kendall Brown.

* * *

Jill Becken, who un-retired to coach Centennial girls to a 73-16 record the last three years and a state third-place finish this season, has stepped down again. In her first tenure, Centennial had four state trips in nine years, with a runner-up finish in 2009. She retired to watch two daughters play college basketball and her son play in high school. After five years away, the retired math teacher give it another go, coaching four Division I-bound players (Sydney and Sara Stapleton, Claire Orth and Taylor McAuley). She had a career 396-134 record including 115 wins at at Forest Lake.

* * *

Tony Mathison has retired as girls basketball coach at Northfield. In 28 seasons as a head coach, 20 of them with the Raiders, Mathison posted 303 wins. He had state tournament teams in 2010 and this year.

---

**PACESETTER CHAMP CAMP**

For boys & girls entering grades 6 - 10

Willmar Community Christian School

Tuesday-Thursday

June 11-13

Tues: 10am-8pm • Wed: 8:30am-8pm • Thurs: 8:30am-4pm

Player Fee: $230 - 28 hours, includes 5 meals & 7 snacks

REGISTER ONLINE:@ www.pacesettersports.net

---

**FEATURING: JOHN CARLSON**

- Former Litchfield Boys Head Coach
- MN Coach of the Year 2000
- Record 469-307
- MN BB Coaches Association HOF

"The BEST Camps in Minnesota!"
GRAND RAPIDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
Grand Rapids, MN

Mon-Tues, June 17 - 18 • Director: Dave Galovich
Session 1: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
8:30 am - 12:30 pm • $80/player
Session 2: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 4-7
1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Dave Galovich
• Record: 720-338 - Second winningest active coach in Minnesota
• State Appearances: 9 times
• Minnesota Class AA Coach of the Year (2004 and 2017)
• MN Basketball Coaches Assoc. Hall of Fame - 2007
• NABC Outstanding HS Coach Award 2019

Dave Galovich
Grand Rapids, MN
Mon-Tues, July 8 - 9 • Director: Dave Walker
Session 1: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 5-7
8:30 am - 12:30 pm • $80/player
Session 2: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player

Dave Walker
• 35 years as HS, college & Semi-Pro Coach
• State Champion: 1993 - 3 time state appearances
• Kept opponent under 30 points in championship game
• 566 total career wins
• MN Class AA Coach of the Year (1994)
• 8 time District, Sub-Section, Section “Coach of the Year”
• Directed camps in 9 states

Wednesday, July 10 • Director: Dave Walker
Defensive Camp for Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
Defensive Skills ONLY - Point • Wing • Post • Pressing
9:00 am - 12:00 pm • $30/player
In 1993 MN State HS Championship game kept opponent under 30 points in championship game

Paul McDonald
• Head men’s coach at Vermillion Community College
• 18 seasons with 20 or more wins
• Record: 538-248 at Vermillion Community College
• 23 consecutive NJCAA state/regional appearances

Thursday, July 11 • Director: Paul McDonald
Boys & Girls Entering Grades 6-12
8:30 am - 12:30 pm AND 1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player
All-Skills Camp

Monday-Tuesday, July 29-30 • Director: Paul McDonald
Session 1: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 8-12
8:30 am - 12:30 pm • $80/player
Session 2: Boys & Girls Entering Grades 4-7
1:00 - 5:00 pm • $80/player
All-Skills Camp

Register Early! Each Camp limited to 48 players • Register Online at WWW.PACESETTERSSPORTS.NET
Questions? Call Pacesetter 320-243-7460 or email info@pacesetternet.com