Prep HOF adds 4 coaches, stars from 8 decades

By Bruce Strand

Along with a bevy of state tournament legends, the list of 15 individuals chosen for the Minnesota High School Basketball Hall of Fame is well-represented by one dynastic school, one now-defunct school, and the Georgia Bulldogs.

Eleven players from eight different decades, along with four coaches, will join last year’s inaugural class when they are introduced March 26 at the Timberwolves game against the Clippers. The Timberwolves and Lynx partner with the Hall.

The 2019 inductees:

**Ken Novak**, Hopkins boys coach, has amassed an 856-149 record, ranking third all-time in wins in Minnesota. His program’s 16 state trips ties for the most under one coach. His teams are 7-2 in championship games, with those seven titles, between 2002 and 2016, ranking second. Novak was named ESPN Rise national boys coach of the year in 2011 when his Royals completed a three-peat.

**Kris Humphries**, supremely athletic 6-9 forward, averaged 26 points and 11 rebounds on Novak’s state champion team in 2001-02, his junior year. They placed third his senior year. Humphries finished with 1,792 points and 811 rebounds (the rebound stat is estimated) and was named Mr. Basketball and McDonald’s All-America in 2003. After one All-Big 10 First Team season with the Gophers, Humphries played for eight NBA teams from 2004 to 2017, with career averages of 6.7 points and 5.4 rebounds.

**Ed Prohofsky** guided Marshall University to a 28-0 season for the Class A championship in 1976-77 (just two classes then) and had a 53-game win streak that ended with a loss in the 1978 tournament. He had a stellar 140-10 record at Marshall U before moving on to coach Hamline for nine years and serve as assistant coach with both the Timberwolves and Lynx. He’s also noted for significant involvement with adapted athletics.

**Ronnie Henderson** was Profosky’s MVP, just 5-foot-6 but a dynamic force who “set a standard for point guards of the era,” the Hall’s press release stated. After averaging about

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Hall of Fame: 2018 picks

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30 points the first three games, he was asked by Prohofsky to become the feeder, a role he loved. His pinpoint passing and generalship were crucial to Marshall U becoming an unbeaten state champion. He posted a record 42 assists in the 1976 state tournament and helped them extend their win streak to 53 games the next year.

Coco Miller and Kelly Miller are identical twins with virtually identical careers. The 5-9 guards led Mayo to state championships as sophomores and seniors, and shared the Miss Basketball Award in 1997 after an undefeated season, with Coco posting 2,113 points and 604 assists in her career, and Kelly 2,151 points and 459 steals. At Georgia, they were co-winners of the Sullivan Award as outstanding amateur athletes in the nation in 1999. Coco scored 2,131 points at Georgia while Kelly logged 2,177 and is still the only Bulldog in the top 10 all-time for points, rebounds, assists and steals. Each played 12 seasons in the WNBA, Coco mostly with Washington (eight years) and Kelly with seven teams, including Phoenix in their 2007 championship season.

Tracy Henderson, 1996 graduate of Patrick Henry, was one of the state’s most-coveted college prospects ever as a powerful 6-2 scoring machine fast enough to win a gold medal at the state track meet in the mile relay. Henderson logged 1,919 points, over 1,100 rebounds, and blocked 577 shots. A McDonald’s All-America, she signed with Georgia, played in two Final Fours with the Bulldogs, and was a finalist for Naismith Player of Year.

Bob Brink posted a 936-237 record over 51 years, most of them at Rocori, ranking No. 2 in the state in wins. (Chisholm’s Bob McDonald, with 1,012, was inducted last year), Brink’s Spartans advanced to state 13 times

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Hall of Fame: 15 luminaries selected

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and captured the Class AA title in 1988 (two-class system). They won 14 consecutive conference titles from 1976-89.

Mike Dreier, in his 41st season at New London-Spicer, is the only girls coach with over 900 wins (921-179). His 17 state tournament trips also rank first. Dreier’s teams are always ready to roll at “state” with a stellar 28-16 record there including two championships, six runners-up, two thirds, and two fourths. His Wildcats have 26 conference titles.

Bob Bruggers inspired a thunderous standing ovation from 19,000 fans in 1962 at Williams Arena when the Danube star’s name was called for the All State Tournament team after he scored 93 points, including 36 in a semifinal loss, leading the Hawks to third place. The 6-1 forward led tiny Danube to two state trips in the one-class era, logging 2,364 points and 1,098 rebounds. Football was his sport after, playing linebacker for the Gophers and in the American Football League with Miami and San Diego. He was then a pro wrestler for three years before an injuries in a small-plane crash ended his athletic career.

Norm Grow, 6-5 forward at Foley, averaged 36 points and 23 rebounds his senior year, 1956-57, and set state records that stood for decades — 2,852 career points (33 years), a 70-point game (47 years) and 1,412 rebounds (49 years). Foley did not reach state in the old one-class system, losing in regionals twice to state champion Roosevelt teams. Grow played for the Gophers, mostly as a backup. He died in 2012.

Hal Haskins played when nobody was keeping 1,000-Point Club but research on the subject found that the 6-3 post for the Alexandria Cardinals was the first player to achieve it, graduating in 1943 with 1,123 points. Haskins powered Alexandria to a state runner-up finish and previously led St. Mary’s of Morris to the Catholic state tournament. He was a two-time All-American at Hamline. His Hamline teammate Vern Mikkelson, who played for the Minneapolis Lakers, called Haskins “the best all-around player I ever saw.” Haskins died in 2003.

Kelly Skalicky, sweet-shooting guard with a bulldog disposition, scored 2,704 points in six seasons for Albany, capped by a spectacular 1981 state tournament, setting records that stood for over 25 years — a 45-point game and 102 total points — as the Huskies finished 26-0 with the Class A championship. Also state Class A golf champion that year, Skalicky switched to golf at Louisiana State after a knee injury her freshman year ended her hoops career.

Bob Zender was the linchpin of the “Edinasty” of the 1960’s when Edina won three state championships in a row, 1966-67-68, and reeled off 69 consecutive wins, a record never broken. The 6-8 center was the only Hornet player spanning all three of those seasons, averaging over 20 points in nine state tourney games, including 35 in the semifinals his senior year. Zender went on to play for Kansas State and settled in Kansas. He died in 2010.

Aileen Just (married name Luther) is the Hall’s nod this year to an early era of girl basketball when many schools played the six-player game (three offensive, three defensive) until the MSHSL abolished girls basketball just before World War II. (Last year, Grand Meadow was inducted as a team). Playing for tiny Rapidan, near Mankato, 1926-30, Just was “perhaps the best girl player of pre Title IX era,’’ the Hall’s press release stated. She led Rapidan to a 40-3 record in three years, scored 453 points in 416 minutes as sophomore, and had games of 50 and 60 points.

The Hall of Fame has a display in the skyway of the Target Center. Tickets for the induction ceremony cost $25. See mnhsbasketballhall.com. Anyone can nominate a player, coach, contributor or team on the website. Corporate sponsors and individual contributions are welcome. See gofundme.com/mnhsbasketballhall.
It’s Farmington girls’ time to shine

By Bruce Strand

Farmington has made just one state basketball appearance in the school’s history and that was the boys in 1937. But the Tiger girls are certainly in the conversation this year. With a young but veteran lineup, Farmington is 11-0 and ranked No. 4 in Class 4A.

Six of the top seven scorers returned from last year’s 19-10 team that ended a string of six losing seasons. The Tigers reached the Section 1 finals last March and got pummeled by Lakeville North 65-43. They had lost to the Panthers by just 55-53 in conference play.

However, the Tigers came up with a signature 61-47 win over Lakeville North in the third game this year. “We worked really hard these past years to beat them but they’re a really good team,” veteran guard Molly Mogensen told the Farmington Independent after that win. “We had some girls step up so it was all good.”

Farmington leads the South Suburban with a 5-0 mark, with Shakopee, Lakeville North and Eastview all 4-1. Farmington will play at Shakopee on Friday night.

Mogenson, a junior, has started since eighth grade and scored around 1,150 points. She played on 3-23 and 6-21 team her first two years but things are different now. Mogensen is poised to break the Tiger record of 1,439 held by her mother, Julie (Bauer) Mogensen.

The Tigers are holding opponents to 41 points per game while showing great balance on offense. Reliable scorers are sophomore guard Paige Kindseth (14.2 ppg), 6-4 soph center Sophie Hart (13.1), Mogensen (12.7), soph guard Peyton Blandin (9.2), junior guard Morgan Ebel (7.9) and senior center Kaitlin Winston (5.5).

It’s the fourth year for coach Liz Carpentier, who made a tough decision to leave Eagan in 2015. Carpentier coached Eagan, her home town, for seven years, and had a school-record 17-win season in 2014-15, but left to take over a Farmington squad that had gone 3-23. Carpentier took the job because she and husband Bob and their three young children live in Farmington, where Bob had been a teacher. He’s now activities director at Cristo Rey Jesuit. But the coaches switch to the Farmington Tigers is looking pretty good right now.
Tibs, Butler gone, Wolves hit re-set

By Terry Kunze

Assessing the Timberwolves, we have to begin in the 2017-18 season. Coach Tibs decided to go for quick success by making a big trade for a proven asset in Jimmy Butler from Chicago. The 6-7 shooting guard is a two-way player who should have given them a solid scorer and locker room leadership. The Wolves gave Zach LaVine, Kris Dunn and Lauri Markkanen to Chicago, their No. 1 picks the previous three years. All three are starters for the Bulls and they will become solid starters in this league.

Even with this deal, the Wolves barely made it to the playoffs, with an overtime win over Denver on the last day of the season, then quietly bowed out to Houston 4-1 in the first round of the NBA playoffs, a disappointment to fans and coaches.

Fans could not wait for the next season to begin. But in late summer, calamity struck. Butler refused to play with the Wolves, and flatly embarrassed the organization. Thibodeau, reluctantly, was forced to look for a trade. I felt that Karl Anthony Towns and Andrew Wiggins had a difficult time adjusting to Jimmy Butler, who dominated the ball and took most of the big shots in close games. There was too much one-on-one-dribbling, too little ball movement.

Butler was traded to the Philadelphia 76ers for 6-10 post/wing Dario Saric, 6-9 shooting forward Robert Covington and 6-3 guard Jarryd Payless -- actually a very favorable trade. Covington and Saric are excellent defenders, shooters, passers, and teammates. Bayless is just coming off injuries. He may get an opportunity to show his skills soon.

Tibs was fired last week, his fate sealed by his handling of the Butler situation. I thought Butler should have been fined and not allowed to practice or play until traded. I think Glen Taylor realized that things were not working out and the team was not always focused or showing positive emotion. The college coach is the boss, but the pro coach has to sell his program and motivate his players.

Ryan Saunders has moved up to interim head coach, and at Oklahoma City, his debut, the team showed positive energy and played for each other, resulting in a nice road win. This is a new start for everyone. Fans were not happy with Tibs’ negative coaching style and control. I feel players will be more involved and will grow in a positive environment. I hope it results in a playoff berth.

The Wolves have settled on a nine-man rotation and at times will go ten deep. The first unit, with my assessments, is:

Jeff Teague, 6-2 guard, good quicks, adequate shooter, average defender, at times over dribbles; Andrew Wiggins, 6-8 forward, athletic and skilled player, at times seems to coast, a suspect shooter who must play with more urgency; Robert Covington, 6-9 forward, excellent shooter, best defender, active on both ends of the floor; Taj Gibson, 6-9 power forward, tough inside, very good rebounder and defender, a real pro; and Karl Anthony Towns, 7-0 center, the man, the go-to guy inside and out.

The second unit, with my assessments, is:

Tyus Jones, 6-1 point guard gifted passer and a leader, makes teammates play better, and has a positive influence on the court; Derrick Rose, 6-3 guard, volume shooter of the unit, tough to stay in front of, a guy who attacks and attacks, hitting 18 ppg; Dario Saric, 6-10 guard forward, moves well without the ball, good shooter, excellent unselfish passer; Gorgui Dieng, 6-10 center, does the dirty work, guards the best post, takes charges, adequate perimeter shooter; and Josh Okogie, 6-4 guard/forward, athletic, active player, stout defender, picks up team intensity, although a streaky, off and on shooter.

One thought I have: maybe Tyus Jones should start with the first unit. He can orchestrate the offense and distribute the ball. In one game, the Wolves point guard took 29 shots, far too many. Players know that they will get the ball if Tyus is on the floor.

The Wolves have a very good roster, on paper, with excellent depth and good length. They should not be underachieving like they have been this season. Two games under .500 (at this writing) is not acceptable. Too often, they have lacked urgency on the court and do not seem to be having fun. We hope the coaching change will take care of that.
Delano grad sparks Illini past Gophers

By Bruce Strand

Delano graduate Alex Wittinger, senior forward for Illinois, was a one-girl wrecking crew on the defensive end of the court in the second half against the Minnesota Gopher women Sunday.

Illinois rallied from 17 points behind in the third quarter to stun the Gophers 66-62 at Williams Arena — marking the first time in Wittinger’s career that her team has beaten the Gophers.

Wittinger, an explosive leaper at 6-foot-1, with impeccable timing, blocked six shots in the second half, and intimidated the Gophers into several other misses as their big lead melted. Gopher center Annalese Lamke, who had 18 points in the first half, was blanked by Wittinger in the second half.

Wittinger also logged 11 points and eight rebounds in her last game against the Gophers. She leads the Illini (9-6) with 15.5 points, 8.2 rebounds and 2.6 blocks per game.

Shot-blocking has always been Wittinger’s thing. Interviewed by the Star-Tribune during her senior year at Delano, she commented:

“Blocking shots is the thing I like to do the most. It comes pretty naturally … I like the fact that as a shot-blocker, you make people nervous about getting into the paint.”

That certainly was the case Sunday.
Springfield’s Fink hits 84 in 2 games

By Bruce Strand

Springfield senior Isaac Fink scored 84 points in two back-to-back evenings as the Tigers defeated Redwood Valley 90-83 there Monday evening and Sleepy Eye 94-69 on Tuesday evening at home.

Fink poured in 43 points against Redwood Valley to break the school record by one point. The 6-4 senior guard hit five 3-pointers and 16 of 22 free shots while pulling down 23 rebounds. The previous Tiger record of 42 was shared by Tyler Marz (2011 graduate) and Rod Davison (1970 graduate), coach Lance Larson said. The Augustana recruit followed up with 41 points and 10 rebounds against Sleepy Eye. His previous high was 41 points in January 2018 in a win over Minnesota Valley Lutheran when he reached 2,000 points.

Meanwhile, Decker Scheffler, Springfield 6-1 junior guard, delivered 29 points and 11 rebounds against Redwood Valley, then notched his 1,000th point against Sleepy Eye while logging 20 points and nine rebounds.

Springfield is 9-1 and ranked No. 2 in Class 1A.

Armstrong clips top-ranked Pirates

Park Center was knocked from the unbeaten ranks, and from the top spot in the Class 4A rankings, by Robbinsdale Armstrong, 62-56, on Tuesday. Adam Biewen scored 18 points, Devyn Frye 13, Jake Breitbach 13, and Hezekiah Iyawe 10 for Armstrong (7-3). Detavious Frierson sank 16 and Tommy Chatman 14 for Park Center (9-1).

DeLaSalle fended off Minneapolis North 66-57 in a duel of state title contenders Tuesday. DLS is ranked first in Class 3A and North is No. 2 in Class 2A. Tyrell Terry, senior guard averaging 27.3 points, sank 23 for the Islanders (6-3), while Kameron Givens, senior guard averaging 7.0 points, stepped up with 20 points. Eli Campbell netted 17 points and Willie Wilson 12 for the Polars (6-3). This was the first DLS-North game since 2011.

Lariah Washington, St. Cloud Apollo’s all-time scoring leader, reached the 2,000-point marker while scoring 19 in 77-46 loss to Willmar on Thursday. Washington, a senior guard, is averaging 26.7 points, 6.3 rebounds and 3.8 steals for the Eagles (7-5).

White Bear Lake’s 10-1 team is led by two seniors who’ve gone over 1,000 points. Jeremy Beckler, 6-8 forward, scored 20 points in an 80-63 win at Stillwater on Tuesday to reach the milestone. Sam Schwartz, 6-4 guard, got there Dec. 14 scoring 23 in a 77-50 win over Mounds View. Schwartz, who’s averaging 21.9 points, has committed to Southwest State. Beckler, averaging 20.9 points, has committed to Carleton College.

Triple-double by Mounds View’s Becher

Mounds View’s Lindsey Becher achieved a rare triple-double — 26 points, 18 rebounds, and 11 blocked shots — and the Mustangs needed every bit of that to hold off Cretin-Derham Hall 72-70 on Jan. 4. The 6-2 junior forward is averaging 20 points and got her 1,000th three games earlier. “Lindsey definitely had 11 blocks,” coach Ashlie Anzel said, when asked about that statistic. “We played zone most the night so she was in position to help on anyone who drove in the lane. She really is a kid who does everything.” Lizzie Kauls added 25 for the Mustangs (6-7) while Sydney Jackson sank 29 and Frannie Hottinger 25 for the Raiders (6-7).

Mesabi East junior guard Ava Hill shot 15-for-15 on free shots on the way to 35 points as the Giants won a shoot-out over Duluth Marshall 82-79 Jan. 3 at Marshall. Hill, a two-time state champion in the 800-meter run, hit her last two freebies with 9.4 seconds for the clinchers. Mesabi East (8-4) also had Hannah Hannuksela with 27 points. Duluth Marshall (7-2) got 54 points from two guards as Grace Kirk sank 29 and Gianna Kneepkens 25. Kneepkens, a sophomore, averages 30.5 points and Kirk, a junior, averages 25.

Everybody wants to sink that 3-pointer just before the buzzer to pull out a close game. Heidi Hoffman of New Ulm Cathedral did just that Jan. 4, hitting from the corner, with a defender on her, off an inbounds play that started with 2.4 seconds left, to beat Nicollet/Loyola 51-50. Hoffman had been off-target with just five points before she got the ball with the game on the line. She told herself “Relax” and let it go. “I made it and it felt really good,” she told the New Ulm Journal. Sarah Mohr sank 15 points and Lauryn Franta 12 for the Greyhounds (4-6).
MBBN BOYS BASKETBALL TOP 20

CLASS 4A

1. Hopkins 12-1
2. Prior Lake 7-1
3. Park Center 9-1
4. Shakopee 9-2
5. East Ridge 8-2
6. Eden Prairie 7-4
7. Lakeville North 8-3
8. Wayzata 9-3
9. Champlin Park 7-3
10. Chaska 6-4
11. White Bear Lake 10-1
12. Cretin-Derham Hall 8-3
13. Tartan 9-2
14. Minnetonka 7-3
15. Edina 6-4
16. St. Paul Central 7-3
17. Eastview 7-4
18. Maple Grove 7-2
19. Robbinsdale Armstrong 7-3
20. North St. Paul 6-4

CLASS 3A

1. DeLaSalle 6-3
2. Princeton 10-0
3. Waseca 11-0
4. Austin 8-2
5. Delano 6-3
6. Mankato East 7-1
7. Robbinsdale Cooper 5-3
8. Mahtomedi 7-3
9. Bemidji 6-0
10. Northfield 8-2
11. Minneapolis Roosevelt 8-4
12. Waconia 6-4
13. Holy Angels 10-1
14. St. Thomas Academy 6-5
15. Marshall 7-3
16. Sartell-St. Stephen 8-1
17. Totino-Grace 6-3
18. Hermantown 9-3
19. Alexandria 6-4
20. Hibbing 6-5

CLASS 2A

1. Minnehaha Academy 8-2
2. Minneapolis North 6-3
3. Perham 9-1
4. Breck 8-2
5. Lake City 10-2
7. Holy Family Catholic 9-2
8. Maranatha Christian 10-1
9. Caledonia 8-3
10. Providence Academy 8-3
11. Spectrum 10-1
12. Hawley 9-1
13. Osakis 9-0
14. St. Cloud Cathedral 7-4
15. Breckenridge 5-4
16. Minnewaska Area 7-2
17. Pequot Lakes 8-1
18. Albany 8-2
19. Melrose 7-3

CLASS 1A

1. Minneota 12-0
2. Springfield 9-1
3. Cass Lake-Bena 11-0
4. BOLD 12-0
5. North Woods 9-1
6. Henning 10-0
7. Mountain Lake Area/Comfrey 8-1
8. Mahnomen-Waubun 7-1
9. Spring Grove 9-1
10. Ortonville 7-1
11. Randolph 10-1
12. Rushford-Peterson 8-4
13. Ada-Borup 9-0
14. Hayfield 11-2
15. Waterville-Elysian-Morristown 10-1
16. Minnesota Valley Lutheran 11-1
17. New Ulm Cathedral 9-2
18. Hancock 8-1
19. Pine River-Backus 7-1
20. SW Minnesota Christian 5-1
### MBBN Girls Basketball Top 20

#### Class 4A
1. Hopkins 11-0
2. Wayzata 13-0
3. Stillwater 9-2
4. Farmington 11-0
5. Eastview 9-2
7. Roseville Area 11-2
8. Eden Prairie 10-1
9. Park Center 10-2
10. Forest Lake 12-3
11. Centennial 9-4
12. Apple Valley 8-4
13. Lakeville North 8-4
14. Elk River 9-2
15. Maple Grove 9-3
16. Robbinsdale Armstrong 8-2
17. Chaska 9-3
18. Shakopee 9-2
19. Prior Lake 6-6
20. Burnsville 6-4

#### Class 2A
1. Sauk Centre 10-2
2. Roseau 9-2
3. Eden Valley-Watkins 11-0
4. Holy Family 12-2
5. Minnehaha Academy 9-5
6. Hawley 6-0
7. Rochester Lourdes 8-5
8. Rush City 8-1
9. Minneapolis North 8-3
10. St. Thomas 9-3
11. Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial 11-0
12. Annandale 8-2
13. Lake City 10-2
14. Foley 11-0
15. Norwood-Young America 8-2
16. Medford 11-0
17. Esko 11-3
18. New London-Spicer 8-4
19. Royalton 8-2
20. Maranatha Christian 6-6

#### Class 3A
1. Alexandria 12-0
2. Hill-Murray 12-1
3. Holy Angels 9-2
4. St. Paul Como Park 10-1
5. Red Wing 11-2
6. Waseca 13-1
7. Waconia 9-3
8. Willmar 8-2
9. Simley 9-3
10. Benilde-St. Margaret’s 11-2
11. Mankato West 8-4
12. New Ulm 10-2
14. Austin 9-3
15. Robbinsdale Cooper 5-6
16. DeLaSalle 5-4
17. Grand Rapids 9-5
18. Hibbing 9-2
19. Princeton 11-4
20. Fergus Falls 8-3

#### Class 1A
1. Minnesota 9-0
2. Mountain Iron-Buhl 11-1
3. Menahga 11-0
4. Grand Meadow 13-0
5. Pelican Rapids 10-1
6. Ada-Borup 8-1
7. Heritage Christian 9-1
8. Goodhue 12-2
9. Lac qui Parle Valley 10-0
10. Hills-Beaver Creek 13-0
11. Parkers Prairie 10-0
12. Stephen-Argyle 12-0
13. Cromwell-Wright 8-1
14. Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa 8-2
15. BOLD 7-4
16. SW Minnesota Christian 8-2
17. Park Christian 11-2
18. Cherry 11-2
19. Wabasso 9-2
20. Red Lake 9-4