C6 • STAR TRIBUNE ★★ SPORTS TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2023

PREPS EXTRA

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Kholohnn Cummings-Coleman had 286 yards and two touchdowns on 11 catches vs. Buffalo last year, as well as a 95-yard TD on a kickoff return.

He's hard to catch after the catch

• PREPS from C1

whose abilities allow him to make plays anywhere on the field.

"I just think there's a different speed when you see him play on Friday night," Rusin said. "[He] just seems to have another gear that just sort of makes him go."

His speed and elusiveness — he also runs track in the spring — help Cummings-Coleman find plenty of extra yardage after the catch.

"You could throw him a 5-yard hitch, he'll break somebody's ankles and take it for another 25 yards to the end zone," senior quarterback Jacob Mattick said. "No one ever tackles him on the first try."

Seniors Hettwer and Mattick split time successfully at quarterback last season and are good friends with Cummings-Coleman and better players because of him. Mattick cited the first play against Prior Lake in the Class 6A playoffs last season, when he threw a bad ball but Cummings-Coleman "jumped over the defender and caught it over him."

The three have played together for years, and Mr. CR still makes plays that surprise the other two.

"It's almost every game," Hettwer said.

Breakout game

Still, a 28-14 victory over Buffalo on Sept. 9, 2022, was a whole different level for Cummings-Coleman.

"From the very first play of the game, he beats his corner, 30-yard gain," Hettwer said. "Very first play. You knew that game was going to be special, just get the ball in his hands, let him do his thing."

Cummings-Coleman piled up 286 yards on 11 catches with two touchdowns of 22 and 77 yards that day, and he returned a kickoff 95 yards for an additional touchdown. Cummings-Coleman said he watches that game every week.

Mattick was out that game because of a strained calf but said Cummings-Coleman's performance "was like a movie."

"Buffalo was the breakout game that everyone saw, but it was just, for us, I know it seems unbelievable to say, but this is exactly what we expected," Cardinals wide receivers coach Nolan Schlimsog said.

A football player for about 13 years, Cummings-Coleman is starting only his third year at receiver. He was a running back as a youth player, until his 2020 season on the Coon Rapids freshman team.

Turns out, wide receiver has worked out pretty well.

"I think my athleticism makes me more of a weapon at wide receiver than at running back," Cummings-Coleman said. "I prefer wide receiver, but I still do love running back because that's the Day One position."

Cummings-Coleman will add to his versatility this season by playing cornerback for the first time. Rusin said the Cardinals would "be fools not to think about more ways for us to get him on the football field."

"He's a tough kid. He's not a kid that's afraid to block. He's not afraid to get after kids," Rusin said.

When the pads come off, he switches gears.

"They might think of me as somebody that likes to be too aggressive, always angry, always a hothead," Cummings-Coleman said. "Off the field, that's not really who I am. I'm cool, calm, collected. I'm a go-with-the-flow type of guy."

College: undecided

Cummings-Coleman has nine college offers, in Minnesota and out of state, but starts this fall undecided on his next football home. He keeps several factors in mind, such as likely playing time, his relationships with coaches and, a big one, how he, his mom and his grandma feel about a school and program. He said he's "still trying to develop that relationship with the schools" before he makes a decision for the next four years.

"Right now, I haven't narrowed it down because I'm expected to have a way better season," Cummings-Coleman said. "And I just want to see what doors are open."

Football runs in the family, "but this is the first time in a few years that somebody in my family has gone this far," Cummings-Coleman said. One cousin played Division I football at North Dakota, while another cousin made it to the NFL. Closer to home, Cummings-Coleman is excited to play with his little brother this season, sophomore running back Kamreen Cummings-Coleman.

Rusin loves the prospect of Mr. CR representing the city at the next level.

"You rarely can get those kids coming through your program," Rusin said. "But we just hope he lands somewhere that's best for him."

'Expect the unexpected'

The Cardinals played a Class 5A schedule last year before losing 20-13 to Prior Lake in the first round of the Class 6A playoffs, finishing 4-5. The program has four state tournament appearances, the latest reaching the semifinals in 2019, when the team went 8-4 in Rusin's first year as head coach. Coon Rapids hasn't finished above .500 since.

This season, Coon Rapids is all-in with a fall Class 6A schedule that starts Thursday at Centennial. Cummings-Coleman is preparing with a championship mindset, wanting to win the Prep Bowl "because we know that we are capable of doing it." He tells football fans to "expect the unexpected" from his Cardinals.

Cummings-Coleman plans to leave his mark on the Coon Rapids program. Schlimsog sees that when Cummings-Coleman pulls aside players, upperclassmen or youngsters, to talk about skills and the game.

"I want to leave a legacy for the kids after," Cummings-Coleman said. "That's what I think would be successful."

GIRLS TENNIS PREVIEW

Rochester Mayo off to good start

By JIM PAULSEN
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Rochester Mayo is a perennial state tournament entrant, having made it 25 times in 26 seasons, and the Spartans routinely advance to the Class 2A final. But the dominance of west metro programs from the Twin Cities, specifically Edina and Minnetonka, has consistently stood in their way of taking the final step.

This year looks like Mayo's year. The Spartans lost to Minnetonka 6-1 in the final last year, but most of their team strength is back this season.

It starts with the Loftus sisters, junior Claire and freshman Aoife, who paired to win the Class 2A doubles championship. Both are among the top singles players in the state. Claire is ranked No. 2 in the coaches association rankings, Aoife No. 7.

Always strong at doubles, this year Mayo boasts the deepest singles group in the state. It has three strong singles players in Keely Ryder, Ana Medina and Malen Diehn to fill the two remaining spots.

Mayo has gotten off to a strong start, beating Minnetonka 6-0 (with one match called because of heat) on Thursday and winning its own tournament, the Mayo Invitational, beating Edina 6-1 in the finals.

New coach at Minnetonka

The two-time defending Class 2A champion Minnetonka Skippers face a double challenge: They must replace nine seniors from 2022, including singles champion Sarah Shahbaz and runner-up Kelsey Phillips, and they will do that with a new head coach.

Jessa Richards, a former Minnetonka player, has taken over for Brent Lundell, whose contract was not renewed after last season despite leading the Skippers to the first two state championships in team history. Richards twice played in the state tournament as a singles player for Minnetonka, in 2011 and 2012, and played collegiately at Augustana in South Dakota.

Despite the heavy losses, Minnetonka's program remains solid. Turnout is high, and the Skippers return seniors Karina Elvestrom and Sydney Pronczlenski.

Minnetonka will face a bumpy road just getting to the state tournament. The Skippers will have to survive the gantlet that is the Lake Conference, which also includes No. 2 Class 2A Edina, No. 4 2A Wayzata and No. 10 2A Eden Prairie, before taking on the challenge of the Class 2A Section 2 tournament, which includes Eden Prairie and No. 8 2A Prior Lake.

Class 1A: Repeats in offing?

With Mayo's ascension to the top of the Class 2A rankings, a Rochester sweep is possible. Rochester Lourdes has long been a premier program in Class 1A. The Eagles won the small-school class in 2022, their 14th brick in a foundation of state tournament titles. Top-ranked Lourdes graduated only two seniors from a year ago — one of them its top singles player in 2022, Ryann Witter — and appears deep enough to make it two in a row.

Lourdes' primary threat likely will be Breck. The Mustangs are ranked No. 2 in Class 1A and return senior Isabelle Einess, the 2022 singles champion.

Einess was the singles runner-up in 2021 when she was a sophomore at Minnehaha Academy. A residential move led to a transfer to Breck, where she won the title. She has the talent to win another, but she can expect a challenge from a former teammate. Senior Greta Johnson of Minnehaha Academy is ranked No. 2 in Class 1A.

State rankings

By the Minnesota State High School Coaches Association

CLASS 2A

Teams: 1. Rochester Mayo; 2. Edina; 3. Minnetonka; 4. Wayzata; 5. Elk River; 6. Mounds View; 7. Maple Grove; 8. Prior Lake; 9. Lakeville North; 10. (tie) Eden Prairie and Blaine. **Others to watch:** Lakeville South, Roseville.

Individuals: 1. Cassandra Li, Eagan; 2. Claire Loftus, Rochester Mayo; 3. Ava Nelson, Elk River; 4. Karina Elvestrom, Minnetonka; 5. Lucy Nabedrick, Wayzata; 6. Keira Kelly, Lakeville North; 7. Aoife Loftus, Rochester Mayo; 8. (tie) Savannah Paul, Mound Westonka, and Rashi Singh, Edina; 10. (tie) Molly Miller, Bloomington Kennedy, and Maiea Diehn, Rochester Mayo. **Others to watch:** Nana Vang, Blake; Melat Tabara, Eastview.

CLASS 1A

Teams: 1. Rochester Lourdes; 2. Breck; 3. Pine City; 4. St. James; 5. New London-Spicer; 6. Staples-Motley; 7. Crookston; 8. East Grand Forks; 9. Thief River Falls; 10. (tie) Minnewaska Area and Litchfield. **Other to watch:** Osakis.

Individuals [six ranked]: 1. Isabelle Einess, Breck; 2. Greta Johnson, Minnehaha Academy; 3. Avery Sraay, Thief River Falls; 4. Leah Maddock, Orakis; 5. Lauren Rutten, Staples-Motley; 6. Isla Dille, Litchfield.

RANKINGS AND RESULTS

MONDAY

SOCCER • BOYS

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN
• Andover 5, Rogers 2
• Blaine 1, Champlin Park 0
• Centennial 1, Armstrong 1
• Maple Grove 5, Coon Rapids 1
• Osseo 2, Rogers 1
• Park Center 7, Spring Lake Park 0

METROPOLITAN AREA
• Bloomington Jefferson 5, Bl
• Dexter 2, Achievement-SJ 0
• Buffalo 3, Rosco 0
• Hope Academy 5, Mont Lebanon 0
• Mahtomedi 11, Orono Lakes 0
• Mounds Park Acad. 2, Nova Classical 1
• Mounds View 3, Cristo Rey Jesuit 0
• Park (Cott. Gr.) 3, Irondale 2
• Rochester Century 5, Bel Wing 0
• St. Cloud Apollo 3, Cooper 0
• St. Croix Prep 3, St. Paul Maria. 1
• St. Paul Harding 3, Mpls. Edison 0
• St. Paul Humboldt 2, South St. Paul 0
• Val Verde, Christian 5, Shirley Heber 1
• Watertown-Mayer 7, East Central Reg. 0

SOCCER • GIRLS

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN
• Andover 5, Rogers-Eastern 0
• Anoka 2, Elk River 1
• Blaine 4, Champlin Park 0
• Maple Grove 4, Coon Rapids 1
• Osseo 5, Orono 0
• Spring Lake Park 15, Park Center 0

TRISAETKO
• DeLaSalle 6, Columbia Heights 0

METROPOLITAN AREA
• Big Lake 6, Rosemount 1, ot
• Dassel-Cokato 3, Litchfield 1
• Concordia Academy 1, LEA 1, ot
• Mound Lake 10, North St. Paul 0
• Holy Angels 5, St. Paul Highland Park 2
• Hutchinson/D-SS 2, Norwood 10, 0
• Lionsville-Scott 2, Waconia 0
• Legacy Christian 5, Princeton 0
• Maranatha 10, L'Ecole 2
• Minnetonka 3, Mound Westonka 0
• MACT 1, New Life Academy 0
• Two Rivers 2, Rochester John Marshall 0
• Visitation 2, Valley 1
• Watertown-Mayer 4, Sartell-St 2

TENNIS • GIRLS

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN
• Champlin Park 4, Blaine 3

METROPOLITAN AREA
• Ironton 5, Valley 2
• Mpls. Washburn 7, Winfield 0
• Mpls. Southwest 4, Lino Lakes Spiker 3
• Prior Lake 7, St. Paul Johnson 0
• Prior Lake 5, Mankato East 2
• Roseville 5, Hastings 2
• St. Paul Acad. 5, St. P. High. Park 2

MINNESOTA
• St. James 5, New Ulm 2

VOLLEYBALL • GIRLS

NCAA
• Litchfield Christian def. North Lakes Acad-emy, 25-8, 26-9, 25-15

METROPOLITAN AREA
• Cambridge-Isanti def. Coon Rapids, 25-21, 22-25, 25-21, 25-14
• Minnetonka def. Concordia Univ. Wurtg-America, 25-21, 27-25, 25-12
• Maple Grove def. Edina, 25-13, 25-13, 25-17
• Mounds Westonka def. Big Lake, 25-15, 25-13, 26-25
• Totino-Grace def. St. Francis, 25-14, 25-17, 25-17

MINNESOTA
• Cedar Mountain/Comfrey def. Nicollet, 25-16, 25-13, 25-3
• East Grand Fo ks def. Warren-Alvarado-Oslo, 25-16, 25-15, 25-19, 25-14
• Goodridge/Argyle-Gatzke def. Red Lake Falls, 25-23, 25-13, 25-22
• Hancock/Lowry/Herman-Norcia, 25-13, 17-25, 25-23, 25-19
• Hibbing-Chisholm def. LeRoy-Ostrander, 25-21, 25-7, 25-10
• North Woods def. Mountain Iron-Buhl, 25-21, 25-13, 25-14
• Stacy, Eye def. Mankato-Loyola, 25-12, 25-18, 25-19
• Tri-City United def. Parkers Prairie, 13-25, 25-20, 25-19, 10-25, 15-13

RANKINGS

CROSS COUNTRY • BOYS

BY THE COACHES ASSOCIATION

Class 2A
• **Team:** 1. Wayzata; 2. Lakeville North; 3. Rosemount; 4. Mounds View; 5. Minnetonka; 6. Hopkins; 7. Minneapolis Southwest; 8. Edina; 9. Stillwater; 10. Eden Prairie.
• **Individual:** 1. Noah Baker, Armstrong; 2. Nils Gilles, Minnetonka; 3. Sam Soler, Minneapolis Washburn; 4. Aidan Jones, Minneapolis Washburn; 5. Frankie Hoge, Prior Lake; 6. Eliot MacArthur, Mounds View; 7. Jackson Hoffman, Minnetonka; 8. Andrew Case, Lakeville North; 9. Ben Grosch, Armstrong; 10. Robert Mickelson, Roseville.

Class 1A
• **Team:** 1. Mankato East; 2. Orono; 3. Perham; 4. Belle Plaine; 5. Mankato West; 6. Fergus Falls; 7. Alexandria; 8. Big Lake; 9. Montevideo; 10. Marshall.
• **Individual:** 1. Ben Fischer, Annandale; 2. Kolby Allen, Milaca; 3. Isaiah Anderson, Mankato East; 4. Bjorn Andersen, Perham; 5. Owen Lauten, Big Lake; 6. Ethan Paquet Lakey, 7. Matthew Lindgren, Totino-Grace; 8. Jack Lowe, Big Lake; 9. Ephraim Staley, Mankato West; 10. Farouk Mirzay, Northfield.

Class 1A
• **Team:** 1. Greenway/Nashwauk-Keewatin; 2. Laurentian; 3. Park Rapids Area; 4. Pine River-Backus; 5. Hibbing-Chisholm; 6. Redwood Valley; 7. St. John's Prep; 8. St. Cloud Cathedral; 9. Winona Cotter; 10. Staples-Motley.
• **Individual:** 1. Will Ahrens, Redwood Valley; 2. Owen Jablonski, Laurentian; 3. Brayden Berthiaume-Hewitt; 4. Noah Hall, Park Rapids Area; 5. Mark Swanson, Northwood Nighthawks; 6. Ryan Flanery, Bluffland Orio; 7. Charlie Larson, Pelican Rapids; 8. Isaac Tibbetts, Staples-Motley; 9. Gavin Kiss, Lumber; 10. Zach Meyer, St. John's Prep.

CROSS COUNTRY • GIRLS

BY THE COACHES ASSOCIATION

Class 2A
• **Team:** 1. Wayzata; 2. Minnetonka; 3. Edina; 4. Prior Lake; 5. Farmington; 6. Mounds View; 7. Eden Prairie; 8. Centennial; 9. Woodbury; 10. Hopkins.
• **Individual:** 1. Maddie Gallickson, Wayzata; 2. Sydney Bendzus, Hopkins; 3. Eve Meier, Minnetonka; 4. Mia Hoffman, Benilde-St. Margaret's; 5. Norah Kuttagen, Forest Lake; 6. Marissa Long, Chanhassen; 7. Laura McCarty, St. Paul Central; 8. Lorena Guadalupe, Mounds View; 9. Caitlyn Dunne, Armstrong; 10. Kamryn Nelsen, Anoka.

Class 1A
• **Team:** 1. St. Paul Highland Park; 2. Mankato East; 3. Alexandria; 4. Willmar; 5. Perham; 6. Becker; 7. Monticello; 8. Rocori; 9. Annandale; 10. Hibbing.
• **Individual:** 1. Lucy Nowrenti, St. Paul Highland Park; 2. Isabelle Schmitz, Kutchinson; 3. Olivia Gedert, Albany; 4. Celia Chaney, Pequot Lakes; 5. Alyson Sarmiento, Marshall; 6. Rachel Mehrkens, Monticello; 7. Lauren Elvig, Willmar; 8. Mary Kansier, Fairmont; 9. Kate Ostlund-ers, Chisago Lakes; 10. Annabelle Eisenreich, Orono.

Class 1A
• **Team:** 1. St. Cloud Cathedral; 2. Staples-Motley; 3. Canby; 4. Northwest Nighthawks; 5. Lake City; 6. Wadena-Deer Creek; 7. Rochester Lourdes; 8. Lewiston-Utica; 9. New Ulm.
• **Individual:** 1. Jaena Beraten, Lowrer; 2. Audrey Brouwer, Staples-Motley; 3. Anjolie Abu, Jaidyn North Central; 4. Addison Roel, Lester Prairie; 5. Sonja Sonnberg, Winona Cotter; 6. Carolee Kuehne, Long Prairie-Grey Eagle; 7. Kaycee Wallin, Minden; 8. Ella Will, St. Cloud Cathedral; 9. Clara Schad, St. Cloud Cathedral; 10. Olivia Yotter, Lake City.

SOCCER • BOYS

BY THE COACHES ASSOCIATION

Class 2A
• 1. Wayzata; 2. Woodbury; 3. Maple Grove; 4. Minneapolis Washburn; 5. Minneapolis Southwest; 6. Andover; 7. Burnsville; 8. Minnetonka; 9. Armstrong; 10. Mounds View.

Class 1A
• 1. (tie) Murray; 2. Belgrade; 3. Crosby-Ironton-Cuyuna; 4. Rochester; 5. Orono; 6. Columbia Heights; 7. Morningside; 8. Benilde-St. Margaret's; 9. Holy Angels; 10. Mound Westonka.

Class 1A
• 1. St. Paul Academy; 2. Southwest Christian; 3. Holy Family; 4. Minnehaha Academy; 5. St. Cloud Cathedral; 6. Rochester Lourdes; 7. Riverland/Zumbrota-Mazeppa; 8. Mitchell-Lehman; 9. Maranatha; 10. Legacy Christian.

SOCCER • GIRLS

BY THE COACHES ASSOCIATION

Class 2A
• 1. Stillwater; 2. Wayzata; 3. Woodbury; 4. Minnetonka; 5. Centennial; 6. Edina; 7. Rosemount; 8. Andover; 9. White Bear Lake; 10. Blaine.

Class 1A
• 1. Holy Angels; 2. McNeenish; 3. Benilde-St. Margaret's; 4. Hill-Murray; 5. Totino-Grace; 6. Mankato East; 7. Orono; 8. Cretin-Derham Hall; 9. Chaska-Carver; 10. Mankato West.

Class 1A
• 1. Minnehaha Academy; 2. St. Croix Lutheran; 3. St. Paul Academy; 4. St. Croix Prep; 5. Breck; 6. Rochester Lourdes; 7. Watertown-Mayer; 8. Providence Academy; 9. Holy Family; 10. Maranatha.

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