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Sport Zone

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
THE REPORTER

FALL 2023



Emily Hacker
Mankato East Cougars

Photo courtesy of
SPX Sports

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Scarlets shine ahead of semifinal

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Staff Writer

After having a 12-1 record and making it to the Class AAAAA Championship game in the 2022 season, Mankato West is off to a flying start in the 2023 season.

The Scarlets have a current record of 7-1, and when you look at what they are doing on both sides of the ball, their record shouldn't be a surprise to anyone.

They are holding opponents to 9.25 points per game and through the first eight games, they are averaging 32.25 points per game.

To this point, they have been able to find a balanced attack on offense. In the passing game, they are averaging 184.2 yards per game.

The leader in that department, senior quarterback Bart McAninch, has thrown all but one pass attempt this season for the Scarlets.

McAninch has thrown for 16 touchdowns, has four interceptions and has a quarterback rating of 108.5.

Star wide-receiver and Gopher commit Jalen Smith contributes to much of McAninch's success. Smith is nearing 500 receiving yards, and has seven touchdowns on the season.

As for the running game, they are averaging 129.8 yards per game. The Scarlets have also scored 15 touchdowns on the ground, and have only one fumble on the year.

Senior Carter Bersaw has been largely carrying the load in



SPX Photo

Wide receiver Jalen Smith has committed to play at the University of Minnesota following his senior year.

the running game.

Bersaw has gotten 105 attempts, is averaging 71.4 yards per game and has four touchdowns. McAninch also has had his part to play in the run game as well.

He leads the team with eight rushing touchdowns.

Their most recent game came in a 28-0 win against Rogers. The Scarlets handed the Royals their first loss of the season Wednesday night. All 28

points were scored in the second quarter. McAninch threw for two touchdowns and ran for two more, which included a 27-yard rush into the end zone. He also found Bersaw for an 80-yard touchdown pass.

As the regular season has come to an end, up next for the Scarlets is the Section 2AAAAA Semifinal. The squad will host a 4-4 Chaska team at Mankato West High School Saturday, Oct. 28 at 3:00 p.m.



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Photo moment: East volleyball



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East boys leave it all on the field

By LUKE JACKSON
Staff Writer

Mankato East men's soccer needed to win three section tournament games to head to the Minnesota State Tournament, the Cougars came up short in the last game.

With a 2-1 loss in the third game of the section tournament to Worthington High School, the Cougars season comes to a close. They finished the season as the section 2AA runner-up.

The boys got on the board early in the first half 21 minutes into the game.

They had some looks to put the ball into the back of the net but came up short on a few occasions but kept their 1-0 lead.

Worthington's leader in goals Jonathan Banegas came up big with a clutch kick with 1:06s remaining in the game. This tied the score 1-1.

The two teams then went down to the wire in a penalty kick shootout.

Worthington bested the Cougars in the penalty kick shootout and won the game 2-1. They sent Mankato East home and are now moving on to the Minnesota State Soccer Tournament.

"Extremely proud of the lads tonight, they left everything out on the field but came up short," head coach Jerrad Aspelund said via X.

Despite the loss, the Cougars had a successful season going 10-7-2 throughout the season.



Courtesy Mankato East Boys Soccer

An experienced group of players led this team to the section tournament, but now the Cougars are in the paws of their younger players.

They also held a 7-4 record in the conference.

Their largest victory came against Red Wing High School with a shutout of 5-0.

As the season concludes, the Cougars will be losing the

majority of their players as they had 10 seniors rostered.

Next year, they will have a younger look as only three players will return as seniors. Along with that, they only had five sophomores and two

freshmen rostered.

One senior, goalkeeper Owen Quist, has been named as one of five finalists for the 2023 Class AA Mr. Soccer award. The winner will be announced Sunday at the state banquet.

The winner of the award will be deemed the best player in the state at their class.

"Love this group of players, thank you for the great season and memories," Aspelund said.

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New Ulm Soccer Q/A with Coach Johnson

What is your name and what sport/team are you coaching?

Jonathan Johnson - New Ulm Cathedral Soccer.

Tell us about some of the challenges your team faces this season.

Our biggest challenge this season was playing consistently. We seemed to play really well against powerful opponents, losing by one goal most times and then playing just good enough to win on other occasions. We have the skill and ability, plus the team gives maximum effort, but our mental preparedness was not always dialed in.

What specific players are looking to as leaders this season?

Junior Attacker Kaelyn Eikanger is a very inspiring player. She leads by example with her work ethic and dedication to soccer and to fitness. She makes time in her busy schedule outside of practice to work on her skills. Sophomore Goal Keeper Ellie Dake has trained very hard from a young age on to become an elite GK. She has participated in the Olympic Development Program along with other clinicians. She leads the team from in front of the net with her voice.

Which team or teams in your conference are your biggest rivals? Which teams will give you the toughest challenge?

Saint Peter and Waseca are always tough teams. It's always a good day when we can get a win from them. We also get satisfaction with wins over Marshall, Fairmont, Worthington and Saint James.

What would you say are your team's greatest strengths?

Our defense was awesome,



Courtesy Jonathan Johnson

The New Ulm Women's Soccer Coach Jonathan Johnson said that while the team's biggest challenge was making sure to play consistently, the team gave maximum effort against some of their biggest rivals, St. Peter, Waseca and Worthington.

keeping many opponents away from our net. In games where we are playing consistent soccer, out strength is our ability to pass and receive accurately while moving the ball down field with relative ease.

What are your expectations

for the team this season?

I can only expect them to do their best. If they can walk off the pitch with their heads held high and feel they did everything they could, then it was win no matter what the scoreboard said.

Tell us about the team's chemistry.

We have key, dominate players but we, for the most part, are a happy family. We do many team building events outside of practice so they can interact in different ways.

What is your favorite aspect of coaching?

I love watching these players evolve from the cloud of U6 players into the athletes they've become. It gives me a happy feeling when I see these players succeed.

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 **MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO**
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East girls off to state in back-to-back seasons



Photo courtesy Mankato East Girls Soccer

The Cougars have found their way into the state tournament and hope to make a run for the state title.

By **LUKE JACKSON**
Staff Writer

After the Mankato East women's soccer team finished the 2022 season with a third place tie, they are going back for redemption as they have another chance to make a run for the state title.

To conclude the women's regular season schedule, the Cougars defeated their town rival Mankato West in a 2-0

victory. This gives them a 14-4 overall record and a 8-3 conference record. Of their 14 wins, 11 of them were shutouts. They also average just about three goals per game.

"There were a lot of unknowns heading into this year," head coach Lizzy Vetter said. "We took every game head on, tried to make the most out of each game and win in the little moments. We were able to put together something really

special with a lot of new and returning players." Vetter says culture and tradition can be attributed to their success.

"Our willingness to want to continue our tradition and culture to keep the success that has been laid upon us," Vetter said.

The women's soccer team has five seniors who helped the team to its success and took on leadership roles.

"Our seniors, our returning

players, took this season head on and with a stride that they want to continue," Vetter said. "Huge shoutout to our seniors that wanted to continue on from last year. A lot of our success goes to them."

With the state tournament next for the Mankato East program, they look to finish out the year strong.

The schedule and seedings have not yet been determined but the games will take place



from October 24 to November third. The Cougars will have the chance to represent Mankato East at U.S. Bank Stadium, the home of the Minnesota Vikings.

"We just want to continue to build what we've done here today," Vetter said. "You can only go 1-0 in the state tournament, you only get one chance or you are eliminated. We hope to continue to build, get one win and to be at U.S. Bank would be the dream."





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Photo moment: St. Peter football



Photo courtesy St. Peter Herald

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MSU Volleyball serves up a competitive season



File Photo

The Mavs have a 2-3 home record, 4-5 away record and are 4-2 in games played at a neutral site. The Mavs will host four of their last six regular season games.

By HAYDEN LEE
Sports Editor

After going 6-22 in their 2022 campaign, the Minnesota State volleyball team entered the 2023 season with something to prove – that they were better than what their record showed.

The Mavs were picked to finish tenth in the NSIC in the NSIC Preseason Coaches' Poll, as Elizabeth Dille was the Mavs' 'Player to Watch' for the 2023 season.

To this point in the season, they have proved their worth. They currently sit at 10-10, eighth in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. Their most recent win came over the no. 10 ranked team in Division II volleyball, the Minnesota-Duluth Bulldogs.

"That was a gutsy win for us," said head coach Corey Phelps in a press release posted to the Maverick Athletics website. "I could not be prouder of this team. The team is figuring out how to step up in big moments. I can't think of a bigger moment than this."

Phelps is in his third season as head coach of the Mavs, and his expertise has helped the Mavs come together more as a group.

Stepping up in big moments

and against ranked teams has been something that these Mavs have thrived on. The NSIC is one of the tougher conferences in Division II. Five teams have found their way into the top-15 in DII, and the Mavs have been able to hang with teams like Concordia-St. Paul and even defeat the Bulldogs.

With the amount of competition in the NSIC, that also means that the Mavs need to take advantage of the games that they play against unranked teams. They have a 4-3 record against those unranked NSIC teams, and performed well, (5-3) at the Tiger Classic and Otter Invitational Volleyball challenges before they began conference play.

The Mavs have four players with over 100 kills on the year – senior Sophie Tietz (180), junior Kiya Durant (138), senior Emma Loveall (124) and junior Toryn Richards (123). Tietz also leads the team in service aces with 29. Sophomore Ellie Kline ranks second with 20. Brooke Bolwerk (452) and Makayla Snow (174) lead the way in assists.

As the Mavericks continue their season, they will have only six more games, all against unranked NSIC teams as they fight for their spot in the NSIC and NCAA Tournament.

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Photo moment: East football



Courtesy Mankato Free Press




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Saints volleyball secures Big South East



Courtesy Carmen Hanson

St. Peter Volleyball is currently 14-3 for the season. They played Mankato East 10/16 and Marshall 10/17 for the Big South Conference championship.

By **HAYDEN LEE**
Sports Editor

15 wins, three losses and easily running away with the Big South East Conference.

The St. Peter Saints are winners of their last six games and have not lost consecutive games all year.

They began their season with four straight sweeps over Pipestone, Blue Earth, Fairmont and St. James before losing their first game in five sets to Mankato

West. In their first game against Pipestone, they allowed only 25 total points.

After splitting their next two games against Mankato West and New Ulm, the Saints rattled off another four-game winning streak heading into the Century Invite.

The Saints went 3-1 in a tournament played in a 'best-of-three' format where they played Sartell, Mankato East, Watertown-Mayer and Alden-Conger.

Since their loss to Sartell in the late-September tournament, the Saints have lost only two total sets on their way to six straight wins. Additionally, their game that was scheduled to be played on October 10 against New Ulm was canceled and has yet to be made up.

Just as it was last season, the Saints are currently second in Section 4X, behind Marshall, who is the favorite to finish first.

"We hope to reach that milestone again this year," said

Saints' head coach Carmen Hanson.

Last season, in the section 2AAA championship, the Tigers ended the Saints' playoff run with a sweep.

The Saints have outscored their opponents 1,104-855 on the season, have 67 more kills than their opponents, and have over 200 more digs. Two juniors have stolen the show for the Saints this year – Iris Elias and Emmy Remmert. Elias has reached 1,000 assists on top of her 10

kills, eight service aces and 55 digs. Remmert has 219 kills, six service aces and 75 digs. Senior Lauren Jacobsen is the team leader in service aces.

As the season winds down, the Saints look forward to their inevitable matchup with the Marshall Tigers as they push for the conference championship.

They will play Mankato East in their first playoff game, the Section 2AAA Quarterfinal at St. Peter high school on October 25.



Courtesy St. Peter Public Schools

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Photo moment: West volleyball



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West girls place second in Section 2AA

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Staff Writer

The Mankato West girl's soccer team went into this season with head coach Crissy Makela in charge for her 28th season. In the 2022 season, the Scarlets had a record of 13-4-1. Heading into the 2023 season, they had a lot of turnover in their defense, and lost their top goal scorer, Julia Schumacher, from the previous year.

Despite the change of personnel in a number of key positions, Makela felt like the playing time that some players had last season would help ease into that role of having to replace the players that are no longer on the roster.

"We've always had the mentality even last year during the regular season we made sure all our players got playing time and that's intentional that way now come this year those players who were maybe not starters last year are still ready and know what a varsity level match is," Makela told KEYC.

The Scarlets 2023 season ended the same way the 2022 season did. A defeat at the hands of rivals Mankato East in the Section 2AA Championship. They finished the year with an overall record of 13-6. While they were able to not only cope, but improve with a new look defense. As they conceded 15 goals compared to the 16 opponents scored on them last season. Not having some of their top goal-scorers from a year ago proved to be a big miss on the



SPX Photo

Despite a lot of turnover and changes, the Scarlets still put together an impressive 2023 campaign.

other end of the field.



Schumacher bagged 16 goals and eight assists for the Scarlets in the 2022 season. As a team,

they scored 62 goals, with players like Aubrey Makela with nine, Sydney Shane with eight and Olivia Downs and Kate Hinz

getting six each, being some of their notable goal-scorers . This season, they had a 20-goal dropoff, and only managed to

get 42 goals. Makela led the Scarlets in scoring this season, as the senior put the ball in the net 20 times.

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Q/A Sibley East Volleyball with Coach Wolverton

What's your name and what sport/team are you coaching?

Chip Wolverton - Sibley East Volleyball.

Tell us about some of the challenges your team faces this season.

Replacing some key players from last season and competing in a very tough conference and section.

What specific players are looking to as leaders this season?

Lainey Brandt and Karcyn Dose are our captains and both return as starters. Other leaders will be Elizabeth Sell, Eliza Williams, Sami Petzel and Kendra Schmidt who all return as seniors with significant varsity experience as juniors.

Which team or teams in your conference are your biggest rivals? Which teams will give you the toughest challenge?

Rivals would be Le-Sueur-Henderson and Central (NYA). In our conference, Mayer Lutheran and Belle Plaine will be the biggest challenges.

What would you say are your team's greatest strengths?

We have a lot of players with good varsity experience at many different positions, but especially our back row. We should also have pretty solid blocking at all spots.

What are your expectations for the team this season?

Show improvement from last year.

Tell us about the team's chemistry.

We will be a pretty cohesive unit. I think we'll get along well,



Courtesy Chip Wolverton

Although the Sibley East Volleyball team has been trying to replace key players from the previous season, Coach Wolverton said there's a good mix of seniors on the team with previous varsity experience from their junior year.

incorporate the younger players into our team concept and be able to have fun on and off the

court together. What is your favorite aspect of coaching?

Watching the players improve and mature as players and people over the course of time in our

program. We've been fortunate to have great young people in our program over the years.



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Q/A Bethany Women's Soccer with coach Morris

What is your name and what sport/team are you coaching?

Emma Morris - Bethany Lutheran College Women's Soccer.

Tell us about some of the challenges your team faces this season.

We have lost in the semi-finals of the conference tournament the last two years in a row to UNW. We have our toughest non-conference season in our history.

What specific players are looking to as leaders this season?

Our captains: Asia Jota, Ashley Casper and Emma Lau.

Which team or teams in your conference are your biggest rivals? Which teams will give you the toughest challenge?

UW- Superior and University of Northwestern (St. Paul).

What would you say are your team's greatest strengths?

Our combination plan and technical skills.

What are your expectations for the team this season?

Aim was to go 2 of conference and the finals of conference tournament.

Tell us about the team's chemistry.

This is the best year we've had for team chemistry, they are a family. Our team hashtag is #Familia which pays homage



Courtesy photo

The Bethany Women's Soccer team considers themselves a family and even deemed a team hashtag for their closeness as #Familia.

to the mix of U.S. and international players on the team.

What is your favorite

aspect of coaching?

Seeing individuals achieve things they never thought they would be

able to do.

What else would you want our readers to know about your team?

We have a mix of

in-state, out of state and international players. We're a really fun team

to watch this year.

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FOOTBALL						
9-PLAYER	CLASS A	CLASS AA	CLASS AAA	CLASS AAAA	CLASS AAAAA	CLASS AAAAAA
<p>Quarterfinals November 9, 2023</p> <p>Section #1 vs. Section #3 Albert Lea, MN</p> <p>Section #2 vs. Section #4 Buffalo, MN</p> <p>Section #5 vs. Section #7 Grand Rapids, MN</p> <p>Section #6 vs. Section #8 Moorhead, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 16, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 10:30 a.m. Game #2 - 1:00 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 25, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Quarterfinals November 10, 2023</p> <p>Section #1 vs. Section #3 Jordan, MN</p> <p>Section #2 vs. Section #4 St. Cloud, MN</p> <p>Section #5 vs. Section #7 St. Cloud, MN</p> <p>Section #6 vs. Section #8 Brainerd, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 18, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 9:00 a.m. Game #2 - 11:30 a.m. TBD</p> <p>November 24, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Quarterfinals November 9, 2023</p> <p>Section #1 vs. Section #3 Rochester, MN</p> <p>Section #2 vs. Section #4 New Prague, MN</p> <p>Section #5 vs. Section #7 Forest Lake, MN</p> <p>Section #6 vs. Section #8 Alexandria, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 17, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 9:00 a.m. Game #2 - 11:30 a.m. TBD</p> <p>November 24, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 1:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Quarterfinals November 11, 2023</p> <p>Section #1 vs. Section #3 Hastings, MN</p> <p>Section #2 vs. Section #4 Long Lake, MN</p> <p>Section #5 vs. Section #7 Brainerd, MN</p> <p>Section #6 vs. Section #8 Alexandria, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 18, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 2:00 p.m. Game #2 - 4:30 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 25, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 1:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Quarterfinals November 9, 2023</p> <p>Section #1 vs. Section #3 Apple Valley, MN</p> <p>Section #2 vs. Section #4 Lakeville, MN</p> <p>Section #5 vs. Section #7 Monticello, MN</p> <p>Section #6 vs. Section #8 Elk River, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 16, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 4:00 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 17, 2023</p> <p>Game #2 - 4:30 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 24, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Quarterfinals November 11, 2023</p> <p>Section #1 vs. Section #3 Woodbury, MN</p> <p>Section #2 vs. Section #4 Apple Valley, MN</p> <p>Section #5 vs. Section #7 Osseo, MN</p> <p>Section #6 vs. Section #8 Maple Grove, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 17, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 2:00 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 18, 2023</p> <p>Game #2 - 7:00 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 25, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Quarterfinals November 9-10, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 Oak Park Heights, MN</p> <p>Game #2 St. Michael, MN</p> <p>Game #3 Spring Lake Park, MN</p> <p>Game #4 Brooklyn Park, MN</p> <p>Semifinals November 16, 2023</p> <p>Game #1 - 7:00 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 17, 2023</p> <p>Game #2 - 7:30 p.m. TBD</p> <p>November 24, 2023 Prep Bowl</p> <p>Championship - 7:00 p.m.</p>

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY		
Saturday, November 4, 2023		
Class AAA	Boys 10:00 a.m.	Awards - 11:15 a.m. (approx.)
Class A	Boys 12:00 p.m.	Awards - 1:15 p.m. (approx.)
Class AA	Boys 2:00 p.m.	Awards - 3:15 p.m. (approx.)

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY		
Saturday, November 4, 2023		
Class AAA	Girls 10:45 a.m.	Awards - 11:15 a.m. (approx.)
Class A	Girls 12:45 p.m.	Awards - 1:15 p.m. (approx.)
Class AA	Girls 2:45 p.m.	Awards - 3:15 p.m. (approx.)

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STATE TOURNAMENT SCHEDULES

VOLLEYBALL

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DATE	TIME	COURT#1	COURT #2
November 8, 2023	1:00 p.m.	AAAA Quarterfinal	AAAA Quarterfinal
November 8, 2023	3:00 p.m.	AAAA Quarterfinal	AAAA Quarterfinal
November 8, 2023	5:00 p.m.	AAA Quarterfinal	AAA Quarterfinal
November 8, 2023	7:00 p.m.	AAA Quarterfinal	AAA Quarterfinal
November 9, 2023	9:00 a.m.	AAAA Semifinal	AAAA Consolation
November 9, 2023	11:00 a.m.	AAAA Semifinal	AAAA Consolation
November 9, 2023	1:00 p.m.	AA Quarterfinal	AA Quarterfinal
November 9, 2023	3:00 p.m.	AA Quarterfinal	AA Quarterfinal
November 9, 2023	5:00 p.m.	A Quarterfinal	A Quarterfinal
November 9, 2023	7:00 p.m.	A Quarterfinal	A Quarterfinal
November 10, 2023	9:00 a.m.	AAA Semifinal	AAA Consolation
November 10, 2023	11:00 a.m.	AAA Semifinal	AAA Consolation
November 10, 2023	1:00 p.m.	A Consolation	A Semifinal
November 10, 2023	3:00 p.m.	A Consolation	A Semifinal
November 10, 2023	5:00 p.m.	AA Semifinal	AA Consolation
November 10, 2023	7:00 p.m.	AA Semifinal	AA Consolation
November 11, 2023	8:30 a.m.	AAA Cons. Final	AAAA Cons. Final
November 11, 2023	10:30 a.m.	A Cons. Final	AA Cons. Final
November 11, 2023	12:30 p.m.	A Third Place	--
November 11, 2023	1:00 p.m.	--	AA Third Place
November 11, 2023	2:30 p.m.	A Championship	--
November 11, 2023	3:00 p.m.	--	AA Championship
November 11, 2023	4:30 p.m.	AAA Third Place	--
November 11, 2023	5:00 p.m.	--	AAAA Third Place
November 11, 2023	6:30 p.m.	AAA Championship	--
November 11, 2023	7:00 p.m.	--	AAAA Championship

GIRLS SOCCER

October 24-26, 2023	Quarterfinals (sites TBD)
October 31, 2023	Semifinals U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis Class AAA: 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. Class AA: 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. Class A: 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.
November 1, 2023	Third Place West St. Paul Regional Athletics Ctr. Class AAA: 9:00 a.m. Class AA: 11:00 a.m. Class A: 1:00 p.m.
November 3, 2023	Championships U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis Class AAA: 10:15 a.m. Class AA: 2:45 p.m. Class A: 7:15 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER

October 24-26, 2023	Quarterfinals (sites TBD)
November 1, 2023	Semifinals U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis Class AAA: 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. Class AA: 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. Class A: 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.
November 2, 2023	Third Place West St. Paul Regional Athletics Ctr. Class AAA: 9:00 a.m. Class AA: 11:00 a.m. Class A: 1:00 p.m.
November 3, 2023	Championships U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis Class AAA: 8:00 a.m. Class AA: 12:30 p.m. Class A: 5:00 p.m.



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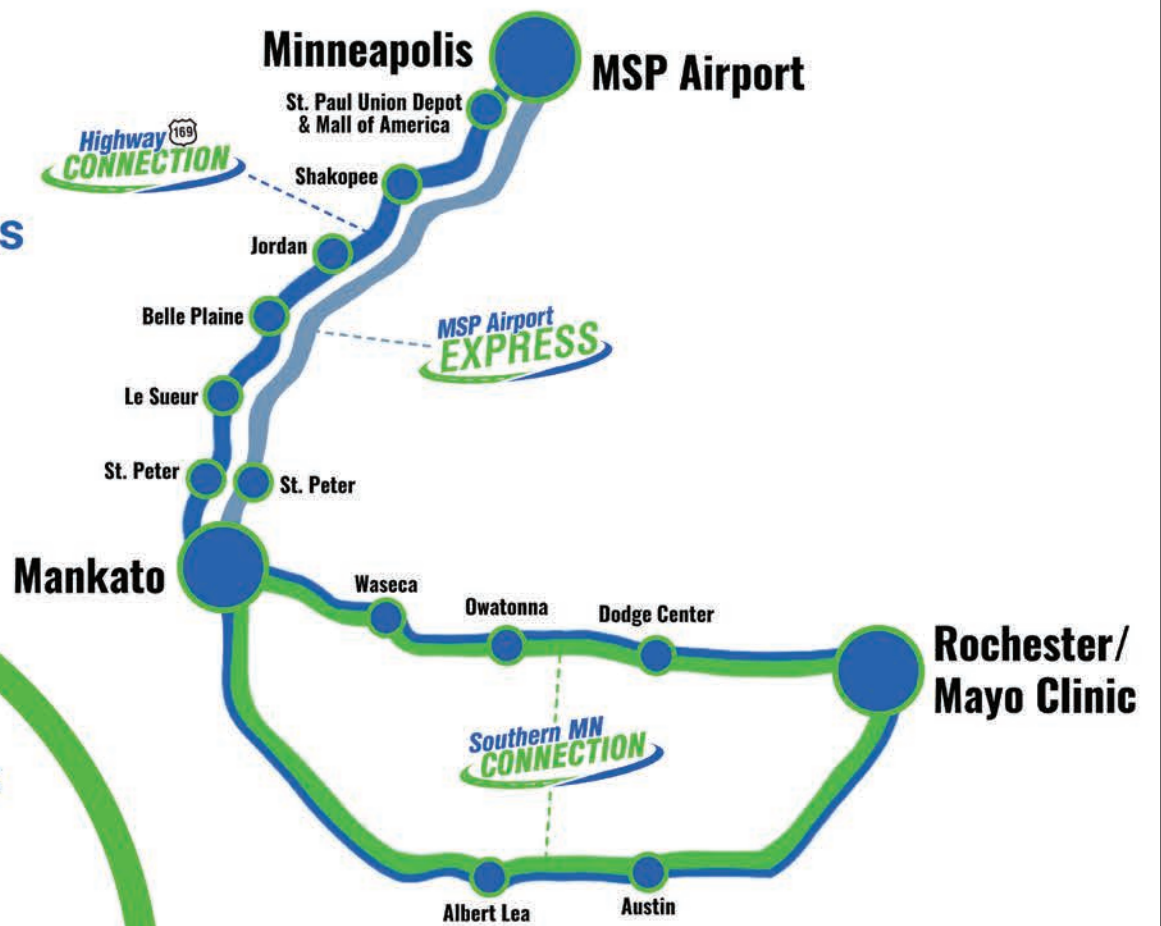
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