



**We pick the
Winners**

Tribune sports staff predictions



**SCOTT
MANSCH**
(146-70)



**MIKE
TOWNE**
(141-75)



**JESSE
GELEYNSE**
(147-69)



**LEE
VERNOY**
(131-85)



**STIRLING
WRIGHT**
(138-78)

Azusa Pacific at Carroll	Carroll	Carroll	Carroll	Carroll	Carroll
Cal at Arizona State	ASU	ASU	ASU	ASU	ASU
Ohio State at Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	OSU	Michigan
Illinois at Minnesota	Minnesota	Illinois	Illinois	Minnesota	Minnesota
Washington State at Washington	Wash	Wash	WSU	Wash	Wash
Virginia Tech at Virginia	Va. Tech	Va. Tech	Va. Tech	Va. Tech	Va. Tech
Florida State at Florida	FSU	FSU	Florida	FSU	FSU
Notre Dame at Stanford	Stanford	Stanford	Stanford	Stanford	Stanford
Clemson at South Carolina	Clemson	Clemson	S. Carolina	Clemson	S. Carolina
Panthers at Colts	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers
Bucs at Titans	Titans	Titans	Titans	Titans	Titans
Bears at Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Bears	Raiders	Bears
Redskins at Seahawks	Seahawks	Seahawks	Seahawks	Seahawks	Redskins
Texans at Jaguars	Texans	Texans	Texans	Texans	Texans
Patriots at Eagles	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots
Cardinals at Rams	Cardinals	Rams	Cardinals	Rams	Cardinals
Vikings at Falcons	Falcons	Falcons	Falcons	Falcons	Falcons
Giants at Saints	Giants	Saints	Saints	Saints	Saints

New coach not skating on thin ice

By SCOTT MANSCH
Tribune Sports Writer

Stirling Wright recently took over as head coach of the Great Falls Americans Junior A hockey team, which has been winless the first two months of the American West Hockey League season.

Needless to say the task of turning around the 0-16 Americans is a challenge.

"If it wasn't a challenge it wouldn't be fun," said Stirling. The new coach will be behind the bench tonight at 7:30 as the Americans continue AWHL play against the Billings Bulls. It was suggested to him that much satisfaction will be gained if the team turns it around.

"Not if," said Stirling. "There's no if about it."

Clearly, the former Wisconsin-Superior and professional hockey player plans on winning. He's been in town now for about two weeks, and the roster looks dramatically different than it did when the season started in early October.

"We've made some great strides," said Stirling. "And we're going to continue to make strides."

The Americans were the youngest team in the AWHL when the season began. Several older players are now skating for the team.

"We've made some pretty hefty changes," Stirling said. "We've become a much larger team physically and we're faster on the ice. And we're certainly a little older."

Stirling, 42, was an All-State linebacker back in the day as a high school athlete in Virginia. He had recruiting interest, but instead opted for hockey. He's been a coach at various teams and levels for decades.

"Hockey is my life," he said. Ah, but not today. For Stirling is joining our illustrious panel. We typically end the contest in late November and the original plan was for last week's to be our swan song.

But then upstart Jesse Geleynse turned in a brilliant 14-4 week and pulled ahead. And, you know, we couldn't let the rookie win.

So we're back at it. (Might even continue the contest indefinitely, depending on how Jesse fares.)

This week's slate features all kinds of college and pro games, but for Stirling there is only one. "Here's your game of the week," he said, circling the Virginia Tech-Virginia clash. "The Hokies, straight out. Beamer Ball. It's a given."

Last week, Bobcat-loving Chrysy Schneider turned in a credible 12-6. She missed on the big game in Bozeman, but we're not going to mention it.



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