

1996-97

*** On July 1, 1996 the Albert Lea Campus of South Central Technical College merged with Austin Community College and the Minnesota Riverland Technical College-Austin Campus to create Riverland Community College. (RVLD will be used to abbreviate the college).**

VOLLEYBALL Coach Helen Jahr 16-15 The Blue Devils opened the season hosting a four team tournament. ACC finished 2-1 as they defeated Anoka-Ramsey 15-12, 15-7, 15-1, then handed Pillsbury a 15-13, 15-4, 15-6 setback before falling to Waldorf 15-7, 15-10, 15-9. “For the first time out with a young team I thought we played really well” said Coach Helen Jahr. Angie Barlow led with 25 kills while Mary Henke added 23 kills. Worthington defeated ACC in their conference opener, while Riverland Community College split a pair of non-conference matches to even its record at 3-3. Riverland defeated Rochester 12-15, 15-10, 6-15, 15-7, 15-10 to even its conference record at 1-1. Five starters who played with injuries were back and the Blue Devils showed it. Carrie Miller was perfect serving 28 of 28 and Stephanie Blaser added 15 assists. RVLD cruised to a 15-5, 15-0, 15-1 victory over Minnesota Bible College in non-conference action. Shannon Cochlin and Angie Harlow had 7 kill apiece, and Blaser had 12 assists. The defending state champions Bethany downed the Blue Devils 15-8, 15-12, 15-5. RVLD led 10-1 in the second game and let it slip away and fell to 1-2 in conference and 5-4 overall. The Blue Devils bounced back with a pair of non-conference wins as they defeated the JVs from St. Olaf (15-3, 15-6) and Carleton (15-10, 15-11) to improve to 7-4 overall. Riverland Community College dropped a 3-1 decision to Worthington to fall 1-3 in the league. The Blue Devils led 8-1 in the first game before falling apart and losing 15-10. RVLD evened the match at 1-1 with a 15-6 win but it was all down hill after that as they lost the last two games, 15-9, 15-8. Carrie Miller recorded 21 assists and connected on 81 of 82 attempts. Riverland Community College drops to 7-5. The Blue Devils finished second in the Anoka-Ramsey Fall fest volleyball tournament by winning three out of four matches. RVLD lost to Vermilion (who they had beat earlier in pool play) in the championship match 15-7, 15-6. Mary Henke paced Riverland with 23 kills and 11 blocks in four matches. Sara Stallman had 27 digs while Val Sheedy added 24 digs. The Blue Devils swept Rochester 15-10, 15-5, 15-8 to win its second conference match (2-3) and improve to 11-6. “Our passing and service were right on target tonight” said Coach Jahr. Riverland dropped two non-conference matches to Iowa Central and Waldorf as they were unable to win one game.

Mary Henke had 11 kills and 8 blocks while Sarah Stallman added 25 digs. RVLD split a pair in the Rochester triangular, beating the Yellowjackets 15-9, 15-8, 15-13 and losing to UW-LaCrosse 15-0, 15-8, 15-13. Riverland Community College is now 12-9 overall. The Blue Devils defeated Pillsbury in four games, 15-4, 15-9, 12-15, 15-9 to improve to 13-9. Angie Harlow had 13 kills and 19 of 19 hitting, Stallman added 10 kills and 15 digs, while Stephanie Blaser set 34 of 34 chances with 12 assists. Bethany ended Riverland's regular season with a 15-5, 15-11, 15-6 win over the Blue Devils. Carrie Miller (46 of 46) and Blaser (27 of 27) were perfect in setting. Riverland qualified for the state tournament by finishing second in the Southern Division playoffs. The Blue Devils defeated Anoka-Ramsey in the opening round, then dethroned Rochester and lost in the finals to Bethany to advance to the state tournament. The trip snapped a drought since 1982-83 when the Blue Devils finished fourth in the state tournament. Riverland has an overall record of 15-12 entering the tournament. The Blue Devils started fast and defeated Rainy River 15-13, 17-15 but fell to the two other teams in pool play, losing 15-8, 15-1 to Central Lakes (Brainerd) and 15-10, 15-8 to Worthington. RVLD caught a break and received another chance to qualify for the championship bracket and played Rainy River in a one-game tie breaker, only to lose 15-3. The Blue Devils bowed out of the tournament losing to Mesabi 15-5, 15-1, 15-9. Riverland Community College finished the season 16-15 overall. Earning MCCC All-Division and All-State honors were Sara Stallman, Mary Henke, and Angie Harlow. Sara Stallman was named to the All-Region team.

Roster Included:

Angie Barlow	Sara Stallman	Carrie Miller
Mary Henke	Shannon Cochlin	Stephanie Blaser
Tessa Hoepfer	Valarie Sheedy	Jennifer Avery

BASKETBALL

Coach David Lillemon 3-19 Coach

Lillemon returns three players that he describes as "great work ethic and attitude". The veterans are Barry Dufault, Kevin Breiter, and Chris Walz. Riverland Community College lost its opener to NIACC 74-60. Jes Switras scored 18 point to lead the Blue Devils. After falling behind 34-11, Riverland battled back and lost 78-70 to WWTI in non-league action. Jamie Dittfach led with 20 points and 11 rebounds, Kevin Breiter also added 20 points, while Chris Walz 14 and Todd Taylor chipped in with 10. Rainy River upended the Blue Devils 88-78 and Hibbing dealt RVLD their fourth loss in a row with a 72-67 win in overtime. Walz led with 18 points including four 3-pointers versus Rainy River. Riverland held a two point lead in the waning moments when Hibbing's Brett Ertz hit a shot at the buzzer to tie it at 60-60. Todd Taylor led the Blue Devils with 18 while Breiter added 14. All four losses have come on the road for the Blue Devils.

Riverland Community College dropped to 0-6 as they lost to two northern teams as Northland defeated RVLD 94-81 and to Fergus Falls 87-69. Jamie Dittfach went off for 25 points and 16 rebounds in the opener. Kevin Breiter led three Riverland players in double figures with 19 in the second contest. Waldorf defeated the Blue Devils 93-86 in non-conference action and kept Riverland Community College winless at 0-7. Breiter paced RVLD with 21 as he hit 6 of 10 from beyond the arc and handed out eight assists. The Blue Devils recorded their first victory with an 82-74 win over Mid-State Tech. Jes Switras had 20, Chris Walz 18 Todd Taylor added 10, going 4 for 4 from the line in the final seconds to secure the victory. NIACC defeated Riverland 75-58 to complete the non-conference schedule at 1-8. Walz had 15, Breiter 14 and Dittfach 10. The Blue Devils lost the conference opener 63-58 to Anoka-Ramsey after leading 40-28 at halftime. Kevin Breiter led with 16 followed by Jamie Dittfach with a dozen. Riverland Community College lost a heart breaker to Minneapolis (#11 ranked team in the country) 74-72 on a three pointer with 19 seconds in regulation. Jes Switras had a chance to tie along with a tip in by Walz but neither attempt went in and the Blue Devils lost a great opportunity to upset one of the best teams in the state. Switras had 19, Breiter 18, Taylor 12, and Walz and Tim Urness each had eight points. The Blue Devils drop to 0-2 in league and 1-10 overall. For the third time in as many chances, the Blue Devils found themselves in a pressure cooker, this time with Rochester and Riverland found a way to win 63-58. Kevin Breiter and Todd Taylor each hit 2 for 2 free throws late in the game to secure the victory. 'This was a great road win, said Lillemon after the team's first two tough opening conference losses. Ridgewater (Willmar) defeated the Blue Devils 89-72 in league play. Taylor led with 25 followed by Dittfach with 18 points. RVLD drops to 1-3 and 2-11. WWTI handed Riverland Community College a 59-55 non-conference loss 59-55. Heartbreakers are becoming an old hat for the Blue Devils. The Blue Devils held the Cavaliers to 19 first half points. Jes Switras scored 14 followed by Todd Taylor with a dozen. Bethany handed RVLD an 82-66 loss in conference play who were led by Jamie Dittfach with 21 points. Worthington handed Riverland its fourth loss in a row with an 82-73 win over the Blue Devils, as they connected on 11 three point bombs. RVLD ended with four in double figures, led by Todd Taylor (17), Breiter, Switras, and Dittfach with 15 apiece. The Blue Devils fell to 2-14. Riverland lost yet another tough contest as Anoka-Ramsey defeated the Blue Devils 53-52. RVLD did not attempt one free throw while the Golden Rams shot 11 of 15. The Blue Devils led 52-51 with 20 seconds to go with the ball when a "phantom" foul was called away from the ball and AR made two free throws to win the contest. Kevin Breiter led with 15 followed by Deron Turner who had four 3-pointers off the bench for 12 points. Riverland battled Minneapolis again to the wire, trailing 63-62 with five minutes to go and then finally breaking down against the number seventh ranked team in the country.

Jamie Dittfach had 22 points and 10 rebounds while guard Kevin Breiter added 13 points and 10 rebounds. The Blue Devils posted their third win of the season as they defeated arch-rival Rochester 79-64. Jes Switras and Jamie Dittfach combined for 42 points and Todd Taylor added 20. RVL D is now 3-16 and 2-7 in league play. Ridgewater edged the Blue Devils 61-58 despite shooting 36% from the field. "It was a gutty effort" said Coach Lillemon whose team continues to battle despite its record. A three point shot at the buzzer fell short and RVL D was handed its 17th loss of the season. Dittfach (13 points and 14 rebounds) and Switras (18 points and 14 rebounds) led the Blue Devils in defeat. Bethany handed the Blue Devils their worst loss of the season 90-54 in conference action in their final road contest. Worthington defeated Riverland 89-81 in the final contest of the season as the Blue Devils missed their first 13 shots of the game. Kevin Breiter had 19, and Dittfach ended with his eleventh double-double of the season with 16 points and 15 rebounds. Riverland Community College finished the season 2-10 and 3-19 overall. "One of best compliments I get from people is how much fun we were to watch" said Coach Lillemon. "We did have fun and I looked forward to practice every day right up to the last day". Sophomore Kevin Breiter and freshman Jamie Dittfach earned Southern Division All-Conference honors. Riverland Community College led the nation in free throw percentage with a 75.4%. Individually, Breiter finished 6th in the nation, shooting 84.6% followed by Todd Taylor's 81.5 free throw percentage, good for 11th in the country.

Roster Included:

Shannon Dohlman	Jeff Cole	Jared Dufault
Kevin Breiter	Deron Turner	Todd Taylor
Chris Walz	Tim Urness	Jay Overson
Jess Switras	Jamie Dittfach	

Assistant Coach: Larry Reynen

BASKETBALL Coach Tim Kjar 3-18 Riverland Community College lost its first two games of the season, losing to Iowa Lakes 100-50 and to WWTI 79-53. Laura Chaffee had 31 points and 23 rebounds in the two contests. Rainy River defeated RVL D 83-51 in non-conference action. Mary Henke led with 15 points followed by Chaffee with 11. The Blue Devils won two of their next four contests to improve to 2-6 overall. Anoka-Ramsey defeated Riverland Community College 100-33 in league play. Laura Chaffee scored 10 points to lead her team in scoring. The Blue Devils dropped to 0-3 in conference as Rochester upended RVL D 65-53. Chaffee had a season high 29 points and hauled down 9 rebounds. Henke chipped in with 10 points and 11 rebounds. Riverland dropped a 63-52 decision to Ridgewater as Coach Kjar is seeing improvement in his squad. Chaffee had 15 and Henke 11 to lead their team in scoring. RVL D drops to 2-9 on the season.

WWTI upended the Blue Devils 49-44 in non-conference action. Chaffee was held to 10 points and as a team RVLD shot 5 of 29 in the second half, getting just 14 points. Bethany handed the Blue Devils a 105-53 loss in conference action. Laura Chaffee had 18 points and eight rebounds. Riverland Community College dropped to 3-12 with a 74-37 loss to Worthington. Chaffee managed 11 points despite shooting 2 of 12 from the field. Anoka-Ramsey defeated the Blue Devils 99-44 in league play. Laura Chaffee tallied 11 points and Mary Henke 7. Riverland demonstrated on how far they have improved. RVLD lost 67-63 to Iowa Lakes, a 57 point turnaround from its first meeting (100-40). Chaffee continued her stellar play with 16 points and 14 rebounds while Mary Henke added 14 points. Playing in the final home game, the Blue Devils lost 65-49 to Ridgewater. Chaffee led with 11 and Henke 8 and combined they had 21 rebounds. The loss drops the Blue Devils to 2-16. Riverland Community College posted its third win with a 60-41 win over Pillsbury as the bench provided the spark to the victory. Sarah Kirsch led the club with 15 points and 11 rebounds, followed by Henke with 13 and Chaffee 11. After falling to Bethany, Riverland rapped up its season with an 89-41 loss to Worthington. Laura Chaffee finished her brilliant career with five points and nine rebounds. Tessa Hoeper led with 10 points. Laura Chaffee and Mary Henke were named to the All-Conference team. Chaffee earned All-State honors. Rynda Simonson earned **Academic All-American honors** (3.9 GPA).

Roster Included:

Mary Henke	Laura Chaffee	Kerry McAllister
Sarah Kirsch	Angie Arndt	Abbie Bushaw
Mikky Scheffel	Rynda Simonson	

BASEBALL Dwight Kotila 19-12 Second year coach
 Dwight Kotila has 17 freshmen working out with three veterans. The Blue Devils lost their opening doubleheader to Waldorf, losing 12-6 and 7-6. Todd Lupie took the loss in game one as his team-mates committed three errors behind him. Ryan Quinn had a two run home run in game one. RVLD led 3-0 after three innings in the nightcap Waldorf quickly tied it and went ahead 7-3 and never looked back. “We played well for our first time out compared to Waldorf (18-5) who had 23 games under their belt” said Coach Dwight Kotila. Riverland Community College swept Crown College 8-2 and 16-10 in non-conference action to even its record at 2-2. Brad Carlson tossed a two-hitter in game one while Eric Phillips led the way with 2 for 4 and a three run home run. In the nightcap, the Blue Devils collected 18 hits, led by Jay Buckentine who went 4 for 6 with two home runs and five RBI. Lupie picked up the win in relief. Riverland swept Ridgewater in the conference opener 9-8 and 8-6. Trailing 8-4 in the opener, Kotila’s squad rallied for five runs in the fifth to win the opener.

The big hits came from Andy Johnson's two run double and Jason Stern's two run single that put Riverland Community College ahead for good. The Warriors led 6-0 in the second contest after four innings. But the Blue Devils scored five runs in the fifth and three in the sixth to sweep the twin bill. Ryan Quinn's three run triple in the sixth put the Blue Devils ahead 8-6 and the final outcome. Riverland lost a pair to Bethany 8-2 and 4-2. In both games RVL'D's pitchers took 2-0 shutouts into the sixth innings and lost both games. Brad Carlson and Todd Lupie were the tough luck losers. The Blue Devils swept the Rochester 10-6 and 10-0 to earn themselves a berth in the Region XIII tournament. The winner of the first half of conference play earns them-selves a trip to the region which is a qualifying tournament for the national event. Ryan Jerle got the win in relief of Jason Wald, who went five innings. Wald was 3 for 3 with two doubles and 4 RBI while Ryan Quinn and Dave Gasta each had two hits. Kyle Goslee pitched a five inning no-hitter in game two, striking out four and walking three. RVL'D improves to 4-0 in league play. In non-league play, Riverland Community College defeated Iowa Lakes 11-10 after trailing 10-0. Scott Meyer took over in relief in the fourth and pitched five and 2/3 scoreless innings for the win. Andy Johnson was 3 for 5 and two RBI, Jerle and Tony Vincenda each had two hits and a RBI. The Blue Devils swept Willmar 5-3 and 10-4 to virtually assure themselves a trip to the state tournament. In dramatic fashion, RVL'D rallied with three runs in the 7th inning and the won it in the eighth on a two run double by Johnson. Meyer picked up his third win with two innings of relief. Spurred by the come from behind win in game won, the Blue Devils routed the opposition 10-4 to sweep the twin bill. Matt Steen had a grand slam in the first inning and Riverland Community College never looked back. Ryan Jerle went six innings to improve to 3-0 on the mound. The Blue Devils are now 9-4 overall and 6-2 in the conference. RVL'D pounded Anoka-Ramsey 11-1 in game one and rallied to win the nightcap 11-10 in league action. Scott Meyer (3-0) came in relief again to gain the win as starter Kyle Goslee left the game in the second due to arm stiffness. The Blue Devils blew a 10-2 lead but scored a run in the bottom of the seventh on a Jason Steen single to win the second contest. The wins increased the Blue Devils winning streak to seven games. Riverland improved to 14-4 with two wins over St. Johns University JVs as a tune up for the Region XIII tournament. The Blue Devils drilled St. Johns for 33 hits, including four homers in the 12-11 and 22-9 sweep. Brian Gigl tripled and had three RBI and Jason Wald went deep adding two RBI in the opener. Wald had another home run in game two along with a triple and three runs scored, and increased his batting average to .520. Riverland swept the Winona State JV team 10-9 and 21-12. A grand slam by Kyle Goslee in the bottom of the seventh game the Blue Devils the win in the opener. Scott Meyer (6-0) went the distance to get the win. Goslee had four RBI with two hits in game two while Jay Byrum had a three run home run. Riverland Community College lost both its games in the Region XIII

tournament, losing to Madison Area Technical College 16-6 in the opening round and then Vermilion sent them home as they defeated the Blue Devils 4-2. Riverland Community College lost the first two games in the MCCC state tournament, dropping a 6-3 decision to North Hennepin and losing 10-4 to Itasca to finish the season 19-12. Jason Wald earned All-Conference, All-State and All-Region XIII honors.

Roster Included:

Eric Phillips	Ryan Quinn	Jason Stern
Ryan Jerle	Larry Phillips	Kyle Goslee
Rudy Stroup	Jay Byram	Todd Lupie
Jason Wald	Jay Buckentine	Matt Steen
Dave Dillion	Brian Gigl	Scott Meyer
Brad Carlson	Dave Gasta	Adam McMahon
Jason Stern	Tony Vitcenda	Ass't: Kevin Graber

SOFTBALL Coach Paula Carlsen 8-23 Paula Carlsen replaces Pat Cornelius after four years and a runner-up in last year's state tournament. The Blue Devils lost their opener, dropping 11-3 and 13-5 games to Waldorf and went on to win only three of their next nine games. The Blue Devils stood at 3-8 with North Hennepin coming to town. The Riverland softball team continued to be plagued by a season-long problem of leaving runners on base and North Hennepin defeated the Blue Devils 10-2 and 9-6 in conference play. RVL D left 10 runners on in game one and base runners fifth, sixth, and seventh of the nightcap. 'We're hitting the ball' said Coach Paula Carlsen. Darcy Wytaske had two hits and two RBI while Sam Shatek went 2 for 3 with a triple and double in the nightcap. The Blue Devils dropped to 3-10 overall. Riverland won its first conference game as Tracy Johnson pitched a one-hitter and the Blue Devils defeated Ridgewater 1-0 in the opener of a twin bill. Shatek's single scored Val Kromn for the only run in the second inning. RVL D lost the nightcap 13-9 in a slugfest. Joscelyn DeMoss and Angie Harlow each had two RBI in the second contest. In back to back doubleheaders, Bethany defeated Riverland 12-5 and 17-0. DeMoss and Sarah Stallman each had 2 hits in the opener while DeMoss added three RBI. The Blue Devils drop to 1-9 in conference and 4-13 overall. In a make up game. Bethany again defeated RVL D twice by the scores of 5-2 and 11-1. Cathy Vittrich went 2 for 2 in game one while Tracy Johnson struck out five taking the loss in the opener. In the second contest, Riverland made 10 errors. In the southern division playoffs, Riverland Community College were eliminated as they lost their opener 19-0 to Ridgewater and then 11-2 to Rochester in the loser's bracket. The Blue Devils ran their losing streak to nine games as they lost a pair to NIACC 9-4 and 19-7. Johnson took the loss in both games. Melissa Lohmann connected on a home run in the nightcap. Riverland Community College drops to 4-19 overall. Rochester swept the Blue Devils 8-4 and 5-1.

Sarah Stallman went 2 for 4 in the opener while Joscelyn DeMoss had two RBI. The Blue Devils put everything together and won the Hibbing invitational in a seven team tournament as they went undefeated winning three games. Tracy Johnson earned a win in all three games. The Blue Devils snapped their eleven game losing streak, defeating Hibbing 32-2 in the opening round. RVL D had 21 hits, including 4 for 4 and nine RBI by Joscelyn DeMoss. Sarah Stallman collected three hits while Sam Shatek and Darcy Wytaske each had two hits. Hibbing's pitchers allowed 18 walks. Riverland defeated Mesabi 3-2 in the second contest. Wytaske (2 for 3) scored the eventual winning run in the third inning after she tripled and scored on a pass ball. Johnson struck out five and the defense did the rest with 12 assists and only one error. Riverland Community College beat Northland CC 7-3 in the championship game. Micky Sheffel had a big two out triple that scored Jill Fischer and Melissa Lommen to put the Blue Devils ahead for good. The Blue Devils up their record to 7-21. In a new format where the state tournament is an open field, Riverland competed in the state classic and played well as the hosts. "We played with some positive energy" said first year Coach Paula Carlsen. The Blue Devils won their opening round game 19-7 over Fergus Falls. RVL D collected 19 hits, including 4 for 5 from Angie Barlow. Sheffel and Fisher each had three hits in the opener. The Blue Devils took eventual state champion Bethany to the brink, before losing 3-1. Down 3-0 in the seventh, the Blue Devils almost pulled out the shocker. Sam Shatek cut the lead to two with a RBI single but Riverland left the bases loaded to end the game and dropped to the loser's bracket. The Blue Devils were eliminated by Vermilion losing 4-3 after they left 10 runners on base and committing four errors. "I wish we had another month to play" said a disappointed but pleased Coach Carlsen. Riverland Community College ended the season 8-23.

Roster Included:

Tracy Johnson	Darcy Wytaske	Val Kromn
Sam Shatek	Sarah Stallman	Angie Barlow
Mikky Scheffel	Jill Fisher	Melissa Lommen
Cathy Vittrich	Joscelyn DeMoss	

GOLF Coach David Lillemon Riverland Community College hosted the MCCC state and Region XIII tournament won by Bismarck State Junior College. The Blue Devils finished fifth in the field and third in the state with a 357 score. Shannon Dahlmon led the Blue Devils with a 169 score, good for ninth. Tim Robertson followed with a 179, John Hatten fired a 186, Ryan Row 187, and Beau Twaddle 194. The top five qualified for the national tournament. Also participating for the Blue Devils was Morgan Stark.

TENNIS Coach Tim Kjar 0-8 The Blue Devils played the season with just four member including Jes Switras, Jared Dufault, Jay Overson, and Jamie Dittfach. Riverland Community College went winless during the season (0-8) but had a fine showing in the finale at the state tournament, taking third in the four team event. At #1, Jared Dufault took third place after losing his opening round match. At #2, Jes Switras lost both his matches. At #3, Jamie Dittfach also lost his two matches. At #4, Jay Overson lost 6-2, 6-0 but bounced back to win third place. In doubles, Dufault and Switras lost both their matches and at #2, Dittfach and Overson took third place.

TENNIS Coach Tim Kjar 3-5 MCCC-state 3rd Coach Tim returned one player that being team captain, Bridget Engelhardt. Two of three wins recorded by Riverland Community College were over Rochester. The last victory was a 4-3 victory over the Yellowjackets setting the stage for the state tournament. The Blue Devils earned victories by Mary Henke at #3 and Tracy Schreiber at #5. In doubles, the #1 team of Engelhardt and Schreiber won 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 and Henke and Abbie Bushaw were victorious at #2 doubles. Riverland Community College finished third in the state as four of the five women competing took third place finishes overall. At #1 singles, Bridget Englehardt lost 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 but bounced back to take third. At #2, Tracy Schreiber lost both matches. Abbie Bushaw brought home third after losing her first round in the #3 singles. At #4, Mary Henke lost 6-0, 6-0 but came back to take third, And at #5, Kim Jewison took third after losing her opening match. In doubles, the duo of Engelhardt and Schreiber lost their opener but rebounded with a third place finish. At #2, Bushaw and Henke also took third place. Members included: Bridget Engelhardt, Tracy Schreiber, Mary Henke, Abbie Bushaw, and Kim Jewison.

