1951-52

NO FOOTBALL

BASKETBALL

SMJCC Champions (10-0)  A new coaching era begins at AJC as first year coach Herald “Hal” Cuff takes over the coaching duties following the resignation of three year mentor Dick Jewett last spring. Cuff, a former Mankato Teacher’s college star, will be assisted by Dick Seltz, the high school’s baseball coach. He inherits a team that returns three lettermen (Bill Johnson, Don Freeberg, Dick Anderson) from last year’s squad that won 12 of 18 games the SMJCC championship. Austin would open up its season in the Iron Range, defeating Virginia JC 48-47 and losing to Hibbing JC 77-63. In their season opener, Dick Anderson would score with seconds remaining to give the Austin mates the one point verdict. Bill Johnson would pace the Blue Devils with 19 points, followed by Anderson with 13 for the night. Johnson would not see action in the next contest due to an ankle sprain and coach Cuff’s crew severely missed his scoring and leadership in the loss. In a night billed as “open house”, the Blue Devils opened up their home season with a 49-39 win over Concordia. All fans would be admitted free to witness the victory, led by Dick Anderson’s 11 points. Austin showed a fast moving, smooth attack on offense and an even more effective defense. Austin would come back from a halftime deficit 22-21 to Bethany to win 51-47 in their third game of the season. Austin JC would score 20 points in the third quarter (Bethany only scored seven points) and Bethany would run out of time in the loss. In their last game before Christmas, Austin would defeat Rochester 54-43 in what Coach Harold Cuff would describe, “that was our best team performance of this young season”. Four of the eleven Austin players who saw action scored in double figures led by Don Miller with 15, followed by Anderson with 14, Bob Wangen with 13, and Don Freeberg with 10 points. The victory was the fourth in five starts for Cuff’s team. In a return match up where Austin defeated Virginia by one point in the season opener, the Greyhounds would lose again a tight contest as AJC would pull out a 58-56 win to increase its season record to 6-1. Hibbing JC would hand the Blue Devils their second loss of the season 80-64 as Dick Garmaker scored 40 points and Austin’s leading scorer, Dick Anderson had to leave the game in the second quarter with five fouls. Bob Wangen would lead the team in scoring with 22 followed by Anderson’s 18 points. Defending conference champions Austin would create quite a stir in the SMJCC as they chalked up their fourth conference win without a loss as they defeated Worthington 65-58. Balanced scoring, good rebounding and superior floor play told the story as Worthington proved no match for the Blue Devils.
Bill Johnson and Dick Anderson would lead the team with 17 points apiece. Johnson would drop 12 of the final 17 points of the contest and his effective scoring would secure the victory. Harold Cuff’s team would step out of conference play and dethrone Mason City 58-52 with Freeberg, Anderson, and Wangen leading the way, scoring 46 of the team’s total points. Turning in their best performance of the season, Austin would thump Waldorf 78-65 to set a season high in scoring. Anderson again would lead them in scoring with 21 points. The college led all the way in their eighth win in ten starts. Austin would set a new scoring record by recording a 86-71 win over Rochester at the high school gym. Holding an 18 point at one time Coach Cuff pulled his regulars and an entire new team entered the fray. Center Don Freeberg would be high scorer with 23 points. Four members would score in double figures. It was Austin’s fifth straight conference win. A JCJ remained undefeated in the conference (6-0) and tied with Martin Luther College as they defeated Bethany 70-54. Coach Cuff was not around to see his club whip Bethany (he was home with the flu), it did not seem to matter. Another balanced scoring effort by the Blue Devils would notch their tenth victory in 12 contests. Johnson (19), Anderson (17), and Miller (14 points) would pave the way. In possible the biggest game of the year, Austin would travel to New Ulm and defeat previously undefeated Dr. Martin Luther College 65-64 to take over as the undisputed leader in the southern conference. It was a dog fight from the opening whistle as both teams battle to maintain the advantage. Austin went ahead 18-15 at the quarter but trailed 30-29 at halftime. After three the Blue Devils led 51-50 and would go on to win by two tallies. Don Miller would lead the way with 21, followed closely by Bill Johnson with 17, and Dick Anderson with 10 points. In their next contest without the services of Anderson (out with the mumps), Don Freeberg limping all over the court, and Coach Harold Cuff out of town, Austin would prevail with a 68-58 win over Worthington to keep its perfect league record intact at 8-0 and up its season mark to 12-2. A seven game winning streak would come to a halt as Mason City would defeat the AJC 68-55 at Roosevelt field house. “I am glad we got this one out of our system” Cuff following the ragged performance of his ball club. Austin would clinch the SMJCC title by upending Concordia JC 58-52 in St. Paul with two more games to complete their season. The score was knotted 56-56 with only seconds remaining when Don Freeberg dropped in the winning basket for Austin. Dick Anderson, coming off the mumps, would carry the load and have his finest game of the season scoring 24 points to lead the way. AJC would trip Waldorf 69-52 to set up its season’s finally with Dr. Martin Luther College at home. A perfect climax to a successful season would describe the thriller as Austin would defeat Martin Luther 68-67, giving the Blue Devils a season record of 15-3 and another SMJCC title as they completed the 10 game conference schedule undefeated.
With the game tied at 64-64 apiece, Bill Johnson broke the tie with a tip in and after Martin Luther scored again, it was Johnson again scoring from inside to seal the win. The game was tied 13 times and the lead changed 11 times before the Blue Devils triumphed. Anderson would lead the team in scoring with 22 points.

Roster Included:

Dick Anderson  Bill Johnson  Don Freeberg
Don Miller     Bob Wagner    Tom Knauer
Tom Jordan     Dave Walker   Dave Ochs
Blaine Nobbs   Dick Dastyck  Bernard Anderson
Assistant Coach: Dick Seltz

GOLF  Coach Bill Evans  Bob Wangen (135) and Bill Nopp (155) both participated in the SMJCC Golf tournament in Rochester. Six promising candidates reported daily to Coach Evans: Don Freeberg, Chuck Leighton, Gene Brakke, Jim Goick, Duane (ace) Rolfason, and Jim Wagner.

TENNIS  Coach Bill Evans  SMJCC Runner-up  Members were: Eugene Eppen, Dave Walker, Don Hurmanson, and Thomas Knauer. Teams competing were: Rochester (1st), Austin (2nd), Bethany (3rd), and Dr. Martin Luther (4th).