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Austin's 'Baldy' Hansen only legislator to lose primary

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Only one Minnesota legislator, Sen. Baldy Hansen, Austin DFLer, was defeated in yesterday's primary election, late but unofficial returns indicated today.

Hansen, a 10-year veteran of the Senate, appeared to have lost support across the board. He antagonized labor by bottling up its bills in his committee, liberals by holding up consumer legislation and the DFL leadership by bucking its positions on numerous matters.

Hansen lost to Tom Nelson, a 31-year-old teacher and Austin City Council member who had DFL and labor endorsement. Complete but unofficial returns gave Hansen 4,840 votes and Hanson 2,811.

Nelson said that voters had been antagonized by an appearance on behalf of Hansen by Gov. Wendell Anderson, despite his lack of DFL endorsement. Hansen denied that Anderson's support had hurt him.

"When he came down and said

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he was for Baldy, there was a general backlash," Nelson said last night. "People in general thought he didn't have the right to come in here especially when I was the endorsed candidate."

The 3,000-member Meatcutters Union, largest in the area, was

angered by Anderson's appearance, according to Richard Arnold, president of Union Local P-9.

Hansen said he felt that Anderson's endorsement helped him. But Hansen felt he was hurt by a story last Saturday in the Minneapolis Tribune that he had not reported three campaign contributions of more than \$50 and that his campaign committee had not registered with the state before the deadline.

One other legislator was defeated when he tried to move from

the House to the Senate. Rep. Roy C., Carlson, Pine City DFLer, failed to unseat Sen. Florian Chmielewski of Sturgeon Lake.

Before finally challenging Chmielewski, Carlson changed his mind twice about which office he would seek. He first filed for reelection as a state representative, then withdrew and filed for the senate.

He then sought to withdraw his candidacy for the Senate and

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reinstate himself as a House candidate. The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that he could not do so, and he remained a senate candidate.

The make-up of the Legislature was changed less by the primary than it had been by the retirement of 10 House members (eight DFLers and two Independent-Republicans) and 12 senators (six from each party).

Primary contests that were expected to be close all were decided in favor of incumbents, according to the unofficial results.

The results were a blow to U.S. Rep. James Oberstar, who had opposed four DFL incumbents who had opposed him in his bitter 1974 battle for the DFL nomination in the 8th Congressional District. The four, who all won, were Rep. Peter Fugina, Virginia; Sen. David Schaaf, Fridley; Sen. George Perpich, Hibbing, and Rep. Norman Prael, Grand Rapids.

Fugina wasn't sure he had won renomination until the final precincts had reported. He was nominated with barely a third of the total DFL vote, which was split among five contestants in the primary.

Fugina finished with 2,781 votes, compared to 2,640 for his principal challenger, Dominic Elloff, of Virginia; 1,515 for Cheryl Spolarich; 956 for James Sandstrom, and 284 for Robert Gunderson.

FUGINA AND Independent-Republican Gary Gorham will be opponents in November.

Schaaf won renomination with 2,705 votes to 2,477 for Don Frank, his challenger from Spring Lake Park. Schaaf will face Republican Ben Ho in November.

Perpich won not only the nomination but reelection, since no Independent-Republicans have filed in the district.

Perpich received 7,521 votes, compared to 5,289 for E. J. Matonich, Hibbing; 2,833 for Mike Dotlich, Hibbing, and 1,754 for Will A. Sandstrom, Virginia.

Prael was renominated with 3,903 votes in the DFL primary. Bob Hall, Grand Rapids, had 2,603 votes and Merly Williams, Pengilly, 1,457.

Several close races in the Twin Cities area also were won by incumbents.

Rep. Peggy Byrne, St. Paul DFLer, was nominated for a second term in a contest with three opponents. She received 1,794 votes, compared to 1,645 for Dick Zasada, whom she will face in November. Others in the race were Lyn Robinson and Roy Ryan, who formerly held the seat.

Rep. John Tomlinson, chief sponsor of the unsuccessful bill to build a new stadium, barely survived a challenge from DFLer Joe Pangal in St. Paul. Tomlinson had 1,983 votes and Pangal 1,934. Three other DFL candidates trailed.

ANOTHER CLOSE winner was Rep. Peter Stumpf, St. Paul, who received 4,308 votes to 4,104 for Bill Konopatzki, former St. Paul City councilman.

Rep. Neil Dieterich won the DFL nomination for the senate seat held by retiring DFLer Bob North. After running behind in the vote count much of the evening, Dieterich won with 3,725 votes to 3,536 for Patrick Sweeney. Mike Fritz, another DFLer, received 758.

Rep. Ed Schrom, Albany DFLer,

easily beat off a challenge by his young opponent, Pat Flanders of Paynesville. Schrom had 3,856 votes with 57 of 60 precincts reporting, while Flanders polled 2,350.

Minneapolis DFL Rep. Tom Berg won reelection by defeating his primary opponent, Lawrence Baill, by 2,078 votes to 230. No Independent-Republican filed in the district.

Others who face no opposition after winning their primaries yesterday are Chmielewski and Rep. John Spanish, Hibbing. Bob Lessard, International Falls, was leading three other candidates for the Senate seat being vacated by Norbert Arnold and will be elected if he prevails in the primary.

Rep. James Rice, north Minneapolis DFLer, easily won renomination over three opponents with almost 60 percent of the vote. Rice had 1,806 votes to 898 for Lee Mosher, 229 for Marvin Eakman and 170 for Michael Weber.

RICE WAS accused of conflict of interest in a report issued last year by a grand jury. He later was indicted for bribery on another matter, but the charge was dismissed by a judge who ruled the grand jury had not heard enough evidence to issue an indictment.

A low voter turnout for the primary, estimated at 500,000 persons or about 20 percent of those eligible, could be attributed at least partly to the scarcity of primary contests.