

SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW 2010

YHS BOYS' TENNIS TEAM BUILDING ON A SWEET 16 WIN-SEASON

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A LOOK AT SPRING SPORTS FOR YANKTON, MOUNT MARTY, USD AND AREA HIGH SCHOOLS IN S. DAKOTA AND NEBRASKA



Cyrus Sorenson

Senior, Yankton High School

- 9-13 record at Flight One Singles in 2009
- 13-15 record at Flight One Doubles in 2009
- Part of school-record 16 dual victories in 2009
- Fifth all-time in YHS school history with 47 career doubles victories
- Tied for 14th all-time in YHS school history with 34 career singles victories

Jacob Rockne

Senior, Yankton High School

- 21-8 record at Flight Two singles (one shy of school record)
- 13-15 record at Flight One Doubles in 2009
- Part of school-record 16 dual victories in 2009
- Fourth all-time in YHS school history with 51 career doubles victories
- Third all-time in YHS school history with 65 career singles victories



Sorenson, Rockne Set To Leave Mark On Bucks' Record Books

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Five years ago, a pair of seventh graders found their way into the Yankton Bucks' tennis lineup as doubles players. A year later, they were into the singles rotation.

Now, as Jacob Rockne and Cyrus Sorenson prepare for their final season at YHS, they look to leave a lasting mark on the program.

The seniors both rank in the top five all-time in career doubles victories. Rockne also ranks third in singles wins, with Sorenson tied for 14th.

The two have taken turns filling the higher slot in the Bucks' lineup, with Sorenson taking flight one this past season.

"They're both really even. Both are strong players," said Yankton head coach Tim Mulhair. "Sometimes figuring out

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His 65 career singles wins has him 13 behind Ryan Elwood (1998-2001) for first all-time in Buck history.

Sorenson (9-13) has 34 career wins, including a runner-up finish in ESD in 2008.

"He's had a few injuries that have kept him off the court at times," Mulhair noted.

The duo (13-15) rank fourth and fifth in Bucks history, with Rockne having 51 victories and Sorenson recording 47. The pair combined to finish second at flight two in the ESD in 2007. Conan

who should be (flight one or two is tough.)

Rockne (21-8 in 2009) won the consolation title and finished second in the Eastern South Dakota Conference at flight two singles a year ago.

"Cyrus is an outstanding soccer player. He's taller, quicker and more athletic," Mulhair said of Sorenson, who will play soccer at NIAA Doane College beginning this fall. "Jake has probably spent more time on the court. He knows what he wants to do on the court, and plays to his strengths."

While both have had varied success in singles, their doubles work has been solid.

"We know each other's game well," Sorenson said. "That allows us to know what the other can do."

Malady (1996-2000) holds the Yankton doubles record with 67 career wins.

Both have been on a tennis court for a large portion of their lives. Sorenson began playing when he was five. Rockne is one of several siblings to play tennis for YHS, including one, Melanie, that currently plays for NCAA Division I South Dakota.

As they have progressed through the program, the pair have learned to keep their emotions in check.

"I've had to learn to keep my temper and move on within the point," Rockne said. "Just put it behind you, go out and do better."

Mulhair has seen that mental growth out of both players. "They've realized that sometimes it's better to be smarter than more athletic," he said. "Sometimes you have to outsmart your opponent."

Mulhair, in his 18th season at the helm of the Bucks, has had very few athletes which he spent as much time with as this duo.

"We've traveled a lot of miles together, spent a lot of time in the suburban," he said. "Between grades seven and 12, not everyone has the same coach all the way through, especially at a bigger school."

But the pair can still surprise him at times.

"They have an interesting perspective on tennis sometimes," Mulhair said. "About the time I figure them out, they do something different. You think they don't want to be coached, then they ask for help."

"I've learned to expect the unexpected."

What the pair does expect is to have one more successful season as members of the Yankton Bucks. "Hopefully we're first in the ESD," Sorenson said. "State will be tough, but hopefully we'll be in the top three or four." The pair's hard work has rubbed off on the younger players, according to Mulhair. "All the guys see it," he said. "They figure if the top guys work hard, then they can, too. It shows a lot to the players behind them, the younger players."

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