

Gazelles Return Top Four From Sixth Place Finish



GAZELLES: McKenzie Fitzgerald

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With a tie for fifth place in last year's Class AA state tournament and a pair of top-20 places by the returning players for the Yankton Gazelles girls' golf team, 12th-year head coach Brett Sime has high hopes for this year's team.



"We did pretty good last year," he said. "Plus we have four girls back from the state meet, and they were the four scores that counted."

The Gazelles tied for fifth place in last year's state tournament with Rapid City Stevens, and were awarded the sixth place trophy after a score card playoff. Coach Sime and the returning Gazelles hope to improve on that goal with at least a top five finish this year.

Those returning include senior McKenzie Fitzgerald, who finished 11th at the state meet last year with a two-day combined score of 169. Also back is Megan Mingo, who finished tied for 15th as an eighth grader with a score of 172. Junior Taylor Specht and sophomore Hannah Withrow rounded out the Gazelles scores with top-30 placings.

Fitzgerald, Mingo, Specht, Withrow and junior Kaitlyn

Erickson should round out the top five, with one spot to be fought for by 10 other players.

"It is nice to have five girls with experience and others with good potential," Sime said. "We should be able to have six pretty good players for the conference and state meets, which takes some of the pressure off, because we can only score four."

The Gazelles are looking forward to playing in the Eastern South Dakota Conference (ESD) this spring, as well as the state meet.

They are looking to place in the top three in the ESD meet, with their biggest competition being the defending state champion Brookings team, and a good Huron team.

The Bobcats have won seven out of the last eight state titles and are on a five-year streak.

"They lost their best girl from last year, Morgan Fitts, but they will still be pretty good," Sime said. "If we are playing well at that time, we should give them a run."

Yankton will be hoping to improve their placing over last year in the state meet, and hope to place in the top four or five.

"If we are playing well we hope to move up a notch or two, and maybe place in the top three," Sime said.

The Gazelles will begin their season with a dual at home versus Brandon Valley Monday, April 5.

Depth Key For Tanager Golfers

VERMILLION — The Vermillion Tanagers are boasting depth as their strong point this year.



Vermillion head coach Kirk Hogen feels the Tanagers are looking to make some noise in Class A and the Big Eight.

Vermillion only graduated one senior from last year and look to bring plenty of young talent to the table.

Some returning letterwinners for the Tanagers are Kristen Schwasinger (Sr.), Laura Hansen (Sr.), Kenzie Huska (Sr.), Ellen Brown (Sr.), Lindsey Robinet (Sr.), Kelly Amundson (So.).

Other returners for Vermillion are Elly Mueller (Fr.), Chelsea Gilbertson (Fr.), Allison Henie (Fr.), Brooke Schwasinger (Fr.).

Some of the newcomers on the team are Kelly Nielsen (7th), Kasey Nielsen (7th), Kylie Kuiper (7th), Audry Miller (7th).

The Tanagers will use their



VERMILLION: Kristen Schwasinger

depth to strongly compete in the Big Eight Conference.

"We will need our young girls to push our upperclassmen," Hogen said.

Baseball: Tanagers Look To Bounce Back After Graduating Eight Letterwinners

VERMILLION — The Vermillion Tanagers lost eight starters or letterwinners from last season, but are looking to continue their winning ways this upcoming spring.



Jason Gault's team finished last year with an overall record of 15-2 and won the East Division Championship. Vermillion went on to be the runner-up in Region 1B.

The Tanagers lost three all-state players: Kyle Nemecek (1st Team All-State), J.R. Moore (1st Team All-State) and Cory Taggart (2nd Team All-State).

Vermillion does have six

returning letterwinners: Jason Rasmussen (Sr., SS), Brian Hansen (Sr., 3B), Sam Ekstrom (Sr., 2B), Nick Anglin (Sr., P), Denny Kainrath (Sr., OF), Ryan Fischbach (Sr., C).

The first year players are Aaron Steele (Sr., C), Nathan Garrett (So., OF), Wes McBride (Sr., OF), Robert Osterberg (Sr., P), Tyler Husby (Sr., P-C-IF), D'Andre Fore (So., OF-IF), Stormy Mirtz (So., IF-OF), Zach McDonald (Sr., 1B), Scott Iverson (Sr., C), Andrew McCann (Sr., OF), Luke Dodge (Sr., OF).

The Tanagers team strengths are that this team has an opportunity to be very good defensively. Rasmussen and Hansen will anchor the defense at shortstop and third base, and will rely on their team speed.

"With the return of only two starters from last year's team, one could assume that the Tanagers will be in a rebuilding mode," Gault said. "However, this is a solid group of younger players who have had great success at the JV and Teener levels. They will be expected to have an immediate impact on this year's varsity team."

Vermillion is in Class B, Region 1B (East Division).

Gault is starting his ninth year as the head coach for the Tanagers, and is assisted by Reid Meierkort and Bill Settles.

Boys' Track: Vermillion Returns 10 Letterwinners, Five All-Big 8

VERMILLION — After fielding a young squad in 2009, the Vermillion Tanagers boys' track team is hoping to continue the building process in 2010.



The Tanagers return 10 letterwinners and five all-conference performers from a team that finished fourth in the Big Eight a year ago. Gone from that team are state placemen Wyatt Hunter, now competing for the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, and two-time state qualifiers Mike Oberle and Greg Anderson.

"With a roster dominated by freshmen, we made huge improvements throughout the year," Vermillion head coach Lenni Billberg said of 2009. "Senior leaders Wyatt Hunter and Mike Oberle served as great mentors to a young group."

Now the Tanagers' senior leadership falls on a trio of returning letterwinners, Chris Sargent-Wilson (400), Ryan Kost (hurdles) and Micah Karrick. Kost was an all-conference performer last year.

Juniors Cody Olson (200/400), Carson Sullivan (1600) and Robert Osterberg were all all-conference performers last season, as well.

"Cody Olson returns and is hungry to take some early sprint races, as he missed state in three events by less than two-tenths," Billberg noted. "He worked extremely hard all year to ensure there is no doubt he is one of the fastest 200/400 kids



VERMILLION: Ryan Kost

in our area."

Sophomores Andrew Kost (300 hurdles), William Mart (throws) and Aaron Ruhaak (400/800) also return. Mart was an all-conference performer a year ago.

Several members of a young squad got a taste of success last season, which should be a strong motivator this season.

"The experience gained last year will really help our kids as they enter the 2010 season," Billberg said. "As with any team, we must stay healthy. We are not strong in the short sprints, but we have a lot of kids that will make huge improvements as the season develops."

Coaching with Billberg are Jay Drake, Len Griffith and Kelly Fischbach.

Tennis: Tanagers Return Three Starters, Look To Build On Experience

VERMILLION — The Vermillion Tanagers are looking to rebuild from a tough season a year ago finishing with a record of 0-13.



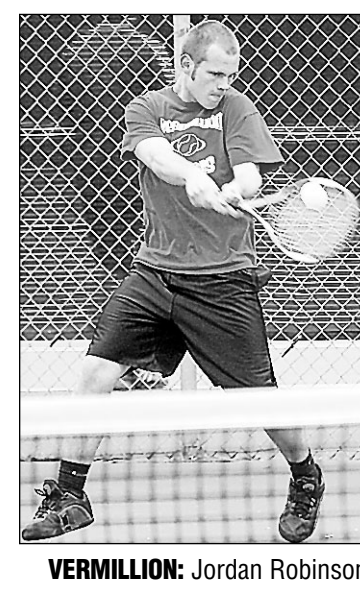
Dan Hanson will continue the coaching for the Tanagers, who is now in his third season.

Vermillion have lost three starters: Tyler Kielman, AJ Walker and Michael Walker.

Returning letterwinners for the Tanagers are Jordan Robinson (Sr.), Wes McBride (Sr.) and Dylan Scheidel (So.).

Also returning for Vermillion is Tyler Osborne (Sr.), Ethan Druin (Sr.), Camden Riazola (Sr.), David Day (Fr.), Nathan Svendsen (8th), Nathan Samudzi (8th), Mark Helenurm (8th) and Kevin Helenurm (Fr.).

The Tanagers have a few newcomers this year: Jaysen Dugan (8th), James May (8th), Joe Swanson (7th), Isaac Rosdail (7th), Ryan Styles (7th), Adam Ahmed (8th), and Conner Kielman (8th).



VERMILLION: Jordan Robinson

Vermillion seems to have the depth to make a stand for this season. They will have to rely on the experienced players to show the way for the underclassmen.

"We have a hard working bunch of players," Hanson said. "We should get solid play from our core group of upperclassmen, but also get strong play from some of the younger guys."

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Irene Wakonda Track Schedule

4/11	Centerville Rotary Relays	Centerville
4/13	Marion Invite	Freeman
4/18	Menno Relays	Freeman
4/22	Jesse James Relays	Garretson
4/27	Alecia Relays	Yankton
5/2	Don Viede Relays	Freeman
5/5-6	Howard Wood Relays	Sioux Falls
5/6	Parker Invite	Parker
5/9	TVC Meet	Centerville
5/18	Region Meet	TBA
5/26-27	State Meet	Rapid City

Golf Schedule

4/4/10	Freeman Academy Invite	Valley View (Freeman)
4/6/10	SESP Invite	Fox Run Golf Course (Yankton)
4/11/10	I-W Invite	Glenridge Golf Course (Irene)
4/13/10	S.F. Christian Invite	Bakker Crossing (Sioux Falls)
4/17/10	Marion Invite	Par-Mar Valley Country Club (Parker)
4/21/10	I-W Invite	Glenridge Golf Course (Irene)
4/24/10	West Central Invite	Central Valley Golf Club (Hartford)
4/27/10	Alester-Hudson Invite	Alester Golf Course (Alester)
5/4/10	TVC	Fox Run Golf Course (Yankton)
5/8/10	I-W Invite	Glenridge Golf Course (Irene)
5/15/10	Region	TBA
5/22-23/10	State	TBA

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Gayville - Volin Raiders Track Schedule

3/30/10	• Dan Lennon Inv.
4/06/10	• EPJ Invite • Elk Point
4/13/10	• Centerville Rotary Relays
4/15/10	• Menno Relays
4/17/10	• Avon Invitational
4/20/10	• Beresford -Alester-Hudson
4/30/10	• Howard Wood Track Meet
5/01/10	• Howard Wood Track Meet
5/04/10	• Don Viede Relays • Freeman
5/06/10	• 1st Pakota Relays-Yankton
5/11/10	• TVC • Centerville
5/20/10	• Regions
5/28/10	• State Track
5/29/10	• State Track

Girls Varsity Golf Schedule

4/01/10	• SESPSS • Fox Run
4/02/10	• Freeman Invite • Freeman
4/06/10	• Freeman Academy Invite
4/23/10	• Scotland Invitational
5/06/10	• TVC Conference • Fox Run
5/17/10	• Regions-Elmwood SF
5/24/10	• State Meet-Aberdeen
5/25/10	• State Meet-Aberdeen