

TENNIS

ATHLETES TO WATCH

CHANCE SORENSON, YANKTON (Sr): Consolation champion at flight 5 singles last season; also advanced to the consolation final at flight 3 doubles
DAVID DAY, VERMILLION (Jr.): State meet competitor at flight 6 singles last season; also competed at flight 2 doubles

JAMES MAY, VERMILLION (So): State meet competitor at flight 3 singles last season; also competed at flight 3 doubles
LUKE ROCKNE, YANKTON (Fr): Top-8 finisher at flight 4 singles last season; also competed at flight 2 doubles



Yankton Boys Look To Bounce Back

BY CODY BALL
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the March 30 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect the on-going season.

The Yankton boys' team looks to rebound from an uncharacteristic year last year, and head coach Brady Muth has confidence in his group to do just that.

"The biggest strength of the team this year is their athleticism," Muth said. "They are also a very competitive group."

Those traits will serve the team well in the sport which requires both huge amount of athleticism and competitiveness.

Leading the way for the Bucks' tennis squad will be

Chance Sorenson, who won the consolation championship last year in the fifth flight at state last season.

Last season, Yankton took 15th place out of 21 teams in the state, and finished in sixth place in the Eastern South Dakota Conference.

The other returning letterwinners who are joining Sorenson are junior Luke Rockne and sophomore Ben Jensen.

Some of the newcomers to varsity tennis that are expected to have strong seasons this year are seniors Josh Jensen and Morgan Jones, junior John Fanta, sophomore Brandon Frick, and freshmen Paul Fanta and Jason Shindler.

Muth spoke about what he feels will be important to the Bucks season this year.

"It is extremely important that

our athletes stay healthy throughout the season," Muth said.

Muth is in his second season as the head coach of Yankton tennis after taking over for longtime head coach Tim Mulhair.

Another piece to a successful season has fallen beautifully into place. So far the weather has cooperated with all preseason practices, allowing the Bucks to be fully prepared for their season opener.

"The weather has been great," Muth said. "It has allowed us to get a lot accomplished drill wise, they are just ready to play at this point."

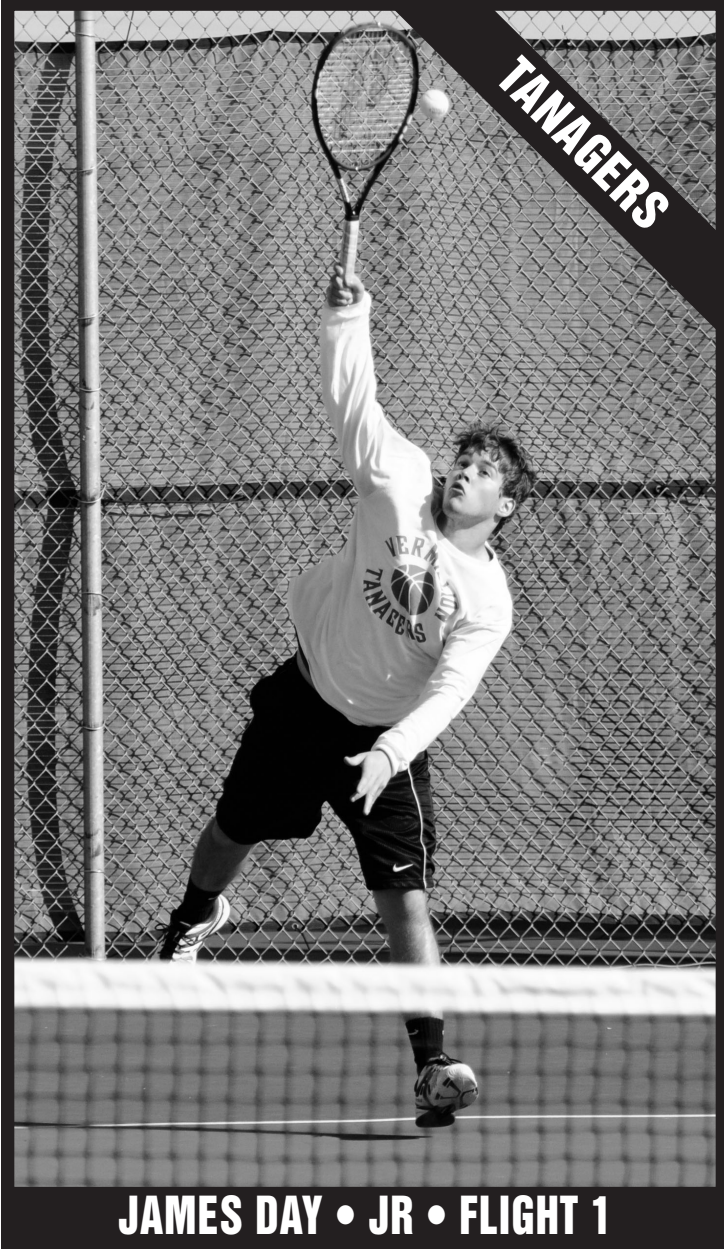
The anxious Bucks opened their season with wins over Vermillion and Sioux City (Iowa) North on March 31, then dropped 6-3 decisions to Sioux Falls Roosevelt and Brandon Val-

ley on April 3.

The Yankton roster is rounded out by juniors Gravholt Derek, and Eric Stratman, sophomores Alex Fields, Brandon Frick, Greg Hauer, Trevor Rehurek, and Rashad Yousef. The other freshman that will represent Yankton this season are Tyler Carr, Malen Moody, and Austin Saraceni. Eighth graders Nathan List and Matt Jensen will also play for Buck tennis this spring.

Yankton boasts a tennis friendly community with plenty of courts. This has allowed them to schedule six events that will take place in Yankton throughout the season.

The ESD Conference tournament will take place on May 11 in Brandon, and the state tournament will be in Rapid City beginning on May 17.



Tanager Tennis Squad Excited About Season

BY TYLER SMIT
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the March 30 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect the on-going season.

VERMILLION — "The team is getting back into the swing of things," coach Betsy Hughes said light-heartedly.

Strong leadership combined with unseasonably warm spring weather is making for ideal conditions for springtime sports — tennis included.

With 25 players on the roster, the Vermillion boys' tennis team is excited to get the season underway.

This will be Hughes first year as boys' coach; he was the women's coach in the fall and is looking forward to the spring season.

The squad is 25 athletes deep, a solid number for any program. Hughes commented on the depth of her roster.

"Our varsity roster includes David Day, James May, Mark Helernurm, Nathan Svendsen, Nathan Samudzi, and Will Card. Our top JV players are Kevin Helernurm, Jacob Ford, Ryan Styles, and Andrew Callahan."

Hughes continued.

"We are a fairly young team. Having kids who love to play,

which we have, means that we will see a lot of improvement over the course of the season."

Vermillion is working with six available varsity positions. Each athlete will play one singles match and one doubles match against every opposing team. Most schools will also have at least six JV players.

Vermillion held their first practice March 12.

"The boys are working hard and have positive attitudes," Hughes said. "They love tennis and you can often find them playing after practice or on week-ends."

At the completion of the first week of practice, Hughes didn't know for certain which athlete would fill the available spots.

"We did some challenge matches towards the end of the week to begin setting positions for both varsity and junior varsity players. Nothing is totally set yet," Hughes said.

Vermillion is off to a 1-2 start on the season, with its victory coming against Sioux City (Iowa) North.

BASEBALL

ATHLETES TO WATCH

DERIK BIALAS, PARKSTON (Sr.): 1st-team all-state at pitcher
MATT HOINES, BERESFORD (Sr.): 1st-team all-state at third base
ALEX KOECER, WAGNER (Sr.): 2nd-team all-state at pitcher

D'ANDRE FORE, VERMILLION (Sr.): all-region at outfield
CODY WAGNER, PGDC (Sr.): all-region (utility)
BLASE VANECEK, BON HOMME (Jr.): 1st-team all-state (utility)

Yankton Squad Looks To Reload



BY CHRIS RILEY
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the March 30 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect the on-going season.

Following the loss of a number of standout players to graduation last spring, 2012 looks to be wide open for the Yankton Bucks baseball team.

The Bucks finished 2011 with a 9-10 record, but managed to advance to the region championship game before falling to Sioux Falls Lincoln in a close 2-1 contest.

Second-year coach Robb McClemons has over 20 players vying for spots on his varsity and junior varsity rosters this season.

"We return a lot of talent but not much experience at the varsity level," McClemons said.

Gone is offensive threat Cameron Schiltz. Schiltz hit .512 last season with three home runs. Also gone are top pitchers Josh Teichroew (five wins) and Mike Janish (three wins, 2.88 earned run average) and the eight of nine total Buck wins that they accounted for on the mound.

That means there are plenty of open roster spots and production on both sides of the field that need filling.

Seniors Alex Wagner and Jordan Groves will be counted on as key components in this season's pitching staff. Both were letter winners last season. Groves went 4-2 in legion play last season while hitting .297. Wagner won seven games in legion action while posting an excellent 1.90 earned run average.

Other returning letter winners that will need to step up are

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