

Softball: Gazelles Look To Reload After Graduating Seven

BY ROYAL MCGREGOR
sports@yankton.net

The Yankton Gazelles are coming off a fifth place finish at the state tournament and are looking to rebuild after the loss of seven seniors coming into this season. "The weekend of the state tournament last year, we just couldn't hit the ball very well," Yankton co-head coach Bernie Goeden said.

Goeden's other co-head coach is Bob Cabalka.

"This might have been a different story last year as the Gazelles had seniors to look to for leadership, but coming into this year it is going a whole different ball game as the juniors will be relied heavily on.

"The seniors last season showed great leadership and hopefully that is going to help out our program this year," Goeden

said. "Hopefully the younger girls will be able to follow in the footsteps that the seniors from last year showed."

The Yankton area won't see the last from one of the seniors that felt this season as Christine Broders will be playing softball at USD.

The Gazelles are welcoming back one of their seniors from last season Kelsey Grosshuesch, who will be attending USD in the fall and be the head coach of Yankton's junior varsity team.

Coming into this season Yankton has a lone senior on their roster Katelyn Munyer, but she has only played in the summer leagues, so the coaching staff doesn't really know what they are going to get from her.

"I'm not really sure how much leadership we are going to get from Katelyn this season, because this will be her first year

playing this type of competitive softball," Goeden said. "She has softball experience, but it is in the summer rec leagues in Yankton."

The Gazelles do have four returning letterwinners in Katie Koletzky (Jr.), Tiffany Townsend (Jr.), Stephanie Campbell (Jr.) and Jessica Wirth (So.).

Koletzky has taken the mound before many times, but this season will be very important for her as she will be the go-to pitcher on the team.

"Katie is going to be very important to our team this season," Goeden said. "Fastpitch softball revolves around pitching and defense, so having an experienced pitcher in Katie back is a huge asset to our team."

Other than Koletzky Yankton is looking to a few other players to take on the pitching responsibilities in Tara Blaha (So.) and

Campbell.

"Campbell hasn't pitched in softball for awhile, but I have been talking to her about throwing a little more and getting some quality innings from her," Goeden said.

The Gazelles are looking for a few offensive spark plugs on their team as well and they are hoping to get to some good contributions from Wirth, Townsend and Haley Hinseth (Jr.).

"What we have been telling our girls since the first practice when they are up in the batters box is to make every at bat a quality at bat," Goeden said.

Yankton has fifth returning letterwinner in Janessa Ekeren, who was going to their catcher this season, but due to a torn ACL and MCL in summer softball she will be sitting this season out. The Gazelles did find a spot for her on the team as the student

manager.

"We were counting on Janessa to our catcher this season," Goeden said. "But that didn't work out so we are scrambling around trying to fit someone into the catcher's spot."

Other girls are will be fighting for a starting spot and a spot on the varsity team are Katrina Kellum (Jr.), Alexis Smidt (Jr.), Alysha Watzel (Jr.), Kristian Bilbrey (So.), Kourtney Erickson (So.), Taylor Hutchinson (So.), Karlee Kozak (So.), Jennifer Feilmeier (Fr.), Amber Livingston (Fr.), Brooke Loecker (Fr.), Kalyn Peterka (Fr.), Alisa Ruzicka (Fr.), Abby Schulte (Fr.), Jaclyn Arens (8th), Andriana Sprakel (8th) and Paige Thieman (8th).

The Gazelles will open up their season with a doubleheader in Sioux Falls against Watertown and Jackson, Minn., this Sunday.

Pitching Key For Tanagers

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

VERMILLION — With a dynamic 1-2 punch in the circle and several players returning from a year ago, the Vermillion girls' softball team has high expectations for the 2010 season.

"We've got a lot of returning players," said Vermillion coach Chris Girard. "Almost all of them played summer ball, so we should have a very solid team."

The Tanagers have just two seniors, Lindsay Robinet and Carlee Sorenson.

"Carlee's a solid utility player who can also catch. Lindsay plays outfield and second base," coach Girard noted. "Both have been playing Tanager softball their whole high school careers. They are strong players."

Six juniors, including both the team's pitchers, make up a solid core for the squad.

The pitchers, who also split time at first base, are Lizzy Bye and Jessica Finch.

"We have two very solid pitchers that will help us tremendously," coach Girard noted.

Other players in that junior class are Sami Girard, Claire Jones, Beth Szymanski and Tory McCreary.

"They know the game of softball," coach Girard noted. "They've played competitively for years."

The two sophomores on the roster, Shelby Christopherson and Paige Olson, will also be key contributors.

"Shelby's got a big bat and is solid at third," coach Girard said. "Paige has lots of speed and is a good bunter."

Coach Girard feels that the players' summer competition, which for many included playing on travel teams in Sioux Falls, has prepared them for a tough fall season.

"They've seen a lot of pitchers. They know what to expect," she said. "They know the level of competition out there, and I think they will be very well prepared."

While the Tanagers are athletic and fast, the team is a little undersized when compared to some of the teams they will face.

"We're not a big team. Our girls are on the tinier side, but we are quick," coach Girard said. "Smart baserunning and solid defense will keep us in the game."

Vermillion opens the 2010 season Sunday in Sioux Falls.

Speed Key For Vermillion Girls' Soccer Squad

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

VERMILLION — The Vermillion Tanagers girls' soccer team will bring a fast squad to the pitch when it opens the 2010 season Saturday.

Vermillion returns a host of talent from a year ago, as just three letterwinners graduated from 2009: Sophie Nelich-Arroba, Hannah Nelich-Arroba and Lacey Leichtman. The Nelich-Arroba twins will be playing at Dakota Wesleyan this fall.

The Tanagers boast good team speed, led by senior Ashley Brunick and junior Christine Epping.

"Ashley was injured halfway through last year and returns healthy," noted head coach Dave LaCombe. "Christine was a first-year player last year. She is much more knowledgeable and fast. They are both great outside threats."

Vermillion boasts several other fast players.

"We feel very blessed with speed this year," LaCombe said. "Speed is our biggest threat."

Seniors Tascha Donnelly (D) and Morgan Erickson (D) and junior Shelby Gregoire (MF) among the team's fastest players.

Junior Katie Wasley returns for a third straight season in goal.

"She is a key asset for us," LaCombe said. "She is a very talented, knowledgeable skilled goalie that's not afraid to get dirty."

Senior Tracy Howe, sophomores Kelsey Meadows and Kortni Walker, and freshmen Haley Freidel, Tori Gregoire, Allie Mockler, Alexis Reich, Teddie Settles and Cheyenne Steemken will also be counted on this season. Each has varsity experience, but many will be asked to play different roles this season.

"We're going to be doing some realigning to fill those midfield spots left open by the twins," LaCombe said. "Someone may find themselves playing a position they didn't play before. If we pull someone (forward), someone has to go play back."

The Tanagers begin their schedule Saturday against Huron, the first of a full schedule leading up to the state tournament, Oct. 7-9 at Mitchell.

"We have a lot of games with just two or three days of rest," LaCombe noted. "The top three seeds at the end of the season get a bye to state, and the rest have to play a one-game playoff with the winners advancing."

Vermillion will also field a junior varsity team for the first time. Team members include Autumn Barnett, Shantel French, Katie Kost, Cheyenne Mallory, Alokandana Manna-Ray, Audrey Miller, Kayal Mulheron, Natasha Samudzi, Alisa Soesbe, Kayla Stammer, Twila Sweeney and Sophia Taggart.

MLB

From Page 6A

The Phillies, who have won 13 of 17 games, are 2 1/2 games behind the Braves in the NL East.

Halladay (16-8) won his sixth straight while allowing eight hits, striking out five and walking three, matching a season high. It was the ninth time this season he hasn't allowed a run and the 25th time in 26 starts he has pitched six or more innings.

BRAVES 5, CUBS 3. CHICAGO (AP) — Rick Ankiel hit a bases-loaded triple off a wild Carlos Marmol with two out in the ninth inning, sending Derrek Lee and the Braves to a victory over the Cubs.

METS 7, PIRATES 2. PITTSBURGH (AP) — David Wright and Jose Reyes each had three of the Mets' slump-ending 15 hits, Mike Pelfrey pitched eight innings and New York assured the Pirates of their record-extending 18th consecutive losing season.

MARLINS 9, ASTROS 0. MIAMI (AP) — Anibal Sanchez pitched seven scoreless innings and Cody Ross and Hector Luna hit back-to-back homers to power the Marlins to a win over the Astros.



Yankton's John Morrow (right) tries to deflect a pass from Pierre's Max Hanson during their high school boys' varsity club soccer game Friday night at Lewis & Clark Soccer Complex.

Pierre Tops Bucks 4-1 In Opener

The Yankton Bucks opened its season with a 4-1 loss to Pierre in high school boys' varsity club soccer action Friday night at Lewis & Clark Soccer Complex.

Matt Gubbels scored

Yankton's only goal, in the first half. Alex Opsahl recorded three saves at goal and John Morrow had a strong defensive performance.

In the JV game, Yankton

defeated Pierre 2-1 behind goals from Zach Lopez and Landon Breen.

Yankton is off until next Friday when they host Rapid City Stevens.

5K Next Step Toward Larger Goal

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

This morning, I will be running a 5,000-meter race for the first time since state cross-country in 1987. It will be my furthest run in competition since 1990 region track.

Since then, I've played a lot of softball, a little hoops, a little volleyball and not much else. I let my self go over the years, as most of us do, ballooning to 310 pounds at my heaviest.

In January of 2009, I set out to try to get back in shape, proclaiming in a column that I would run the MMC Riverboat Days 5K that August. But I never really took it seriously, and a knee injury late in softball season gave me an out.

Last fall, I went on a diet, bringing myself down to 267 pounds — my lightest since college. But I had cut too many calories out of my diet and my body started to break down physically. A few trips to the chiropractor and some bad habits returning later, I was back over 290 again.

This summer, I took a new approach. I have logged my calories and workouts online, tracking both workouts and intake. It

has helped me see what I'm doing, and make better decisions. I've also complete cut out pop from my diet, a major accomplishment for someone who, at my peak, injected two two-liter bottles or more of pop every day. I began the process in February, giving it up for Lent, and went through two weeks of caffeine withdrawal headaches. After Lent was over, I did occasionally pick up a non-caffeinated pop, but stayed off the hard stuff. In June, I decided it was time to give it all up.

I have picked up my workouts, starting slowly. I am trying to build up to 20 miles a week running, though would love to get up to 30 or 40 miles a week. As I shed the extra pounds, I think it will come a lot easier.

This brings us to today. The Mount Marty 5K begins at 8:15 a.m. (walk at 7:15), and I will be at the start line. I hopefully will cross the finish line before 9, then still be alive enough to go to work and get done what needs

to be done on the Fall Sports Preview (Aug. 27 release). My ultimate goal is for this to be not just the end of a couple months of training, but a stepping stone on the way to a more healthy me. We'll see if I can keep myself on that path.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK

has helped me see what I'm doing, and make better decisions.

I've also complete cut out pop from my diet, a major accomplishment for someone who, at my peak, injected two two-liter bottles or more of pop every day. I began the process in February, giving it up for Lent, and went through two weeks of caffeine withdrawal headaches. After Lent was over, I did occasionally pick up a non-caffeinated pop, but stayed off the hard stuff. In June, I decided it was time to give it all up.

I have picked up my workouts, starting slowly. I am trying to build up to 20 miles a week running, though would love to get up to 30 or 40 miles a week. As I shed the extra pounds, I think it will come a lot easier.

This brings us to today. The Mount Marty 5K begins at 8:15 a.m. (walk at 7:15), and I will be at the start line. I hopefully will cross the finish line before 9, then still be alive enough to go to work and get done what needs

to be done on the Fall Sports Preview (Aug. 27 release). My ultimate goal is for this to be not just the end of a couple months of training, but a stepping stone on the way to a more healthy me. We'll see if I can keep myself on that path.

309 W. 11th Street • Yankton, SD 57078
800-249-3837 • 605-668-2168
www.tkplaceyankton.com

the Kitchen Place

- Kitchens
- Baths
- Office & more

SHOWPLACE Wood Products

BREAK THE SNORE CYCLE

When you snore, you effectively cut quality sleep out of the picture, leaving you tired throughout the day. Here's the thing: your snoring may be a symptom of a larger problem: sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea, if left untreated, can lead to high blood pressure, heart attacks and even stroke.

Are you at risk? The Avera Sacred Heart Sleep Lab offers sleep apnea testing and treatment for snoring and other sleep-related disorders. All right here in your community. All backed by the area's health care leader.

Avera
Sacred Heart Sleep Lab

Break the snore cycle.
Call (605) 668-8773 or visit www.AveraSacredHeart.com for more information.

P&D:
Your Sports Source