

## 109 Years Ago James Cash Penney Opened His First Store in Kemmerer, Wyoming 2011 We Celebrate 88 Years in Yankton!



Painting of Mr. Penney against backdrop of Kemmerer, Wyoming

Modern jcpenny stores are a far cry from the small dry-goods store that James Cash Penney opened in Kemmerer, Wyoming in 1902. In those days, frontier



The original Golden Rule store in Kemmerer, Wyoming, 1902.

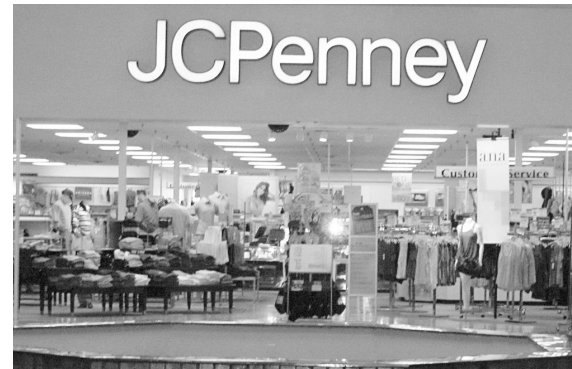
miners and farmers and their families turned to jcpenny for blue jeans and other work clothes, shoes, fabrics and sewing needs. Today, busy working families turn to jcpenny in cities, towns and suburbs and to jcp.com for affordable fashions and home accessories.

jcpenny's commitment to serving its customers with style, quality and smart prices has led the Company through many transformations over the years as society and shopping habits change. Furthermore, through more than 100 years of history, the Company has stayed true to its Golden Rule beginnings, with a continued commitment to care for the communities where it does business in and operate in an ethical and responsible manner. Today these commitments live on in the Company's dedication to make "Every Day Matters" for all its stakeholders.

**jcpenny** YANKTON MALL  
665-2714



jcpenny came to Yankton August 30, 1923. Located here at 3rd & Cedar, Downtown Yankton.



The jcpenny store moved to their present location at the Yankton Mall in 1978.

# Yankton: A History Of Athletic Greatness

### At All Levels And In All Sports, Yankton Has A Championship-Caliber Athletic Tradition

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK  
The Press & Dakotan

As much as Yankton has been a community of pioneers, it has also been a community of great accomplishments. That spirit is no more evident than in the sports history of the community.

Yankton High School, Yankton College and Mount Marty College have all left their mark on the athletic scene of the state and region, hanging countless championship banners between them. The individuals who anchored those teams created their own legacies, from the basketball success of Ray Hamann at YHS to YC and NFL great Lyle Alzado to MMC legendary baseball coach Bob Tereshinski, just to name a few.



James D. CIMBUREK

The Bucks, though, have been known for football, thanks to the 30 Eastern South Dakota Conference titles hung by YHS since 1927. YHS won five state titles from 1970-1980, just prior to the implementation of the SDHSAA football playoff system. Six more titles and five runners-up have been added in the playoff era, giving Yankton more titles than every school except Sioux Falls O'Gorman.

Among those greats was Bill Whisler, who graduated from Iowa in 1962 and played 10 years in the Canadian Football League.

Another great during that era was Bob Stransky, who was second in the nation in rushing in 1957 for Colorado, accumulating 1,097 yards and 1,387 yards total offense. A standout in basketball, track, baseball and football in Yankton, Stransky recently went into the CU Hall of Fame.

When girls' sports came into the SDHSAA scene in the early 1970s, Yankton was at the forefront. Yankton played host to the first-ever state girls' track meet in 1969, then became the first dynasty in S.D. girls' basketball, winning eight titles from 1975-1988.

The names of those girls' athletic pioneers already dot the YHS Hall of Fame landscape. Diane Hiemstra and Lisa Van Goor (Class of 1980) were on those first great teams, with Beth McLeod (Class of 1981) not far behind. Sarah (Robinson) Nichols, Dawn (Christensen) Pesicka, Sarah Mannes, Jenny Pokorney, Erin Cihak and Steph Law have followed.

Van Goor is also in the Colorado University Athletic Hall of Fame, the first female to be so honored.

In the 1990s, Yankton's successes turned to running, with the Bucks' first state cross country and track titles coming in the 1991-92 school year. The Bucks would win three more track titles in the next nine years, then would become the dominant force in distance running from 2005-09, winning five straight titles.

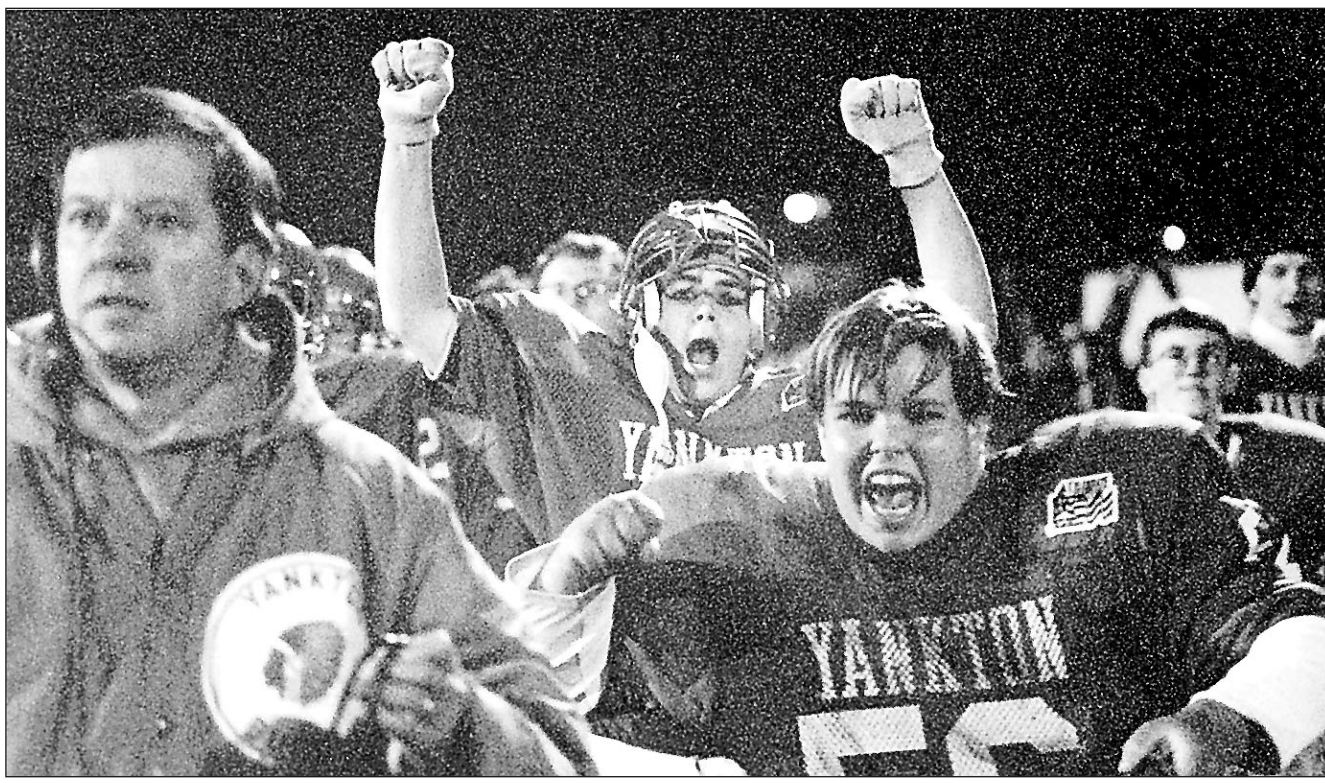
The Yankton girls had similar success, adding a 1995 track title to their three titles in the early 1980s, then running off six championships in seven years in cross country (2003-09).

Yankton has also been a front-runner in the newly-sanctioned sport of competitive dance, winning the sport's first state title in 2007 and finishing second every year since.

One of the things the Yankton School District has done to keep the school's high standards for competition has been its strong middle school athletics programs.

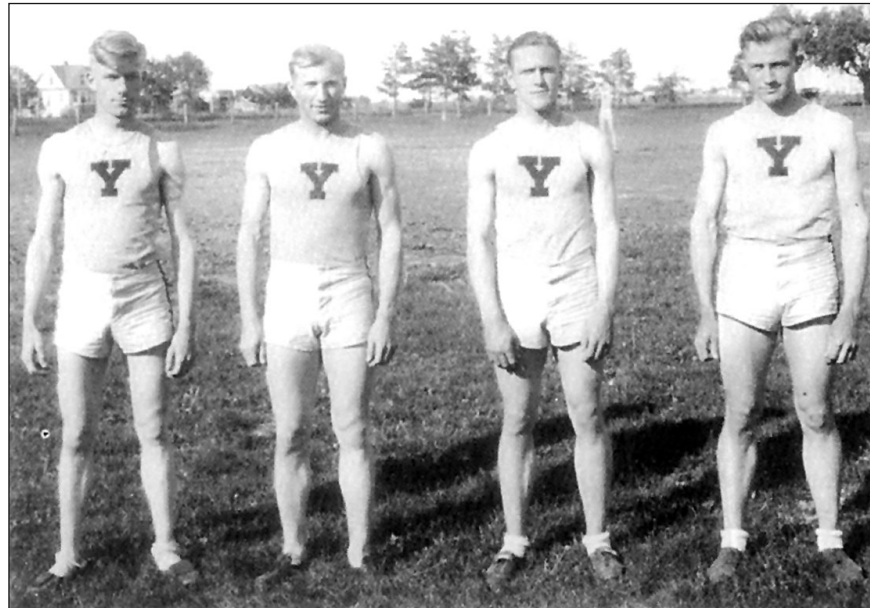
A highlight of the middle school athletics schedule has been the Junior High Relays track and field meet, which began in 1950. The brainchild of coach Lars Overskei and *Press & Dakotan* sports editor Don Bierle, the event was designed to build interest in track and field for younger Yankton students. The first meet was held with the prelims at West Side Park, and the finals under the lights that night at Crane (now Crane-Youngworth) Field.

YSD added end-of-season home tour-



P&D ARCHIVE PHOTO

Yankton High School football players celebrate on the sidelines during a game. Whether it is YHS, Yankton College or Mount Marty College, Yankton has had a history of success in athletics. Yankton also has a history of hosting major statewide, national and international sporting events over the years.



P&D ARCHIVE PHOTO

"Smokey Joe" Mendel, second from left, was one of the best athletes ever to grace the athletic battlefields in Yankton, not to mention South Dakota. The Yankton College legend once tied the world record in the 100-yard dash with a time of 9.5 seconds. Also pictured are fellow Greyhounds Frank Lyman, Tom Ptak and Ben Valder. (From the book "Yankton: The Way It Was!" by Bob Karolevitz)

naments in basketball, volleyball and wrestling.

All middle school programs are currently in jeopardy, though, as they were part of the budget cuts YSD made after a failed opt-out attempt. Efforts are being made to restore the programs with private funds.

While baseball is not affiliated with the school, Yankton High School has produced some greats.

A YHS and YC grad, Romaine "Red" Loecker, left his mark on amateur baseball in the state, earning three state tournament batting titles and leading the Yankton Lakers to state championships in 1969 and 1975. He was the 1969 state tournament MVP. Also a standout basketball player and state hurdles champ, Loecker went into the YHS Hall of Fame in 1994.

#### YANKTON COLLEGE

YC produced a number of great athletes in several sports before its closure in 1984, the most famous of which might be 13-year NFL great Lyle Alzado.

Alzado made a name for himself as a tough defender, playing for the Denver Broncos, Cleveland Browns and Oakland Raiders during his career. After his career, though, his name became synonymous with something else: steroid use. As the substances that once helped him build up his body tore it apart, he became an outspoken advocate for drug testing, showing himself as an example of what not to do.

YC also had the distinction of playing the first night football game in South Dakota, hosting Western Union College of LeMars, Iowa. (Which later became Westmar before closing in the 1990s.)

That game was played Oct. 10, 1930, with YC winning 52-6, thanks to the heroics of Toy Southmayd, who had four touchdowns, and "Smokey" Joe Mendel.

Mendel was best known for his exploits on the track, beginning with single-handedly winning the state track meet for Onida in 1926. He scored all 20 of Onida's points, beating out Sioux Falls Washington for the title. His mark of 22-7 1/2 in the long jump that day stood as the state record for 50 years.

At YC his legend grew. In 1929, he long jump 24-1, a state collegiate mark that stood for 45 years. Two years later, he matched the world record in the 100-yard dash, running the event in 9.5 seconds.

Another former world record holder from YC was Tommie Lee White, who set the 60-meter hurdles record (7.4 seconds) and shared the American 50-meter hurdle mark (6.4 seconds). In 1968 he was a member of the world-record 480-yard shuttle hurdle relay team.

Though White just missed Olympic berths in 1968 and 1972, he was ranked among the top 10 in the 110-meter hurdles for five years, peaking at third in 1971, and was ranked among the top 10 hurdlers in the U.S. for nine years, peaking at second.

On the basketball court, YC also had a number of greats and another famous game, a seven-overtime affair with Black Hills State in the early 1950s, which BH won 80-79. Four of the Yankton College players who played in that long game later coached South Dakota high school basketball champions — Bob Brooks, Mitchell High School (1964); Ken Liveris, Parkston High (1965); Jim Flevares (Tripp High) 1967; and Ken Thury, Brookings High (1968).

Kay Besanson, a Delmont native who also played in the seven-overtime game, was recruited by YC for basketball but, after beating a member of the track team in a race, was invited by Youngworth to join the track team. He broke

SPORTS | PAGE 11C

*Congratulations to the  
City of Yankton and  
the Press & Dakotan  
on your 150th Anniversary*

Representative Nick & Ginny Moser  
SD District 18

