

## Tanager Boys' Soccer Opens 'A' Title Defense Today

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK  
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VERMILLION — The Vermillion Tanagers boys' soccer team was unbeaten a year ago, 12-0 and state champions in 2012. In 2013, the Tanagers are hoping for similar results.

Vermillion sports five seniors and several other returning players as it opens the 2013 campaign today (Saturday) at home against Belle Fourche.

"We have a lot of the right tools," said Vermillion head coach Curt Nelson. "We need to work just as hard as last year, possibly harder, to get back to the top."

While the Tanagers graduated five seniors and lost a sixth player, but Vermillion dealt with similar losses prior to last season.

"We have a good group of guys returning and a number of

### Tanagers Soccer

Aug. 17	Belle Fourche	1 p.m.
Aug. 23	@ Hot Springs	6 p.m.
Aug. 24	@ Custer	2 p.m.
Aug. 30	Hot Springs	6 p.m.
Aug. 31	Custer	3 p.m.
Sept. 6	Sturgis	6 p.m.
Sept. 16	Huron	5 p.m.
Sept. 21	@ Huron	1 p.m.
Sept. 26	S.F. Christian	7 p.m.
Sept. 28	@ Sturgis	2 p.m.
Oct. 4	@ Chamberlain	5 p.m.

SDSSA Tournament  
Oct. 17-19 at Sioux Falls

new kids," Nelson said. "We have similar numbers to last year."

One thing in Nelson's — and the team's — favor is the fact that all of the seniors play different positions.

"We have good balance again, like last year," he said.

Two players return after earning all-state honors a year

ago, striker Nathan Samudzi, a first-team selection, and center midfielder Ethan James. Outside midfielders James May and Austin Druin also return. Senior goalkeeper James Butler is also a welcome addition to the roster.

The Tanagers had an inexperienced defense a year ago, but return juniors Matthew Wasley and Blaine Bottolfson, and sophomore Alec Leber this season. Junior forward Sam Tigert, sophomore midfielder Joe Miller and freshman midfielder Seth Druin are also part of Vermillion's first unit.

Also on Vermillion's varsity and JV roster include junior Andrew Callahan, sophomores Daniel Robinson and Tristan Meadows, freshman Nate Robertson, eighth graders Matthew Noteboom, Josh Prescott, Nick Lubers and Logan Bendeski, and seventh graders

Ross Dahlhoff, Wyatt Loftus, Parson Covington and Joel Druin.

Two of the top teams in Class A teams from a year ago, Harrisburg and Tea, moved over to the SDHSAA-sanctioned league, but plenty of talent remains in the South Dakota Soccer league.

"Some of the strong opponents moved to the sanctioned league, but Sturgis and Huron will be tough competition," Nelson said. "Some upsets and surprises during the year can make a lot of difference."

For the Tanagers to make another run, they need to stay focused, according to Nelson.

"We need to make sure the kids stay grounded," he said. "We need to work to achieve similar results to last season."

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at [twitter.com/JCimburek](https://twitter.com/JCimburek)



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

**Pierre baserunner Pat Anderson, 5, tries to get home as Vermillion Red Sox catcher Colby Lessman takes the throw during the second inning of an elimination game in the S.D. State Class A Amateur Baseball Tournament on Friday at Sioux Falls Stadium. Anderson was out on the play, but Pierre scored two in the inning, enough to secure a 3-1 victory over the Red Sox.**

## Decker, Pierre Send Red Sox Packing 3-1

BY PETER CHAPMAN  
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SIoux FALLS — The Pierre Rattlers knocked out the Vermillion Red Sox 3-1 in the State Class A Amateur Baseball Tournament, Friday afternoon at Sioux Falls Stadium.

Elliott Coughlin and player-manager Tyson Lindekugel each had two hits for Pierre, which advances to play the Sioux Falls Saints today (Saturday) at 11 a.m. Jordan LaBrie, Allen Goodman, Harry Decker and John Richter also had hits for the Rattlers.

Derrik Nelson, a pickup player from Yankton, had two of Vermillion's six hits, including a double. A.J. Staiert, Tyler Cando, Dan Hansen and Kasey Neumann also had hits for the Red Sox.

Decker went the distance for the win, striking out six and walking one. Derrick Appley took the loss, also going the distance.

The Rattlers came out quick scoring two runs in the second inning putting the Red Sox behind. The Sox were unable to place the ball where they needed to make important plays ultimately keeping them from winning.

"We hit the ball hard, but we hit the ball right at them," Red Sox manager Kirk Sorenson said. "We made the errors early and got down, and we just couldn't get quite back in it."

Appley threw a good game to keep down the attack of the Rattlers striking out Jordan LaBrie in the first and Allen Goodmen in the third but the errors in the second kept the Red Sox behind.

"We usually make those plays and we thought we could overcome it, it helped them get stronger but we weren't able to overcome it," Sorenson said. "Pierre gets the credit. Their pitcher Decker threw a good ball game and they made the plays."

Decker gave the Red Sox little to work with to make some plays. Decker threw to the zone making the Sox put the ball in play with confidence in the rest of his team.

In the eighth the Rattlers came on strong with LaBrie and Goodman getting base hits and Ryan Yackley hitting the ball to get runners on second and third with two outs. The attack was shut down when Red Sox Candor caught Lindekugel's fly ball to center field with a diving catch to move into the ninth.

In the ninth inning the Red Sox were able to put pressure on the Rattlers with two base hits and a walk loading the bases. With one out, Reese Steckler's hit to left field was caught allowing Nelson to score a run but it would not be enough to close the gap as Dan Terry's fly ball would be caught ending the game.

"We are done for the year, now we see if we are going to do it again next year," Sorenson said.

You can follow Peter Chapman on Twitter at [twitter.com/PEChapman](https://twitter.com/PEChapman)

## Yankton Soccer Teams Begin Season



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

**ABOVE: Yankton's Morgan Tessier, right, is congratulated by a teammate after Tessier scored the game-winning goal in the Gazelles' 2-1 victory over Watertown on Friday at Lewis & Clark Soccer Complex.**

**BELOW: Watertown's Brandon Derby, left, tries to chase down Yankton's Ryan Olson during the first half of their boys' soccer match on Friday in Yankton. Due to a late start on the match, results were not available at presstime.**

## Gazelles Claim Season Opener

Morgan Tessier broke a 1-1 tie with a goal midway through the second half, lifting Yankton to a 2-1 victory over Watertown in the girls' soccer season opener for both squads. The match was held at Yankton's Lewis & Clark Soccer Complex.

Briana Benjamin scored off an Danielle Beckman pass for Yankton in the first half.

Raquel Cole played a strong match in goal for the Gazelles, stopping six shots to preserve the victory.

The Gazelles, 1-0, will host Rapid City Stevens today (Saturday) at 1 p.m.

### College: SDSU 10, Winnipeg 0, exhibition

BROOKINGS — The South Dakota State women's soccer team defeated the University of Winnipeg 10-0 in an exhibition contest on Friday night. Stacy Gujjarro and Alexa Trakalo both recorded hat tricks in the game.

The format of the game consisted of one 45-minute period and two 25-minute periods.

Elisa Stamatakis started for the Jacks in the net and played until the 29:47 mark when Nicole Inskeep replaced her. She played until the end of the first period, when Blaklee McMillen started the second period. Lauren Thormodsgard took over at the start of the third period and closed out the game for the Jackrabbits. As a combined goaltending unit the Jacks allowed zero goals on four shots.

The SDSU offense took 31 total shots and 17 of them were on goal.

The Jackrabbits will officially begin the 2013 season next Friday night against Iowa State. The game time is set for 6 p.m. at Fishback Soccer Park.



## Commentary: Can Someone, Anyone, Please Take Down The SEC?

BY PAUL NEWBERRY  
AP National Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Can somebody — anybody! — please stand up to that bully down South.

The college football season hasn't even started yet, but we already feel like we know the outcome.

The SEC is up here.

Everyone else is down here.

Frankly, it's getting a little boring.

Sport requires drama, suspense, some degree of uncertainty to truly capture our attention.

In this sport, though, we've got the closest thing to a sure bet. Come January, we all know there's likely to be another Southeastern Conference team standing in the middle of that confetti at the Rose Bowl, collecting the league's eighth straight national title.

Once again, the SEC has an embarrassment of riches: the best offensive player (Texas A&M quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Manziel), the best defensive player (South Carolina end Jadeveon Clowney), the best coach (Alabama's Nick Saban), and — oh, yeah — the best team

(Saban's mighty Crimson Tide, winner of three crowns in the last four years and heavily favored to claim another).

Yawn.

For the good of college football, somebody needs to end this reign of terror.

Sure, dynasties are a whole lot of fun for those on the right side of history, but they're not the best way to keep the rest of us engaged. It is surely no coincidence that average attendance this past season was down 1.3 percent from 2005, the last time a team not from the SEC finished No. 1, and a more troubling 3.3 percent from its record high in 2008.

In fact, last year's turnout of 45,440 per game was the lowest for the NCAA's top division since 2001. Even the folks in SEC country seem to have become a bit bored with all this winning, judging by a slight drop in average attendance each of the last two seasons and a more glaring number of no-shows at some big-time stadiums.

For now, look for more of the same.

The SEC could have as many as five teams (Alabama, Georgia, South

Carolina, Texas A&M and Florida) in the top 10 when the first Associated Press poll of the season comes out on Saturday. LSU is right in the mix, too.

There are those who choose to bury their head in the sand when it comes to the SEC.

A few weeks ago, Nebraska coach Bo Pelini took offense at anyone suggesting the SEC was head and shoulders above every other conference. Alabama, for sure, but not the entire conference.

"I guarantee there are a lot of teams in the SEC that aren't Alabama that wish they were Nebraska, that wish they were Michigan, wish they were Ohio State," Pelini said, "so don't talk to me about the SEC."

That sort of denial isn't going to get it done.

Not when anyone can match up to the SEC in two crucial areas: quarterback and defense.

It starts with Manziel, the game's most dynamic player, assuming he isn't sidelined by an investigation into whether he got paid for doling out his autograph (the guess here is that Johnny Football beats the rap). Alabama is led by AJ McCarron,

who has done nothing but win championships since taking over as the Tide's QB. Georgia has Aaron Murray, a fifth-year senior who surprisingly passed on a chance to enter the NFL draft after guiding the Bulldogs to the cusp of the national title game last season.

Clowney would surely be in the pros by now if he wasn't required to spend one more year in college. If anyone needs a refresher on just how good this guy is, check in with former Michigan running back Vincent Smith, assuming he's finally coherent after taking the season's most vicious hit in the Outback Bowl, one which sent both the ball and his helmet flying.

In a sense, Clowney is the exaggerated prototype for the kind of player that makes SEC defenses stand apart from everyone else. In this league, it seems, everyone is just a few pounds bigger, a little bit stronger, a step quicker. Manti Te'o might've been a stud at Notre Dame, but his performance in the national title game — most of it spent on his back as Alabama romped to a 42-14 victory — showed he would've been just another player in the SEC.

If there was any hope the Crimson Tide might back off the throttle just a bit, Saban shot that down just minutes after his team had finished its destruction of the Fighting Irish. He said the celebration would last all of 24 hours, then he'd be back in the office getting ready to win another championship.

"Even though I really appreciate what this team accomplished and am very, very proud of what they accomplished, we need to prepare for the challenges of the new season very quickly with the team we have coming back," he said.

Saban sounded totally devoid of joy, just a man on an insatiable quest to knock down anyone in his path. He is the perfect symbol for the SEC, which saps a little more joy from this game with each passing season, a league on cruise control while everyone else is struggling mightily just to get off the ground.

Please don't put us through that again.

Can you help us out, Ohio State? The Buckeyes at least have a coach, Urban Meyer, who knew how to win