

# WOKSAPE

## Gazelles' Basketball Season off to a Roaring Start

**BY TORY GROSS**

The Yankton Gazelles opened up their season exactly the way they wanted, defeating the Brookings Bobcats 55-31 last Friday night at Summit Activities Center. The strong defense and fast-paced offense was too much for the Bobcats, as Yankton remained in control for the entire game.

Yankton's defense proved to be the foundation of the team's success. Brookings had only six points at the end of the first quarter, four of which were free throws. Once the Gazelles came back determined to clean up their fouls, Brookings struggled to get off shots.

"I thought our team defense was very good," senior point guard Chloe Cornemann explained. "We made it really hard for Brookings to run any of their plays, which is key to winning games."

It was Yankton's offense, however, that got the game rolling. The Gazelles got the ball up the court quickly and were able to make numerous plays off the fast break. They also substituted a lot of players, each of which got the job done.

"I think our depth and speed are this team's strongest asset. We have a lot of players that are able to contribute, and we're a quick team from our guards to

our posts. It's rare to come across a team with the talent we have in so many different areas, and I think that is going to be a huge part of our success," Cornemann added.

Points were distributed relatively equally between players, but it was senior forward Emily Fedders who led the night with 12. Cornemann followed with 10, while seniors Tory Gross and Sarah Ekeren and junior Mikala Hora all had 7.

Although they gained a win, it was a costly one, as the Gazelles lost two key players: Hora with a shoulder injury after just 11 minutes of play and senior Audrey Fuks with a knee injury.

It is uncertain when the two will be back, but the team will have to forge ahead without them in their heavy upcoming schedule.

On Tuesday December 13th, the Gazelles played an always tough Sioux Falls Washington team, losing their second game. Then, on December 15th the Gazelles traveled to Brandon Valley and won that match 49—38. The Gazelles will travel to Mitchell on Tuesday.

"We definitely have been placed with a tough week, but if we play as a team they should all be very good games," Cornemann explained. "I also think this is where we find out how tough we really are. I'm excited to see how we match up with these three teams."

## Bucks Basketball Team Gaining Momentum

**BY NICK ROBINSON**

Bucks have started their young season out at a disappointing 0-2, but have promise in both games. The future looks bright though, as Yankton has yet to get their shooters to be on fire in games. Yankton also needs to be able to work into the offense and find the right shot. The Bucks have a few new faces seeing varsity time, so it will take some time to work them in; with juniors Kellen Soulek, Michael Rucker, Troy Hunhoff, and sophomore J.J. Hejna all seeing quality varsity minutes. So far, senior Jackson Seitzinger has stepped into the teams leader role and "go to guy".

Yankton played their first game of the season against the Brookings Bobcats on December 9th and fell 68-56 to a very experienced and well rounded Bobcat squad. Yankton took the lead 14-11 in the first quarter and after that Yankton started waiting at the free throw line for Brookings. Jackson Seitzinger led the game with 19 points, while Kellen Soulek had 9 points and 11 rebounds for the Bucks.

"We didn't play our best, we were cold when it really mattered, they (Brookings) are a quality team and for us to hang with them all game is a good sign for improvement," Jackson Seitzinger said. Yankton went 6 of 10 from behind the arc, but Brookings made a living at the free throw line. Yankton had two players foul out of the game and one technical foul.

Yankton's second game was kind of a step back, losing 53-46 to the Washington Warriors. Yankton shot 38% from the field while the Warriors shot a staggering 50% for the game. "They found the right shot, and they hit it. Nothing much you can do about that except try harder on the other side to find the right shot for us," Connor Fitzsimmons stated. Yankton adjusted in the second quarter to play a zone defense to stop the attack of the ball to the rim and to make the Warriors shoot perimeter shots. Washington was still able to make baskets with their speed and stingy defense. "They were a quick team, got after it and hustled after every play. We need to have that type of energy when we play, and I believe we are figuring that out," Kellen Soulek said.

The freshmen and sophomore teams are 2-0 on the year. The sophs have had some big leads and let the opposing teams get back in the game. In the game against Brookings sophomore Landon Breen had a double-double and said, "We need to work on closing teams out, stepping on their throats. If we can play four quarters of good quality basketball I believe we can become a good basketball team."

Against Washington, it seemed like they wrote the same story. Yankton had a 13 point lead at half and let Washington get within 1 point until the Bucks took over with about 3 minutes left in the fourth quarter. Against the Bobcats, the Frosh Bucks only had four players to score, but it was enough to get the job done. And against Washington it was a back and forth juggernaut between the two schools, but Yankton had the upper hand. While the Junior Varsity team is 1-1 there was a lot of improvement from game



PHOTO COURTESY OF MRS. TERI MANDEL

**Above:** The Bucks basketball team gathers at the bench for a time out.

**Below:** Bryan Youngberg prepares to shoot free-throws with two minutes left in the game.



one. Drew Konopasek and Zach Benjamin have proven to be clutch shooters. Yankton lost to Brookings and beat Washington. Yankton headed to Watertown for a game against the Arrows, but the score was not available before press time. Yankton travels to Brandon Valley on the 17th and has Mitchell at home before the start of Christmas break. "These next games are huge for us, I wouldn't say make or break, but close.

We need these wins and we will come out motivated to win," Seitzinger added. There will be no games over Christmas break and action will return on the 6th of January. "That's almost a month of prepping and practicing for the long haul of the season, it's a huge part of how the team will be going on the rest of the year," Fitzsimmons said.

## Bucks Wrestlers Focused and Competing Well

**BY KAMERON KENDALL**

This wrestling season has been both harsh and easy for some wrestlers.

"We're a young team and even though we are down in numbers, we have a lot of talent. This is a rebuilding year, and it is all about gaining experience for some of the younger guys," said Logan Smith, a YHS senior and a 2011 state champion wrestler.

Smith is looking forward to another run at a state title, however he was injured in the second meet of the season and has been forced to spend some time allowing his hyperextended thumb to recover. Smith said, "I want to get as many matches in before state as I can. I tried to wrestle with it (my injury) last weekend, but it didn't work out, so I'm resting until after Christmas."

Smith will return to the mat for the January 5th meet.

Levi Davis of the 145-pound varsity position said, "I'm practicing hard and making it to the morning runs. I'm keeping a good work ethic. My conditioning has gotten better. I'm able to practice longer and harder. I've gotten better at both mental and physical toughness."

The wrestling season has had a great start. Bucks are placing well in some of the home meets. They had prepared well for the tournament held over the weekend.

Conditioning is improving for most of the team. Varsity is doing its best to go all out at practice but save enough energy to use on the mat.

Casey Skillingstad of the 132-pound varsity position said, "My season has been off to a good start. In practice, I'm going to fix the mistakes I made in previous matches. My conditioning isn't where I want it to be, but it's improving. I'm going to enjoy Christmas vacation, and focus more on conditioning when we come back from vacation."

After this past weekend's tournaments and meet, the Bucks get to take off until after Christmas vacation.

## Songs of the Season



Will be performed by  
**Yankton Children's Choir**  
Monday, Dec. 19th  
at 7 p.m.

**HyVee** 2100 Broadway  
Yankton

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