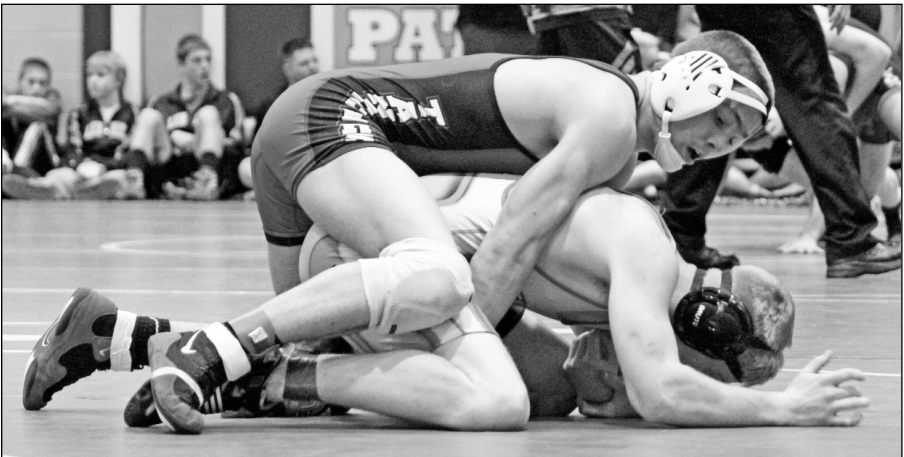


Bucks Third After First Day Of Region 2A



EMILY NIEBRUGGE/P&D
Vermillion's Brett Bye goes for the pin against Josh Goeman of Lennox in their 152-pound match up in the Region 2A Wrestling Tournament on Thursday night in Sioux Falls.

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
sports@yankton.net

SIoux FALLS — With one day of the Region 2A Wrestling Tournament under their belts, Yankton, Dakota Valley and Vermillion are looking to make their goals happen today (Friday).

After competing in the first round of the tournament Thursday night in Sioux Falls, each team is now focusing on sending as many wrestlers to state.

Yankton sent five wrestlers through to today, including Noah Vetter (106), Casey Skillingstad (138), Matt Huber (145), James Hisek (160) and CJ Warren (170). Dakota Valley also sent five wrestlers through. Tyler Schrunk

(120), Blake Perryman (138), Brady Dam (145), Taylor Lambert (220) and Tanner Lambert (285) will all compete today (Friday).

Vermillion's Noah Walker (126), Carter Kratz (138), Brett Bye (152) Brandon Hertz (160) Alex Osborne (170), Seth Heine (182), Noah Westergaard (195) and Zach Westergaard (220) will also compete.

Overall, Sioux Falls Washington is sitting in first place with 136.5 points, followed by Brandon Valley (100.5), Yankton (94.5) in third, Dakota Valley (61), Sioux Falls Lincoln (59), Harrisburg (56) in sixth, Vermillion (48), Lennox (17) and Tea Area (16) in ninth.

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DAVID LIAS/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK
South Dakota's Juevol Myles, right, draws contact against Oakland's Travis Bader during their Summit League men's basketball game on Thursday at the DakotaDome. Oakland edged the Coyotes 76-75.

Oakland Holds Off USD 76-75

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

VERMILLION — The final shot taken by Juevol Myles was, in a lot of ways, a perfect snap-shot of the season.

Good look, shot falls short, another close loss.

That's the way things have gone for the University of South Dakota men's basketball team. The Coyotes hung tough with the hottest team in the Summit League on Thursday night, but Oakland held on for a 76-75 win at the DakotaDome.

"Been a couple of these, that's why this one hurts so much," said Juevol Myles, who scored 23 points but missed a floater in the lane at the buzzer.

In what was the fifth straight loss for the Coyotes (8-17, 4-9), they were able to rally from a 6-point deficit to tie the game at 73 with 1:57 left, but it wasn't enough.

Duke Mondy, a junior guard for Oakland (14-13, 9-4), hit the second of two free throws with 4.3 seconds remaining to push the Golden Grizzlies in front.

After a timeout, Myles got the ball, got two screens, drove the ball down the court and threw up a runner just inside the three-point line that eventually drew air.

"I looked up for a quick second, saw three seconds and I was like, 'I'm going to go,'" Myles said. "Hindsight now, I should've pulled up."

"Wish I could have that play back, but that's life, you have to let it go and move on."

There have been plenty of those kinds of speeches for the Coyotes this season. Thursday night marked the sixth time USD lost a game by five or fewer points — five in conference action.

"It's been like that a lot throughout this year, they were able to jump on us at the start, which hurt us," sophomore guard Brandon Bos, owner of 22 points, said.

"We couldn't quite finish it out at the end."

Although both teams shot at least 50 percent in the second half, Oakland — winners of six straight — out-scored the Coyotes by nine in the second half.

"We had some curial possessions there where we didn't score on," USD head coach Dave Boots said. "Defensively we did get some stops in the last couple minutes that gave us a chance."

"Hard-fought game, they won, we lost."

Oakland's Corey Petros put the visitors ahead 75-73 on a layup with 41 seconds left, but Myles hit two free throws with 22.3 seconds on the clock.

With 4.3 seconds left, Mondy spinned in the lane and drew the foul. He hit the second free throw and Myles' floater at the buzzer — after a timeout — came up short.

"A pull-up, would've been the right play, but he made a runner and it didn't go," Boots said. "Certainly it had a chance. He made some big plays throughout the game; played well."

Oakland, which shot 52 percent after halftime, had two players record a double-double (Corey Petros and Drew Valentine), while Mondy and standout shooter Travis Bader, the nation's fifth-leading scorer, added 16 points.

Ten first-half turnovers, however, led directly to 11

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Sailing True



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
The Wausa student section and cheerleaders try to encourage the Vikings during the Lewis & Clark Conference boys' basketball championship game on Feb. 4 in Laurel, Neb. The Vikings (19-2) are hoping their fans will get the chance to cheer them on at state for the first time since 2003.

Wausa Looks To Be On Course For Lincoln

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

WAUSA, Neb. — After a decade away, the Wausa Vikings boys' basketball team looks to steer their course to Lincoln this March.

Wausa last qualified for state in the 2002-03 season, when current head coach Tylor Fincher was a guard and leading scorer. But most of the decade since was mired in struggles: eight straight losing season, including back-to-back winless seasons in 2007-08 and 2008-09.

But the Vikings began to right the ship a year ago, winning 18 games with a squad of mostly underclassmen. With all but one of those players back this year, the Vikings felt good about their chances.

"Having a team full of juniors and seniors is big," Fincher said. "They've played since they were freshmen and sophomores, and that experience has been key."

One of the key stepping stones for the Vikings' success this season had nothing to do with basketball, but much to do with confidence.

"It started this year in football. We beat them in football, and they finally realized that we can beat Wynot," Fincher said. Wausa beat Wynot 58-50 in the football regular season finale for

both teams, then ended a 17-game hoops losing streak to the Blue Devils with a 62-44 victory on Dec. 14.

"Wynot's one of those teams that in the past five, six years, they've always gotten us," Fincher said. "To get that mental edge, to see that we could beat them, was key. That was probably the best defensive game we've played all year."

The Vikings have already surpassed their win total of a season ago, taking a 19-2 record into tonight's (Friday) regular season finale against Bloomfield. Wausa is beating opponents by an average of 18.1 points per game, a stat senior Trevor Wakeley credits to the team's stout defense.

"We've been talking a lot about defense all season," he said. "We've also focused on our work ethic and being a team."

Fincher credits that work ethic with the team's success.

"These kids just love the game of basketball. They always want to be in the gym. I can't get them out of the gym," he said. "I credit (their success) to a lot of their hard work that they put into it."

That determination has also shown through in the team's rare setbacks. In the Vikings' loss to Bancroft-Rosalie in the championship of the Lewis & Clark Tournament, Wausa battled back from

double-digit deficits to have a chance at a game-tying basket in the closing seconds.

"You can tell their confidence has really gained a lot from last year and the year before to now," Fincher said. "A couple times in that game (Bancroft-Rosalie), they were down 10, maybe 11 or 12, but they hung right in there, and they realized that if they keep working hard they can come back. And they had a good chance."

Eight players have appeared in all 21 games for the Vikings, with two others having appeared in more than half of the team's games so far this season.

"Having guys that I can trust to put in there, to give me their effort, is key," Fincher said. "Those bench guys, they don't really score the most, but they're good role players and they know they're in there for defense and play hard."

Marcus Claussen (14.7 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 2.0 spg, 2.8 apg) and Austin Conn (10.8 ppg, 2.5 rpg, 1.7 spg, 3.6 apg) both score in double figures, with Wakeley (9.8 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.7 spg, 1.2 apg) and Reid Friedrich (8.2 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 1.1 apg) not far behind.

Hunter Vannes (6.4 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 1.8 apg), Spencer Rosberg (5.5 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 1.1 spg, 1.4 apg), Devon Munter (2.6 ppg, 1.0 rpg, 1.0 apg) and Adam Kleinschmidt (1.6 ppg, 1.7 rpg, 1.0 spg) have

also been key contributors for the Vikings.

"Shooting-wise, Marcus Claussen is our best shooter. Night in, night out, he's always putting up those outside shots," Fincher said. "Trevor Wakeley is another kid that is starting to realize that he can get his points by getting some offensive rebounds and posting up more. Another kid in there is Austin Conn. If he isn't always scoring, he's doing a good job of dishing out and finding the open shooters this year, which last year he didn't do as well."

"I really like these guys. They're not selfish. If somebody's struggling from the offensive end, they know that someone else will step up and do the scoring."

Being able to count on everyone in the rotation has propelled the team to success, according to Claussen.

"It helps a lot," he said. "If the starting five get tired, they can come in and do the same things we do."

Wynot, which has ended the Vikings' season the past three seasons, or Bancroft-Rosalie could stand in the way of the Vikings' quest to get to state.

"We need to stay hungry," Wakeley said. "We need to get excited for the next one, and keep wanting more."

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/aceman904

Wynot, Crofton Advance In Girls' Title Defenses

O'NEILL, Neb. — Crofton defeated West Holt 87-29 for the Sub-District C2-8 championship. The Lady Warriors also continued their undefeated season (24-0) with the victory.

Allison Arens led Crofton with 25 points and six rebounds. Bridget Arens had 21 points. Katie Peterson added nine points and seven rebounds to help lead the Lady Warriors.

April Everett led West Holt with 13 points. Megan Wenner posted seven points in the loss.

Crofton will advance to districts next Friday and will face Homer. Site and time are to be announced. West Holt finished with an 18-9 record.

CROFTON (24-0)	28	47	72	87
WEST HOLT (18-9)	7	10	18	29

D2-5: Wynot 60, Bancraft-Rosalie 36

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Wynot defeated Bancraft-Rosalie 60-36 in the Sub-District D2-5 championship on Thursday.

Kelsie Higgins had 14 points to help lead

Wynot (23-3). Maggie Schulte added 13 points in the victory.

Allie Vogt led Bancraft-Rosalie with 12 points. Shelby Ostrand added eight points.

Wynot will advance to districts next Friday. Bancraft-Rosalie ended their season with a 14-11 record.

WYNOT (23-3)	19	33	41	60
BANCRAFT-ROSALIE (14-11)	10	22	29	36

C2-7: Homer 61, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge 53

PONCA, Neb. — Homer defeated Laurel-Concord-Coleridge 61-53 in the Sub-District C2-7 championship on Thursday night.

Brandon Tighe led Homer (23-3) with 27 points. Brooke Tighe added 12 points in the win.

Cameron Eddie led LCC with 11 points. Kiley Thompson and Erin Gubbels each added 10 points in the loss.

Homer advances to districts next Friday. LCC finished with a 17-9 record.

HOMER (23-3)	13	24	41	61
LAUREL-CONCORD-COLERIDGE (17-9)	10	24	35	53

D1-6: Emerson-Hubbard 59, Randolph 57

WAUSA, Neb. — Emerson-Hubbard de-

ESD Boys' Basketball: Lynx Power Past Yankton

BY CHRIS RILEY
sports@yankton.net

Brandon Valley proved why they are one of the best teams in the state on Thursday night as the fourth-ranked Lynx powered past the Bucks 53-39 in ESD basketball action at the Summit Center.

Yankton, 4-12 with the loss, had just 12 points at the half as Brandon Valley's defense led the Lynx to the regular season sweep over the Bucks - Brandon Valley defeated Yankton in Brandon, 62-42, back on December 8.

Brandon Valley forced Yankton into 15 turnovers, turning those takeaways into 14 points, while committing just seven turnovers. The Lynx took 13 more shots than the Bucks during the course of the game.

"We turned the ball over way too many times," Yankton coach Chris Haynes said. "It's going to be really hard to win when you get 41 shots and your opponent gets 54."

Brandon Valley's bruising forward, junior Jacob Adams, finished



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Brandon Valley's Chase Marso, laying, Yankton's Andrew Hummel and Brnadon Valley's Nate Winter, 30, go for a loose ball during the second half of their Eastern South Dakota Conference boys' basketball game on Thursday at the Summit Center.

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