

State JV Girls' Hockey Begins Today

Yankton Plays Host To Three-Day Event At Alcoa Arena

FROM P&D STAFF REPORTS

Eight hockey teams are headed to Yankton this weekend to fight for a championship in the South Dakota Amateur Hockey Association (SDAHA) Girls' Junior Varsity State Tournament, which begins today (Friday) at the 4-H Ice Arena.

Today's action begins at 2 p.m. with Rushmore (14-7) and Oahe (7-10), followed by Watertown (17-2-1) and Sioux Center, Iowa (3-17) at 4 p.m., then Sioux Falls (11-10) and Brookings (9-9) at 6 p.m.

Mitchell, unbeaten at 20-0-1, enters as the top seed and will play the hometown Yankton Miracle (0-20) at 8 p.m.

Action continues Saturday with two consolation, two semifinal games and the seventh-place game, followed by Sunday's championship round. The title game will be played Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

Below are capsules of all eight teams, starting with Yankton.

Yankton Miracle

To say the Miracle lacked experience when they took the ice the first time this season might be an understatement.

But Yankton has turned into a more competitive squad as it enters the state tournament on its home ice.

"I'd say we've progressed very well," said Yankton head coach Mike Freeman. "Last week we played Watertown, who beat us handily twice earlier, to a 2-1 game. That bodes very well for us going into state."

For a Yankton team that has played better at home, having the tournament at Alcoa Arena is an exciting opportunity.

"They're very happy about it being at home," Freeman said. "It's always nice to have the home crowd, too."

Helena Pokorny, one of two seniors on the Miracle, leads the team with seven goals and nine total points. Sam Straatmeyer, despite being a first-year player, has five goals and an assist. Katelyn Stewart (2 goals, 4 assists), Jesley Stone (2 goals, 3 assists) and Erica Westerman (1 goal, 3 assists) have also been offensive factors.

Others have also played well on offense for the Miracle.

"One of our surprises has been Anna Lyman (1 assist). She started last year, and has done well on faceoffs. She has a good presence on faceoffs," Freeman said. "Sam Straatmeyer has a motor that just doesn't quit. We have a lot of younger players playing well as well."

Stone has been the cornerstone of the Yankton defense, with others also playing well in the defensive third.

"Erica Westerman can play defense or offense," Freeman said. "Baylee Prather is our youngest player,

but she has phenomenal closing speed. Elizabeth Rueppel stepped up and said she would play defense when we had someone go down."

Anchoring the Yankton defense in net has been Renee Cross, who stepped into a starting role there a year ago.

"She's still a young goalie, but she's gotten quicker, and better with the stick and with the glove," Freeman said. "Maddie Logue is a backup in her first year who has stepped in and played well."

While Yankton will have its hands full with the top-seeded Marlins, Freeman feels that the Miracle have played well against Mitchell.

"The last time we played Mitchell, we played well for two periods and ran out of gas. It was our third game of the weekend and second game of the day," he said. "We know we can play with them. We have to make sure we're hustling and keep the pressure on them."

Brookings Rangers

The combination of an up-and-coming goalie and some solid offensive players have helped the Rangers play near-500 hockey on the season.

"We've done a lot better than expected," said Brookings head coach Donovan Peterson. "We have a goal that has really taken to the position well."

Karie Krogman is just a seventh grader, but has recorded 305 saves and two shutouts on the season. She stops 85 percent of the shots she has faced.

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JILANNE DOOM/P&D

South Dakota's Polly Harrington, 33, drives past an IUPUI defender during the first half of their Summit League women's basketball game on Thursday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

Coyotes Surge Past IUPUI

VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota outscored IUPUI 36-19 in the second half to claim a 56-39 victory over the Jaguars in Summit League women's basketball action on Thursday at the DakotaDome.

The game was tied at 20 at the half. USD took control with a 20-3 run in the second half, turning a 27-26 deficit into a 46-30 lead. The Jaguars would come no closer than 13 points the rest of the way.

Tempestt Wilson scored 17 points and Polly Harrington had 16 points and 10 rebounds to lead USD (13-14, 8-6 Summit). Nicole Seekamp posted seven points and nine assists. Alexis Yackley added seven rebounds in the victory.

For IUPUI (16-10, 9-4 Summit), DeeDee Bellamy had 10 points and seven rebounds. Katie Comello had four assists. Nevena Markovic also had seven rebounds for the Jaguars.

USD finishes the home portion of its season on Saturday, hosting Western Illinois in a 2 p.m. tilt.

SOUTH DAKOTA (13-14)
Tempestt Wilson 7-12 2-2 17, Alexis Yackley 2-8 1-3 5, Lisa Loeffler 3-5 0-0 6, Nicole Seekamp 1-8 4-4 7, Polly Harrington 7-13 1-1 16, Heidi Hoff 0-2 0-0 0, Sam Mehr 1-1 0-0 3, Pam January 1-2 0-0 2. TOTALS: 22-51 8-10 56.

IUPUI (16-10)
Dee-Dee Bellamy 3-9 2-2 10, Nicole Rogers 1-4 0-0 3, Kerah Nelson 0-9 0-0 0, Katie Comello 2-10 2-2 6, Shawnee Teague 1-1 0-0 2, Jordan Barton 0-1 1-2 1, DeAira Goss 4-10 0-0 9, Akilah Sims 1-4 0-1 3, Dawn Luster 1-11 2-2 4, Alyssa Holder 0-0 0-0 0, Nevena Markovic 0-4 0-0 0, Clara Mitchell 0-2 1-4 1.

At the half: SD 20, IUPUI 20. Three-Pointers: IUPUI 5-21 (Bellamy 2-2, Rogers 1-4, Goss 1-2, Sims 1-3, Seekamp 1-3, Mehr 1-1, Yackley 0-4, Hoff 0-2). Rebounds: IUPUI 42 (Bellamy 7, Markovic 7), USD 39 (Harrington 10). Assists: USD 18 (Seekamp 9), IUPUI 9 (Comello 4). Turnovers: IUPUI 17, USD 16. Steals: USD 8 (three with 2), IUPUI 5 (Bellamy 3). Personal Fouls: USD 15, IUPUI 12. Fouled Out: None

Parkston Downs Wagner For 10A Title

WAGNER — For the second consecutive season, the Parkston girls went into Wagner and handed the hometown Red Raiders a loss in the district finals. The Trojans rallied for a 57-53 win in Thursday night's District 10A championship game.

Erica Herrold scored a game-high 27 points to go along with five rebounds for Parkston (16-6), which won its 11th straight game. McKenzie Weidenbach added 11 points and Logan Wagner grabbed six rebounds.

For Wagner, which ends its season at 16-6, Nicole Weber had 17 points and six rebounds, while Ali Kuca posted 13 points and 14 rebounds.

Parkston advances to the regions next Thursday against an opponent to be determined.

PARKSTON (16-6).....12 22 41 57
WAGNER (16-6).....18 31 47 53

District 7A

Harrisburg 51, Lennox 31

HARRISBURG — Another balanced attack sent the Harrisburg Tigers past Lennox 51-31 in the District 7A girls' championship game Thursday night in Harrisburg.

Morgan Krier recorded 13 points, while Hailey Halling added 12 points and six rebounds for the Tigers (21-1), while Morgan Beaner had 11 points, nine rebounds and five steals.

Alex Johnson dished out five assists and Morgan Darner added six rebounds.

For Lennox, Tara Kuper scored 14 points, while

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Weather Delays Area Contests

Several area games were postponed due to Thursday's expected poor weather conditions.

— The Nebraska Sub-District C2-7 and C2-8 boys' basketball championship games will be played on Friday. C2-7 between Hartington Cedar Catholic and Wakefield will be played in Ponca, while C2-8 between Creighton and Crofton will be played in O'Neill. Each game begins at 7 p.m.

— The S.D. District 8A girls' basketball championship game will be played on Friday. The game between Elk Point-Jefferson and Beresford will be played at Beresford, with a 7 p.m. start.

— The Nebraska Sub-District D2-5 boys' basketball championship game will be played on Saturday in Hartington. The game features Wynot against Bancroft-Rosalie, a 7 p.m. start.

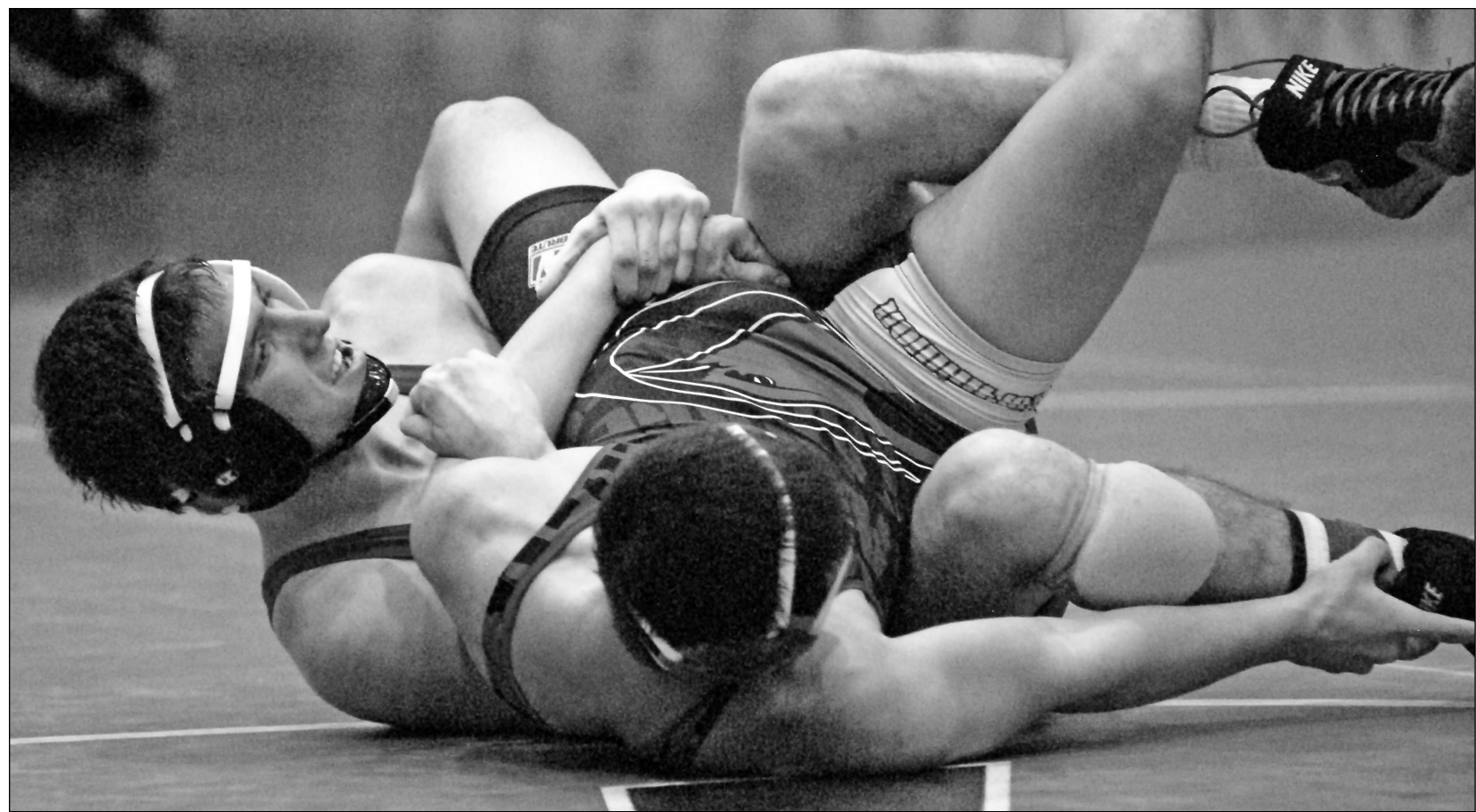
— The Sub-District C1-7, D1-5 and D2-6 championships that were scheduled for Thursday were moved up to Wednesday.

— Also announced on Thursday, the Mount Marty College baseball team has postponed this weekend's trip to Kansas. The Lancers will instead face Kansas Wesleyan in a pair of doubleheaders, March 2-3 in Topeka, Kan. Start time will be noon each day.

— The MMC baseball team also announced that it's high school pitching camp will take place this Sunday, from noon-3 p.m. at Laddie E. Cimpl Arena.

To report schedule changes, coaches and/or athletic directors are asked to contact the Press & Dakotan at sports@yankton.net, by phone at 1-800-743-2968, ext. 106; or by fax at 1-605-665-1721.

WRESTLING | PAGE 10A



P&D FILE PHOTO

Yankton's C.J. Warren goes for the pin against Vermillion's Brandon Hertz during their 160-pound match as part of the Yankton Invitational wrestling tournament in December. Warren is one of seven Bucks qualified for the South Dakota State Class A Tournament, which begins today (Friday) in Watertown.

Area Wrestlers Set For State

Class A Tourney Set For Watertown; Class B To Be Held In Aberdeen

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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Several area wrestlers will be competing in the South Dakota State Wrestling Tournament today (Friday) and Saturday. Class A will be held at the Watertown Civic Arena, while Class B will be held at the Barnett Center on the Northern State University campus in Aberdeen.

Five champions return in Class A, including Dakota Valley's Tanner Lambert, who will look to repeat as heavyweight champion. Two returning champions, Roosevelt junior Troy Kiggins (106 champ in 2011, 113 champ in 2012) and David Potratz of Sioux Falls Washington (106 champ in 2012) could face off in the 120-pound championship. Caleb Stoltenburg of Pierre and Nate Rotert of Spearfish-Lead-Deadwood also return as state champions in Class A.

Class B features two weight classes where returning champions could match up, Webster's Nolan Richie and Tri-Valley's Ryan Schuman at 126 pounds, and Flandreau's Jace Christiansen and Canton's Alex Davies at 145 pounds. Luke Loudenberg of Howard and Eugene Martin of Kingsbury County also return as state champions in Class B.

Pierre is the defending champion in Class A, and is considered one of the favorites again this year, along with Rapid City Central. Canton will defend its title in Class B, where Parkston is considered a heavy favorite to earn its first title since 2007.

Here is a look at the area teams sending wrestlers to state, beginning with Yankton and our other area Class A programs, followed by the area Class B programs.

Yankton

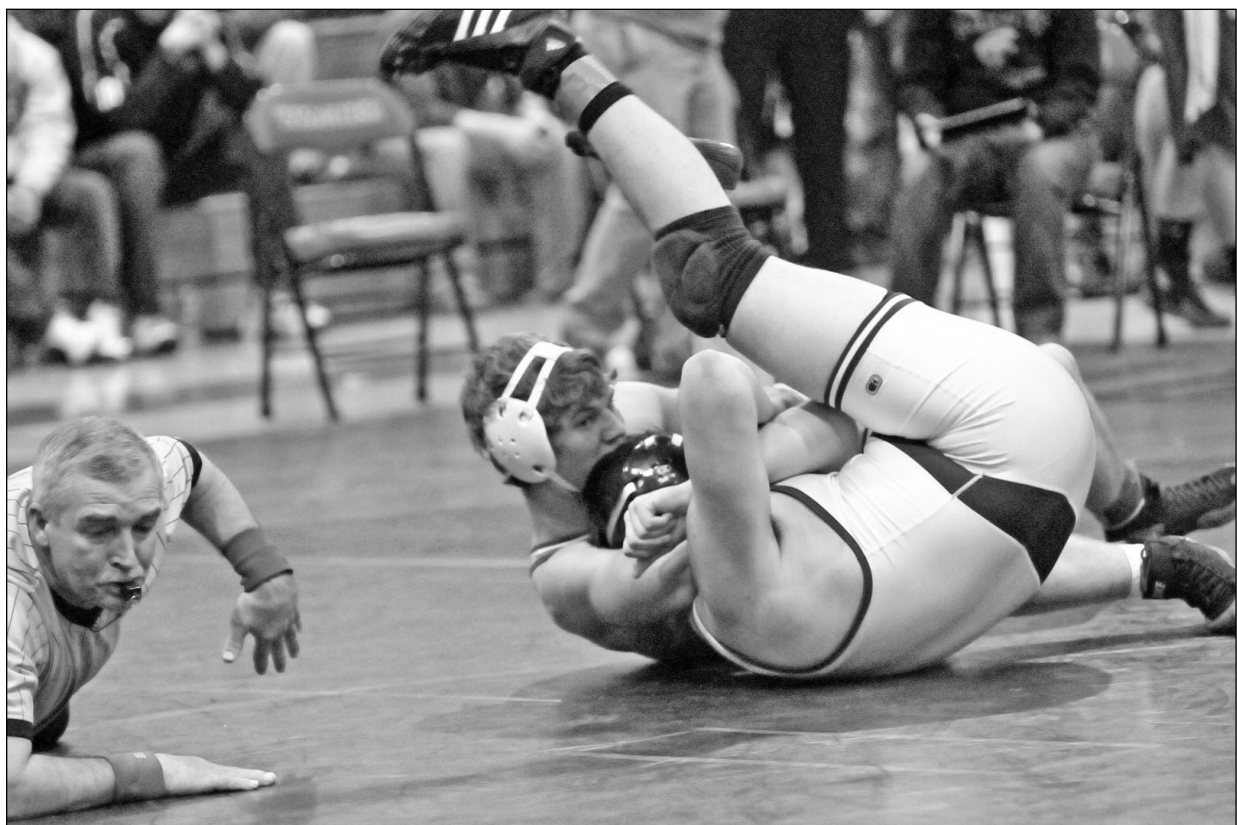
A veteran crew of seven wrestlers head to Watertown for the Bucks, including returning seniors at 145, 160, 170 and heavyweight.

"We expect that out of our seniors," said Yankton head coach Ryan Hage. "We are upset that we left a senior at home (182-pounder Thomas Kruse). We'd like to take all our seniors."

At 145, senior Matt Huber takes a 25-10 record into a first-round match with Spearfish/LD's Chase Harmon (So., 30-17).

"Matt is by far having his best season. He's been very competitive with all of the top guys, and was rated as high as second this season," Hage said. "He can put guys on their back and can wrestle close matches with anybody. If things go right, he can find himself in the finals on Saturday."

At 160, James Hisek rides a 28-7 record and a region title into his first-round matchup with Watertown's



P&D FILE PHOTO

Parkston's Brady Reiff scores a pin over Beresford's Derek Wiebers in the 220-pound championship at the Wagner Invitational in January. Reiff takes a 40-0 record into the South Dakota State Class B Wrestling Tournament, which begins today (Friday) in Aberdeen.

Jesse Forman (18-19).

"James has set himself up well," Hage said. "He can wrestle close with anybody. His goal is to find himself high up on the podium."

At 170, C.J. Warren (24-9) opens with Dell Rapids senior Riley Miller (29-14).

"C.J. has all the tools to be successful," Hage said. "He's very savvy, and he can pin opponents in position so that he can score lots of points. He qualified a year ago, and this year his goal is to make it on the podium."

At heavyweight, Royce Reisner (16-17) is a prototypical old-school heavyweight — pin or be pinned. Reisner begins his tournament against Rapid City Stevens junior Trey McFarland (13-5).

"Royce is a guy that, if he can get you in a headlock, he can pin you. The problem is, at this point of the season everyone he faces will know that," Hage said. "He has to look to control the ties and manage the mat from his feet."

Junior Casey Skillingstad (27-10) already has two state medal medals to his credit, including a sixth place finish a year ago. He begins his quest for a third straight medal against Watertown sophomore Dylan Mitzel (12-14).

"He has wrestled well, and he wants to keep that rolling," Hage said. "We expect him to start off well and keep that snowball going."

Sophomore Snowdon Strahl (20-19) has shown his toughness all school year, playing linebacker for the Bucks' football team and working hard to put himself in the 138-pound weight class. He draws Aberdeen Central standout Griffin Hieb (30-2), who won both previous meetings between the two, in the opening round.

"He has the toughest weight out of anyone on the team, but he has shown his dedication by keeping his weight there all season," Hage said. "He has nothing to lose and everything to gain."

Freshman Noah Vetter (25-14) could hardly be called inexperienced. The 106-pounder has spent nearly all of his 14 years of life on a wrestling mat, including last season on the Bucks' varsity lineup. Vetter draws Rapid City Central's Tyler Pfeifle (31-22) to open.

"Noah's been on the mat his entire life," Hage said. "He wrestles very similar to Mark (older brother, now competing for Augustana), but has his own strengths and weaknesses. He's going in there with a lot of confidence."

Vermillion

With six wrestlers — all underclassmen — going to state, Vermillion could use the 2013 state tournament as a building block for future success, said head coach Hazen Bye.

"We have a great corps of kids that have all worked hard this season," he said. "It's not a matter of just coming back, but putting in the extra work in the off-season."

The lone junior headed to state for Vermillion is 182-pounder Seth Heine (20-20), who draws unbeaten Aero Amo of Rapid City Central in the opening round.

"Seth lost the match to get to state in the final 15 seconds last year," Coach Bye said. "He worked harder this past off-season, and I'm happy to see him make it to state."

Sophomores Brett (37-1 at 152) and Regan (37-4 at 145) Bye have been a strong 1-2 punch for the Tanagers in the middle of the lineup all season. Brett, finished third at 132 pounds a year ago, draws Spearfish/LD sophomore Kyler Schmidt (14-17). Regan faces Sturgis senior Till Olson (21-21).

"Brett moved from 145 to 152 halfway through the year. It took him a while to adapt well to that class," Coach Bye said. "Regan has won his last 19 matches and last five tournaments. He's been on a roll, and it's

a good time to be on a roll."

Fellow sophomore Brandon Hertz (20-18) draws Milbank's Spencer Folk (37-5) in the opener at 160 pounds.

"Brandon's been around a couple of years, and he's starting to see the rewards of having to wrestle with Brett and Regan in the wrestling every practice," Coach Bye said.

The Tanagers also bring two eighth graders, 106-pounder Kyle Seibel (10-9) and 138-pounder Carter Kratz (34-15). Kratz draws Stoltenburg (33-6) of Pierre, a returning state champion, while Seibel faces Sturgis sophomore Zane Joens (37-5).

"Kyle's a good wrestler, a good scrambler, who grew into the spot. He can beat the kids at his (age) level," Coach Bye said. "Carter's a totally different eighth grader, a more mature kid physically. We knew he would be alright, but he's turned out to be a very good wrestler."

Dakota Valley

Only four Panther wrestlers will be taking the mat in Watertown, but three come in as high seeds.

"I thought we wrestled really well at regions," said Dakota Valley head coach Kendall Hanson. "We were hoping for one or two more, but those four stepped it up."

The Lambert twins — heavyweight Tanner and 220-pounder Taylor — have identical 36-2 records on the season.

Tanner is the defending champion at heavyweight, and opens his title defense against Chamberlain's Austin Cheney (16-17).

"Last year he took everyone by surprise. This year, there are a lot of people saying that last year was a fluke," Hanson said. "He's one of those guys that