

Press&Dakotan

DAILY DOSE

Daily opinions from the P&D Sports Staff on local and national high school, college and professional sports.



BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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If you need some motivation to get out and dig out your car this weekend, look at the sports calendar. A mix of playoff events will make going out and working out your shovel more than worth it.

If you're not headed to Aberdeen or Watertown for state wrestling, the action starts this afternoon (Friday), as the state JV girls' hockey tournament comes to Alcoa Arena again this year. There are some talented young players scheduled to be on the ice this weekend, and the hometown Miracle would really love to see the bleachers full of red-and-black clad fans cheering them on. That tournament runs through Sunday.

There are also some great area playoff games tonight, as two Sub-District boys' basketball finals were

pushed into today, joining a pair of girls' district finals in Nebraska and five district finals in South Dakota going on across the area.

The University of South Dakota women end the home portion of their first season under head coach Amy Williams on Saturday, hosting Western Illinois in a 2 p.m. tilt at the Dome.

On Sunday, the next wave of excitement begins, as USD will play host to the Summit League Indoor Track and Field Championships. Sunday and Monday at the DakotaDome. Between USD and South Dakota State, there is a ton of local and regional talent. North Dakota State also has a few top young men and women from the state of South Dakota, making it a homecoming for a ton of talented athletes.

There are plenty of sporting reasons to dig out your car and enjoy some great action. So pick up that shovel and get to work.

SCOREBOARD

BASKETBALL

THURSDAY'S S.D. BOYS

South Central 49, Avon 36
Warner 59, Langford 54

THURSDAY'S S.D. GIRLS

District 1A Final

Aberdeen Roncalli 53, Britton-Hecla 40

District 2A Final

Milbank 37, Webster 27

District 3A Final

Clark/Willow Lake 63, Florence/Henry 32

District 7A Final

Harrisburg 51, Lennox 31

District 14A Final

Pine Ridge 52, Bennett County 37

District 28 Semis

Warner 54, Hitchcock-Tulare 26

District 38 Semis

DeSmet 79, Great Plains Lutheran 26

District 48 Semis

Odham-Ramona/Rutland 52, Howard 44

District 9B Championship

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 81, James Valley Christian 43

District 13B Championship

Lynan 69, Kadoka Area 53

POSTPONEMENTS-CANCELLATIONS

District 6A Final

Elk Point-Jefferson vs. Beresford, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

THURSDAY'S NEB. BOYS

Sub-District C1-12 Final

Kimball 54, Chadron 32

Sub-District D2-12 Final

Leyton 62, Sioux County 33

POSTPONEMENTS-CANCELLATIONS

Sub-District C1-1 Final

Syracuse vs. Falls City, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C1-2 Final

Lincoln Lutheran vs. Lincoln Christian, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District C1-5 Final

Centennial vs. Milford, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C1-6 Final

Grand Island Central Catholic vs. Adams Central, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C1-8 Final

Norfolk Catholic vs. Boone Central/Newman Grove, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C1-9 Final

Gibson vs. Kearney Catholic, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C2-1 Final

Nebraska City Lourdes vs. Johnson County Central, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C2-2 Final

Freeman vs. Sutton, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C2-7 Final

Wakefield vs. Hartington Cedar Catholic, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C2-8 Final

Crofton vs. Creighton, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C2-9 Final

Hastings St. Cecilia vs. Doniphan-Trumbull, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District C2-10 Final

Ravenna vs. Southern Valley, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District C2-11 Final

Dundy County-Crittton vs. North Platte St. Patrick's, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D1-7 Final

Cleaver/Orcharnd vs. St. Mary's, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D1-8 Final

Loup City vs. Burwell, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D1-9 Final

Alma vs. Overton, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District D1-10 Final

Cambridge vs. Arapahoe, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D1-11 Final

SMC vs. Paxton, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District D2-1 Final

Sterling vs. Falls City Sacred Heart, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District D2-2 Final

Dorchester vs. Nebraska Lutheran, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D2-5 Final

Bancroft-Rosalie vs. Wymot, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D2-7 Final

Hampton vs. Gilmer, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District D2-8 Final

Pleasanton vs. Amherst, p.p.d. to Feb. 22.

Sub-District D2-9 Final

Anselmo-Merna vs. Bertrand, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D2-10 Final

Wauneta-Palisade vs. Wallace, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

Sub-District D2-11 Final

Mullen vs. Sandhills/Theford, p.p.d. to Feb. 23.

THURSDAY'S NEB. GIRLS

District B-4 Semifinals

McCook 66, Alliance 46

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOC.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

W L Pct GB

New York 32 15 .627

Brooklyn 33 22 .600 1

Boston 28 26 51.2 5 1/2

Sub-District D2-7 Final

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Hockey

From Page 9A

"She played one or two games for the U-12 squad last year," Coach Peterson said. "She's stepped in and taken a liking to playing in goal. She's done a great job."

The Rangers have been led offensively by Jadyon Peterson, who leads the team in both goals (12) and assists (14). Klara Beinhor (10 goals, 6 assists), Shelby Meyer (7 goals, 7 assists) and Ellison Hegdahl (9 goals, 5 assists) have also put up big numbers in the offensive third.

Seven different players have scored five or more goals on the season for the Rangers. "Jadyon's top-five in the state in scoring and second in assists," Coach Peterson noted. "Otherwise we're pretty spread out throughout the team."

The Ranger defense is a mix of veterans and younger players.

"All of our girls have at least one year of JV under their belts," Peterson said. "They're all working pretty well. Hopefully we're peaking at the right time."

Brookings draws a Sioux Falls team that has plenty of star power, led by Hanna Mutschelknaus, who has 32 goals on the season.

"They're a tough team that's young like us but has some good veterans," Peterson said. "We're 2-2 against them. That's about as evenly matched as a 4-5 matchup can get."

Mitchell Marlins

What started in a season-opening road trip to Rapid City resulted in the first-ever Mitchell girls' hockey team going unbeaten in the regular season.

The top-seeded Marlins (20-0-1), coached by Randy Rezac, have only a 0-0 tie to Watertown on their resume this season. Mitchell also boasts one of the state's top offenses and defenses, as well as a senior goalie in Cara Beck. "The girls just got on a roll and got a taste for winning," Rezac said. "And they just kept on going. Our defense is a big key to that, and we had the most inexperienced girls at forwards, and now they're doing very well."

Mitchell is led offensively by freshman Kylie Barington, one of the state's top scorers, and sophomore Jacey Brunson, among the leaders in assists despite missing the first part of the season with a knee injury.

Beck, who also serves as the back-up goalie to Mitchell's varsity team, will close her career this weekend at the JV tournament. Sixth-grader Katie Lithoven could also see some time at net for the Marlins, who will graduate both of their senior goalies after this season.

"Even Katie has had a couple of shutouts in her games," Rezac said. "We wanted her to get her feet wet, to get some experience. It's our unfortunate luck to have two senior goalies, but we'll worry about next year after this weekend."

Before any championship talk can begin, Mitchell has to contend with the hometown Yankton Miracle tonight. Though the Marlins won all three regular season matchups and Yankton comes in winless, Rezac said his team realizes the challenge.

"When we played down there a few weeks ago, they gave us a good run for our money," he said. "We scored one goal and then another, and then the floodgates opened. We have to respect them; can't over-look them."

Oahe Capitals

The Capitals have developed strong team chemistry and have put together some solid numbers, according to head coach Danielle Morem.

"The girls have really come together," she said. "They've really worked well together."

The Oahe first line of Amy Gilkerson (6 goals, 2 assists), Morgan Puepke (9 goals, 5 assists) and Sara Bachand (4 goals, 4 assists) have led the way, with Brooke Fendrich (9 goals, 6 assists) giving the second line some scoring punch.

"Sara has played both varsity and JV this year. She's a great role model for the rest of our girls," Morem said. "Amy is young, but she's a very good skater."

While the Capitals run only two defensive lines, all four players have made an impact.

"Jocelyn Gray, Emerson Mechale (2 goals, 1 assist), Savana Bogue (1 goal) and Grace Nedved (5 goals, 5 assists) have done a great job," Morem said. "They're all constantly watching the play, making good decisions on defense."

Morem feels the matchup with the Rushmore Thunder is an even one.

"It should be an interesting game. Our skill level is about the same," she said. "If we continue to play like we have the last couple of weeks, we'll have no issues."

all the girls that beat him earlier in the year."

Seventh grader Nick Casperson takes a 30-5 record into his first-round opener against Miller-Highmore-Harold eighth grader J.C. Forman (29-7).

"Nick doesn't wrestle like a seventh grader," Sorenson said. "If he brings his 'A' game, he'll do very well."

Bon Homme

While the Cavaliers did not get every wrestler they'd hoped to state, the team sent six to Aberdeen, including a pair of returning state placewinners.

"We were hoping for three or four more that we thought had a legitimate chance. A couple of those were seniors, and that's tough for a coach to take," said Bon Homme head coach Mark Stoeber. "Our 113 (Alex Caba) and 145 (Austin Kaul) wrestlers had no room for error, even though they were ranked. They had to wrestle well to get through."

Senior Lincoln Stoeber (6th at 126) and junior Kaul (7th at 138) return after placing a year ago. Stoeber (36-3) remains at 126 and opens against Stanley County's Lukas Chase (25-16), while Kaul (14-4) moved up a class and will face Faulkton's Riley Potter (33-11) at 145.

"It was big for Lincoln to win regions. This is his fourth state tournament, so he knows what's going on," Coach Stoeber said. "Austin picked up an injury in his first tournament, and it took him a while to get back. He has placed the last two years, and we think he's at a good spot physically."

Seniors Blase Vanecek and Ezra Bartlett also make one last run for the Cavaliers. Vanecek (31-4) draws Faulkton's Austin Thomas (30-18) at 170, while Bartlett (26-17) faces Custer's Clay Siegler (25-12) at 195.

"Blase has lost to (Wagner's) David Kocer three times and Trevor Lensing once. He spent most of the year at 160, but we decided it would be best for him to go to 170," Coach Stoeber said. "It was good to get Ezra in. He needs to be confident that he can win some points."

The Cavaliers' other two wrestlers, sophomore Duncan Stoeber and freshman Alex Caba, are each in their third year at their respective weight classes and poised for a run to the medals stand. Caba (33-9) opens against Canton's John Lerner (30-13) at 113, while Stoeber takes his 37-0 record into his 106-pound opener against Deuel's Devon Sievers (26-16).

"It's their time to have success," Coach Stoeber said.

Elk Point-Jefferson

The Huskies will send four wrestlers, including one returning placewinner, to Aberdeen.

The returning placewinner is the youngest of the group, freshman Jared Hueser, who fin-

Ready To Dig Out For An Exciting Weekend

Friday, February 22
BASKETBALL, BOYS' Neb. Sub-Districts — C2-7 at Ponca (Championship —Hartington Cedar Catholic vs. Wakefield, 7 p.m.); C2-8 at O'Neill (Championship) — Creighton vs. Crofton, 7 p.m.; Canton at Vermillion (7:45 p.m., KVTF-AM); Elk Point-Jefferson at West Central; Gregory at Wagner; Lennox at Dakota Valley
BASKETBALL, GIRLS' Neb. Districts — C2-4 at Wayne (Crofton vs. Homer, 7 p.m., KVFA-FM); D2-3 at Hartington (Wynot vs. Osmond, 7 p.m., KVHT-FM); S.D. Districts — 8A at Beresford (Championship) — Beresford vs. Elk Point-Jefferson,