

Lynx Complete Season Sweep Of Yankton

BRANDON — Brandon Valley led wire-to-wire in beating Yankton 48-40 in Eastern South Dakota Conference boys' basketball action on Monday.

"Right from the start, we weren't playing well," said Yankton head coach Chris Haynes. "Give Brandon Valley credit. They extended us and played us physically, and we didn't handle it."

Nic Peterson led Brandon Valley with a game-high 17 points. Jacob Adams had 11 rebounds and Derek Johnson recorded five assists in the victory.

Brady Hale scored 14 points to lead Yankton. J.J. Hejna grabbed 10 rebounds.

Brandon Valley, 9-7 and 8-4 after the season sweep of the Bucks, travels to Mitchell on Thursday. Yankton, 11-6 and 10-4 hosts Aberdeen Central on Saturday.

"We had a stretch of six games in 11 days," Haynes said. "Now we can look at film and work on some things. We're going to take care of the Bucks the next few days, shore up some things in practice, before we start worrying about Aberdeen Central."

Yankton won the JV game 44-42 behind 18 points from Austin Johnson. Blake Savey added eight points.

Brandon Valley took the sophomore game 54-36. For Yankton, Keenan LaCroix had 18 points and Bradey Sorenson had eight points.

The Lynx swept the freshmen games, 48-36 in the 'A' game and 49-25 in the 'B' game. J.J. Payer scored 16 points and Cole Lewno had 10 points for Yankton in the 'A' contest. Josh Wendte scored six points in the 'B' game for Yankton.

YANKTON (11-6, 10-4 ESD)
Rand Sawatzke 3-9 0-0 7, Lane Sawatzke 0-0 0-0 0, J.J. Hejna 1-6 1-2 4, Chipper Grantlaton 2-4 0-0 4, Brady Hale 6-16 2-3 14, Tanner Frick 1-2 2-4 4, Austin Johnson 0-0 0-0 0, Mitchell Gullikson 1-3 0-0 3, Evan Greeneway 2-3 0-1 4. TOTALS: 16-43 5-10 40.

BRANDON VALLEY (9-7, 8-4 ESD)
Nic Peterson 7-12 1-2 17, Devan West 2-3 0-1 4, Ryan Imke 2-3 0-0 4, Jacob Adams 2-12 2-2 6, Derek Johnson 1-2 1-2 3, Ryan Sigberg 0-0 0-0 0, Dominic Nealy 1-2 0-0 2, Drew Reinschmidt 0-0 0-0 0, Austin Trevino 2-3 2-2 8, Ryan Larson 0-0 0-0 0, Kevin Petersen 0-0 0-0 0, Peter Choudek 2-4 0-0 4. TOTALS: 19-41 6-9 48.

YANKTON 5 14 25 40

BRANDON VALLEY 13 22 34 48

Three-Pointers: BV 4-12 (Peterson 2-4, Trevino 2-3), Yankton 3-15 (Gullikson 1-3, Hejna 1-2, R. Sawatzke 1-6). Rebounds: Y 30 (Hejna 10), BV 19 (Adams 7). Personal Fouls: Y 15, BV 11. Fouled Out: None. Assists: BV 12 (five with 2), Y 9 (Hejna 3). Turnovers: Y 16, BV 13. Blocked Shots: Y 1 (Greeneway), Y 0. Steals BV 8 (West 3, Adams 3), Y 6 (Hejna 2).

Hanson 67, Freeman 64

FREEMAN — The Hanson Beavers downed Freeman for the second time in three days, downing the Flyers 67-64 in Cornbelt Conference boys' basketball action on Monday.

The teams met in the Cornbelt Classic on Saturday, with the Beavers claiming a 58-48 decision. Taylor Nichols had 24 points and 17 rebounds to lead Hanson. Jordan Marquardt scored 21 in the victory.

For Freeman, Joseph Weier led the way with 21 points. Brennan Schmidt netted 20 points and eight rebounds. Cole Paulson posted 15 points and eight rebounds for the Flyers.

Hanson, 13-3 overall and 5-0 in Cornbelt play, travels to Mitchell Christian on Thursday. Freeman, 8-7 and 4-2, hosts Corsica-Stickney on Thursday.

Menno 49, Marion 47

MENNO — The Menno Wolves overcame a 23-point performance by Marion's Nick Cortmaker in a 49-47 victory over the Bears in Cornbelt Conference boys' basketball action on Monday.

Chet Peterson had 17 points, five assists and five steals to lead Menno. Derrick Lehr had nine points and Dylan Lehr grabbed eight rebounds in the victory. Jacob Wuertz had 11 rebounds and Joey Pessia had 10 rebounds for Marion. Greg Engbrecht posted four assists. Cortmaker also had four assists and five steals.

Menno (7-10, 3-2 Cornbelt) hosts Canistota on Thursday. Marion (2-11, 1-4 Cornbelt) hosts Ethan today (Tuesday).

Marty 69, Andes Central 42

LAKE ANDES — The Marty Indian Braves put four players in double figures in a 69-42 victory over Andes Central in boys' basketball action on Monday.

Clinton Niess scored a game-high 15 points to lead Marty Indian. Neulan Dion scored 12 points, and Leon Jumping Elk and Colt Salcedo each had 11 points in the victory.

For Andes Central, Darrin Hopkins led the way with 14 points and 10 rebounds. Brian Bruwier added nine points, eight rebounds and three steals.

Marty, 12-3, hosts its annual Dakota Plains Invitational later this week. Andes Central travels to South Central on Thursday.

Marty won the JV game 34-12.

MARTY (12-3) 18 36 59 69

ANDES CENTRAL (6-9) 13 22 34 42

Sunshine Bible 60, Mitchell Christian 41

MILLER — Brian LaDue posted 19 points and 14 rebounds to lead Sunshine Bible to a 60-41 victory over Mitchell Christian in boys' basketball action on Monday.

Malachi Clark added 13 points and 17 rebounds in the victory.

Austin Bormann scored 14 points and Chandler Nelson had 10 points for Mitchell Christian.

SBA, 6-9, travels to Wolsey to face Wolsey-Wessington on Friday. Mitchell Christian hosts James Valley Christian tonight.

MITCHELL CHRISTIAN (4-11) 11 15 23 41

SUNSHINE BIBLE (6-9) 8 26 48 60

Girls' Games

Alcester-Hudson 55, Irene-Wakonda 54

IRENE — Alcester-Hudson outscored Irene-Wakonda 17-12 in the fourth quarter to rally to a 55-54 victory over the Eagles in a key Tri-Valley Conference and District 108 girls' basketball matchup on Monday.

Sherina Doering scored 23 points for Alcester-Hudson, which trailed 42-38 entering the fourth quarter.

Amy Morman scored 14 points and Andrea

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JEREMY HOECK/P&D
Maggie Schulte, right, of Wynot puts up a shot on the baseline over Homer's Jessica Noglemeier during their Lewis & Clark Conference girls' championship game Monday night in Laurel, Neb.

'Yotes Continue To Reach New Heights



JEREMY HOECK/P&D
University of South Dakota track athletes (from left) Emily Grove, Bethany Firsick and Megan Glisar were recognized Saturday during USD's Dakota Realty Alumni Meet at the DakotaDome. All three earned first team All-American honors at last spring's NCAA Division I Outdoor Track & Field Championships, highlighted by Firsick winning the pole vault title.

USD Vaulters Among Nation's Best

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — Even some of the best collegiate women's pole vaulters in the nation have obstacles to overcome and struggles to work through.

Bethany Firsick and Emily Grove at the University of South Dakota know that all too well.

Coming off a successful 2013 outdoor season that resulted in a national championship and a seventh-place finish, respectively, each vaulter has specific technique-related kinks they are working to iron out.

"It'll come at any time now," Grove said after Saturday's Dakota Realty Alumni Meet at the DakotaDome. Fittingly, Grove and Firsick tied for the pole vault title at USD's first home meet.

"Every single one of us are ready to break out at any meet now."

It's just the time between that can drive a pair of competitive athletes crazy.

"That's the thing we're all frustrated with," vault coach Derek Miles said. "We know, all three of us, what they're capable of doing. You just want it right now."

Instead, the process toward reaffirming their place among the na-

tion's best on the biggest stage is an ongoing task.

Grove has been working on new poles while on a longer run-through and Firsick is still battling back from ankle surgery late last summer.

Even in the middle of the indoor season, are the top two vaulters turning the corner?

"You know, I hope so," said a smiling Firsick, who was presented Saturday with her national championship ring from last spring's dramatic win at the outdoor meet.

In the updated Division I national rankings, Grove ranks fourth at 14-feet-3.25 (set Jan. 30) while Firsick moved up into a tie for sixth place with a 14-1.75 effort Saturday.

And still, despite their early successes, each vaulter is far from satisfied.

"Obviously you see good things coming out of these meets, but you really have to stay focused and stay motivated," Grove said.

"It's almost like it hits you that, 'Wow, there are some really good girls out there, so I need to keep working.'"

Grove, a junior from Pontiac, Ill., owns a pair of seventh place finishes at the national outdoor meet and was, at one point, ranked number one in the nation during this indoor season.

She set a personal best of 14-3.25 two weeks ago, but got as high as 14-1.75 on Saturday — missing on three attempts at 14-3.

The challenge for Grove has been advancing to the next pole while on a 16-step run for the first time this season.

"It's kind of like a little monkey on my back," she said. "Eventually I'm going to flip a switch and take off. I have to think about it that way."

Once she settles into a new pole, Grove figures to more than surpass her personal best, Miles said.

"She is really clicking well, moving through the gears faster than we get the next pole in her hand," he said. "I think for her, it's just confidence and comfort right now."

"When she gets on that next pole, she'll go 14-7 and possibly higher."

In the case of Firsick, her challenges have been more physical than technical. Not only did she suffer a shoulder injury last spring, another injury eventually required surgery on an ankle.

As she works back to 100 percent (or closer to it), her vaults might suffer, she said.

"It's hard, because you have to swallow your pride a little bit and look to June when I need to be

jumping my best," Firsick said, referring to the national outdoor meet.

Saturday's performance, though, provided Firsick and her coach with an added boost of confidence.

"I honestly think she can jump 14-5 here within the next week or two," Miles said. "In another month, we'll be in even better shape with both of them."

Although Saturday's home meet was essentially a USD scrimmage for the vaulters once it got down to the higher marks, Firsick and Grove certainly didn't appear to be in cruise control.

Instead, they are in constant communication with Miles, who uses a video camera setup to monitor jumps as well as visual marks of each step on the runs.

"We treat all meets, usually, the same way," Grove said. "We're not really thinking about the competition, we're analyzing what we need to do. It keeps us in our element."

A big part of that element is the relationship between the two vaulters, Firsick said.

"It's great. Any meet we go to, we know have each other to push," she said. "We both want each other

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Winnebago Beats Randolph For Lewis & Clark Boys' Title



JEREMY HOECK/P&D
Randolph's Seth Lackas, 30, goes up for a layup in front of Winnebago defender Dave Wingett during their Lewis & Clark Conference Tournament boys' championship game Monday night in Laurel, Neb.

BY JEREMY HOECK
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LAUREL, Neb. — The emotion told the story on the Winnebago bench and in the stands.

Winning a conference title would mean quite a bit.

"The boys just wanted it," said head coach Nelson Wilson, whose squad beat Randolph 41-34 in Monday night's championship game of the Lewis & Clark Conference Tournament in Laurel, Neb.

"We talked about before the game that we're chasing history," Wilson added.

The biggest goal yet to be reached for Winnebago was a conference crown. On top of that, the Indians won their 20th game of the season — against three losses.

"So we accomplished two things tonight," Wilson added.

The Indians, playing in front of a large group of fans, also survived a test.

Winnebago built a 38-34 cushion with 25 seconds left after a layup off of a Randolph turnover. From there, Cory

Cleveland hit a pair of free throws and Matt Wingett added another foul shot with 5.3 seconds left.

Confidence, even in those pressure situations, was never a problem for Winnebago, Wilson said.

"To be honest, at one of those timeouts, the boys knew they were going to win," he said. "They went out and made plays when we needed to."

Cleveland finished with nine points and 14 rebounds, while Wingett added nine points. Dave Mingett scored eight points and Jeremy Merrick had eight points.

After being held to 10 points in the first half, Randolph battled back from a 12-point deficit in the third quarter — thanks to a 10-0 run to close the frame.

The Cardinals actually held a brief 27-26 lead midway through the fourth quarter, but couldn't capitalize.

"We did a good job offensively in the second half, but we just couldn't quite get that lead," said Randolph head coach Mark Anderson, whose Cardinals drop to 15-3.

"We missed too many shots inside at

times; too many to win."

Randolph got 13 points and 10 rebounds from Mitchell Nordhues, while Nolan Nordhues added nine points. Luke Andrew chipped in with five points.

The story, though, was Winnebago. What does the victory mean for the school?

"Oh, it's huge," Wilson said. "We set about six goals at the start of the season, and we've got four accomplished."

Randolph, meanwhile, has to recover quickly for tonight's (Tuesday) road game at Emerson-Hubbard.

"I'm still really proud of the kids for getting here," Anderson said. "We started with what was a pretty young team, but we've grown with some leadership."

"We've got a ways to go, but I think we'll be fine."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

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