

Season Preview | Mount Marty Baseball

Lancers In 'Unique Situation' As Season Begins

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It is not often that a team returns more starters than there are positions on the field, but that is the good problem that coach Andy Bernatow and the Mount Marty College baseball team has entering the 2014 season.

Returning 11 players with starting experience and two starting pitchers with all-Great Plains Athletic Conference honors on their resumes, the Lancers (19-25, 11-9 GPAC in 2013) open the campaign today (Saturday) against Kansas Wesleyan in Topeka, Kan.

"We are fortunate to have a lot of guys returning," Bernatow said.

"We're in a unique situation. We have to get on the field and play so we can figure out personnel."

Part of what created depth this season was an early injury to junior Derrik Nelson, who batted a league-leading .405 and was a GPAC Gold Glove third baseman in 2012. The injury to Nelson opened doors for fellow Yankton native Alex Mueller (.346), as well as Tyler Edler (.263, 25 RBI), Ryan Buck (.232) and Riley Stack (.219) to get starts in the infield.

Michael O'Connell (.263, 23 RBI) took over at third, earning second-team all-GPAC honors. The Lancers also return first-team all-conference first baseman Jared Miller (.397, 5 HR, 38 RBI).

Nelson will take over at short-stop, with O'Connor and Miller settling in on the corners. Edler and Mueller will battle for time in the infield, as will Stack and Buck.

"We should have offensive potential and sound defense," Bernatow said of the infield. "That experience is a nice thing to have."

Behind the plate, Nick Sehr (.244) returns behind the plate.

"Our pitchers like throwing to him," Bernatow said of the junior from Canton. "With the BBCOR bats, there are a lot more aggressive teams out there. You need someone with a good arm behind the plate."

Michael Sadler (Fr., Mitchell), Kory Bromley (Jr., Yankton), Julian Cutolo (Jr., Las Vegas) and Collin

Peterson (Fr., Beresford) will battle for time as the other catcher.

Zac Hollenback (.342, 13 RBI), a first-team all-GPAC selection, returns to anchor center field. Nik Davis (.281, 15 RBI), who came on to take over in left, return. Bryton Carlson (.301, 8 RBI), a honorable mention all-GPAC honoree at DH last season, will take over in right field. Derek Blumenstock, Stack, Cody Ulmer (Jr., Yankton) and Edler all have outfield experience.

"Those guys have the experience and the confidence to put up some good numbers," Bernatow said.

Cutolo and Blumenstock lead the deep list of potential designated hitters. With depth at all positions, the Lancers should be able to mix

up the lineup to give a player or two a rest when needed.

"We feel confident that we can put together a quality lineup with the ability to produce a lot of runs," Bernatow said. "If we need to sneak a day in to keep a guy fresh, we're able to do that without having a fall-off."

Seniors A.J. Griffith (4-5, 3.69 ERA, 44 K in 63 1/3 IP) and Dominic Wieseler (2-5, 2.80 ERA, 54 K in 61 IP) return as conference starters with all-GPAC honors under their belts. Both were honorable mention selections last season.

"Dom's been steady, a confer-

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S.D. State Gymnastics

Gazelles Claim Sixth Place

Vermillion Earns Fourth Place In Class A Event

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Even with one of the Gazelles' lower scores of the season staring at him, Yankton-Bon Homme gymnastics coach Luke Youmans could not help but be positive.

The Gazelles scored a 133.35 to place sixth in the S.D. State Class AA Gymnastics Meet, held Friday at Aberdeen Central High School. While the score may have been low for the 2013-14 Gazelles, the place was one spot better than the team finished a year ago, and was the first top-six finish for the Gazelles in a decade.

"We're going to go back home content, not based on how we did today, but how we did the entire season," Youmans said after the event. "We had a great year, and we've come a long way from where we were just a couple of years ago."

Mitchell edged out Rapid City Central 146.55 to 146.475 for the team title, with Sioux Falls O'Gorman finishing third at 145.475.

Besides the improved finish, Youmans saw the fact that — even on what wasn't their best day — his team was still able to bring home state meet hardware.

"We weren't our best today," he said. "But the upside is that we've gotten to the point where, even when we're not our best, we can still be a competitive team at a state meet."

"Sixth place is a step in the right direction. Now we need to continue to move forward."

Part of that "moving forward" comes in the individual competition, which takes place today (Saturday).

"Hopefully (today) our girls take some of those shoulda-coulda-woulda's and do something special for the team," he said. "It's been a long dry spell for the program in individual competition, too."

A year ago, Charlotte Taggart tied for eighth on the bars at state. Prior to that, the last top-10 individual finish for a

also

■ Individual Competition Will Be Held Today (Saturday) In Aberdeen.



Yankton-Bon Homme senior Elsie Kotalik competes on the vault during the S.D. State Gymnastics Meet on Friday in Aberdeen.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

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Governors Exact Revenge On Bucks With 56-41 ESD Win Friday

WADE LAROCHE
Pierre Capital Journal

PIERRE — The Pierre Governors got a little revenge and a shot at a conference title Friday with a win against the Yankton Bucks.

The No.3 Governors (17-2) earned a season split against the No.5 Bucks (12-8) by defeating their ESD rivals by a score of 56-41 at Riggs High School in Pierre. The win ensured that the Governors will finish no lower than second in the ESD Conference, and they

will have a chance to secure a share of the ESD title when they take on Huron on Tuesday.

"This was a good redemption game, and we knew that there were some things at stake," Governors head coach Terry Becker said. "We could have ended up tied with Yankton for second place in the conference, and we didn't want that. There was definitely a lot of incentive there."

After eight minutes of play, it appeared as if the Governors' up-tempo offense would

run wild in the showdown, but the Bucks had other ideas.

The Governors raced out to a 19-9 lead through the first stanza, as Brevin Kaiser's triple capped a 7-2 run to end the quarter. Pierre was off and running early, and it got going through taking advantage of Yankton's miscues.

"I think our defense generated good offense for us in the first quarter," Becker said. "We got after it on that end, and when we are able to do that, our tempo picks up. We created some transition op-

portunities."

Yankton was able to make it a half-court game in the second quarter, as Pierre didn't score through the first three minutes of it. Yankton trimmed the lead down to six during Pierre's drought, but a big 23 seconds gave the home team some breathing room.

In a 23-second span, Trey Livermont sank three free throws. Kaiser scored after a steal and Austin Christopherson did the same for Pierre. The 7-0 spurt gave the Governors a 13-point lead, but they

didn't score again through the remainder of the quarter.

The Bucks took advantage as JJ Henja's basket was part of an 8-0 run that put Yankton down by only five at the half.

"We thought our half-court defense was decent," Yankton head coach Chris Haynes said. "Our turnovers that led to transition baskets are what hurt us. That happened throughout the whole game."

Pierre offensive woes were marked by a 2 of 14 outing

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Area Hoops: Bon Homme Tops Gregory 71-68 In OT

GREGORY — Scott Van Winkle scored 27 points and Mike Mesman added 23 as the Bon Homme Cavaliers beat Gregory 71-68 in a boys' basketball overtime thriller Friday night in Gregory.

Hunter Young added 10 points for Bon Homme, which closes its regular season at 12-8.

The game was teid 62-62 after regulation.

For Gregory (15-4), Gavin Thomas scored 13 points, Andrew Taggart and Cody Kafka both had 11 points, and Sam Voigt added 10 points.

BON HOMME (12-8).....15 30 48 62 71
GREGORY (15-4).....13 30 49 62 68

Bloomfield 60, Wausa 58

BLOOMFIELD, Neb. — After falling behind nine points at the half, Bloomfield moved on to claim victory over Wausa 60-58 in boys' basketball action on Friday night in Bloomfield, Neb.

Bloomfield's Adam Haigh scored 12 points and gained eight rebounds for the team, while Conner Wilson tallied 11 points and five assists.

There were no stats provided for Wausa.

Both teams will play on Tuesday, with Bloomfield (11-9) against Hartington at home, while Wausa (17-5) faces off with Osmond in Wausa.

BLOOMFIELD (11-9).....12 28 43 60
WAUSA (17-5).....10 37 48 58

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Pierre Tops Gazelles In Regular Season Finale

Yankton freshman Kami Cornemann, left, tries to pry the ball away from a Pierre player during their ESD girls' basketball game Friday night at the Summit Center.



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

BY VANCE JANAK
P&D Correspondent

A known problem doomed the Yankton Gazelles on Friday night against the Pierre Governors.

The Gazelles got off to a slow start in the first half while the Governors consistently drained shots to build a 21-point halftime advantage before cruising to a 55-41 victory at the Summit Center.

Pierre made 58.3 percent of its shots from the field in the opening half. Yankton, on the other hand, hit just 28.6 percent to fall behind 34-13.

It was the Gazelles' eighth straight setback, and the sixth time in that streak that they've trailed by double digits at inter-

mission.

"We just dug ourselves a hole," Yankton coach Doug Pesicka said. "We just aren't a team that can score real quickly. To dig yourself a hole like that, it's tough to come back from."

Pierre never trailed and had its biggest lead of 38-23 on a Sidney Palmer jumper with 6 minutes to play in the third quarter. Palmer paced the Goves (11-8) with a game-high 16 points. Senior Kaitlyn Severyn added nine points and 11 rebounds while Katie Berg and Jory Mullen each scored eight points.

Pierre started hot, hitting 7-of-10 shots — including 3-of-6 3-

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