

# SCL Notebook: Pitching Propels Tappers To Top Of League

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: This is our first South Central League notebook of the season. If you have any story tips, email them to sports@yankton.net.*

The success of the Yankton Tappers will always be split into two categories: How they do against South Central League (Class B) competition and how they fare against other Class A teams.

At the halfway point of the SCL season, the first question has already been answered: Yankton is right at the top.

The Tappers (6-1), who host Crofton on Sunday, are tied for first place with defending state champion Wynot thanks to their strong starting pitching – and, as of late, a potent offense.

“It was one of those things where it was just a matter of time,” Yankton manager Ross Heine said Wednesday. “Quite a few times early we hit the ball hard but didn’t have anything to show for it.

“We just had to keep swinging.”

The pitching, on the other hand, has been there all season for the Tappers.

Brandon Nickolite, who was a senior this spring at Mount Marty College, has been the ace of the Tappers’ pitching staff. He has pitched 23 innings in SCL games and has allowed only two runs.

He is joined by Mount Marty teammate Kaleb Bromley, who has won both of his league starts. Together, the right-handers have given Yankton quality depth – which hasn’t always been a strength for the team.

“Brandon’s been a nice surprise for us, and Kaleb has been a nice surprise,” Heine said. “We’re deep in that category, which is something that’s nice to have.”

Yankton has also boasted left-hander Trey Krier, but he has yet to pitch this summer. The Tappers have therefore used Zach Benjamin and Mike Janish as starters for the other two league games, as well as a group of other pitch-

ers who have eaten innings in relief.

In total, Yankton pitchers have allowed an average of 2.2 runs per SCL game, with two shutouts – including Tuesday’s 10-0 victory at Freeman, in which the Tappers hit four home runs.

As far as the Class A ranks within South Dakota, however, Yankton hasn’t really had much of a chance to gauge where it stands. The Tappers lost to Brandon Valley early in the season, and will face the Sioux Falls Squirrels later in the season. Yankton has traditionally played at least one regular season game against the Class A Vermillion Red Sox, but that team folded, leaving Yankton without a quality test.

Yankton’s Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field will host the first round of the South Dakota Class A State Amateur Tournament in August.

## Irene’s Veteran Power

Regular followers of the South Central League know

by now the offensive exploits of Irene Cardinals veterans Simon Healy and Mike King.

As they have progressed in their careers, Healy and King continue to put up strong numbers.

In Tuesday night’s SCL win at Scotland, Healy slugged his 100th career home run and King picked up his 88th career win on the mound (he estimates he also has 87 career homers).

Without official statistics, the tandem probably boasts the most home runs among any active league players.

The Cardinals are 4-2 in league play and visit Menno tonight (Thursday).

## Scotland Staying Positive

As the Scotland Highlanders near the midway point of the South Central League season, one thing is certain: They’re not giving up.

The Highlanders (0-7), with perhaps the league’s



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Jason Livermont, right, congratulates Yankton Tappers teammate Ross Heine after Heine scored a run during a South Central League amateur game earlier this season. Yankton is off to a 6-1 SCL start thanks to solid starting pitching.

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## Baseball | Area Roundup

# Yankton Teams Earn Sweeps

The Yankton Lakers scored 22 runs on the way to a doubleheader sweep of Brandon in VFW Teener baseball action on Wednesday at Yankton’s Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

In the opener, eight different Lakers had a hit in a 10-5 Yankton victory.

Levi Wiersma doubled and singled, and Michael Drotzmann and Sam Mooney each had two hits to lead Yankton. Rex Ryken had a triple and two RBI. Kieran Lullman also had a hit and two RBI. Ethan Wishon and Case Roth each had a hit and a RBI. Peyton Mueller added a hit in the victory.

Lullman pitched six innings to pick up the victory, allowing one unearned run.

In the nightcap, Wiersma had three hits, including two triples, and two RBI as Yankton edged Brandon 12-11.

Kyle Withrow also had three hits and two RBI. Ryken recorded a double and two RBI. Wishon had a double



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton shortstop Ethan Wishon corrals a throw as Brandon’s slides safely into second base on a steal attempt during the opening game of their VFW Teener baseball doubleheader on Wednesday at Yankton’s Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

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## U.S. Will Face Colombia To Open Knockout Round

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Upstart Colombia will be the next opponent for the U.S. national team at the Women’s World Cup.

The second-ranked U.S. women, who have two World Cup titles, finished atop Group D with a 1-0 victory over Nigeria on Monday night.

Colombia, ranked No. 28 in the world, was the third-place finisher in Group F behind France and England. But Las Cafeteras already pulled off one of the tournament’s biggest upsets with a 2-0 group-stage victory over No. 3 France.

In its group finale on Wednesday, Colombia fell 2-1 to England in Montreal. Sixteen teams in the expanded field of 24 advanced to the knockout round.

Colombia will face the United States on Monday night at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton, Alberta.

Las Cafeteras will be without goalkeeper Sandra Sepulveda because of a pair of yellow cards, one against France and the second against England. Sepulveda was key to the team’s victory over France with six saves.

Colombia is making its second World Cup appearance. The team, which finished in 14th in 2011 in Germany, had never won a match in the sport’s premier tournament until the upset over France.

The United States has won the World Cup twice, but not since 1999. The Americans have advanced to the knockout stage in all but one of the seven World Cups.

## Fury Crush Split On Road

VERMILLION — The Yankton Fury Crush split a softball doubleheader with the Vermillion Blast U16 on Tuesday.

Vermillion took the opener 8-3. For Yankton, Trinity Fitch and Payton Vellek each had a double and a RBI. Chloe Koletzky had a hit and a run scored. Elsie Marquardt, Bridget Nolz and Brooke Madson each had a hit. Bailey Sejnoha scored twice for the Crush. Sejnoha took the loss, striking out three.

In the nightcap, Madson had two hits, three RBI and a run scored in a 11-7 Crush win.

Larkyn Mason had a hit, two RBI and a run scored for Yankton. Koletzky, Marquardt and Rachel Hamburg each had a hit, a RBI and a run scored.

Leann Sasse scored twice, Nolz and Sejnoha each scored once and Fitch drove in a run in the victory.

Nolz picked up the win, scattering eight hits.

The Crush play in the Yankton Invitational this weekend.

## Timberwolves Open Shiny New Practice Center

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minnesota Timberwolves owner Glen Taylor stood at the podium and used the words “gold standard” and “radical departure from the norm” to describe the team’s glimmering new practice facility, as NBA Commissioner Adam Silver nodded his head in agreement.

For once, it appears, the long-suffering Timberwolves are actually at the forefront of something positive in the NBA.

The team held a grand opening ceremony for The Courts at Mayo Clinic Square, a \$25 million joint venture between the franchise and the renowned medical provider that all involved hope will help end more than a decade of futility.

“We think there’s a beautiful future in front of us,” Taylor said. “But it’s a very competitive environment and we’ve got to try to stay up with it. Even though we’re called a small market, we’ve got to be out there showing our best face to players to attract them and to keep them. And in this particular case, to help them get over injuries and perform on the court.”

For years, the Timberwolves shared a single practice court located in a fitness center in the basement of the team’s arena. There was a small weight room, only basic medical and training amenities and a court that had to be shared with the WNBA’s Lynx and others, meaning players often couldn’t get over to work out because of scheduling conflicts.

# Warriors Return Home To Celebrate Championship



ED SUBA JR./AKRON BEACON JOURNAL/TNS

The Golden State Warriors’ Stephen Curry (30) celebrates with teammate Andre Iguodala (9) and the rest of the team after time ran out during the fourth quarter against the Cleveland Cavaliers in Game 6 of the NBA Finals at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland on Tuesday. The Warriors won, 105-97, to clinch the championship.

BY DANIEL BROWN  
San Jose Mercury News

OAKLAND, Calif. (TNS) — On the plane, as on the court, the Warriors offered a blend of skills. Some players blasted music through their earphones. Some players managed to sleep. Some players, Steph Curry said, “were talking about how fun the journey has been.”

And on the tarmac, as in the Finals, they arrived with a common bond.

“Now,” Curry said, “we get to celebrate forever.”

The party began in earnest at 3:18 p.m. Wednesday when the NBA champions planted their glittering trophy back on Oakland soil. Curry was first player off the plane, pausing in the doorway long enough to hold the Larry O’Brien trophy aloft while he screamed into the sky.

Then the undersized point guard began working his way down the mobile staircase:

One small Steph for the Warriors, one giant moment for Warriors-kind.

“We’ll remember this for the rest of our lives,” Curry said.

Less than 24 hours earlier, the Warriors had knocked off the Cavaliers in Game 6 of the NBA Finals to clinch their first title in 40 years. Because they did so on the road, the Warriors first had to celebrate amid the dreary backdrop of Cleveland heartbreak.

The trophy presentation took place in front of a grumbling crowd at Quicken Loans Arena.

Now, it’s the Bay Area’s turn. Greeting the plane at the airport was the warmup act in advance of Friday’s parade. More than 100 team employees lined up near the runway to watch the Delta charter plane touch down at a private terminal of Oakland International Airport.

The plane was a half-hour

late, but front-office staffers didn’t seem to mind. They killed time by singing “We Are the Champions.”

Curry made it worth their wait. When he stepped off the Airbus A319, he ran the trophy directly over to staffers, jogging along the length of the crowd so that everyone had a chance to see.

Then Curry whipped out his cell phone and took a selfie of himself amid the zaniness he helped create.

Forward Draymond Green, surveying the scene, said: “Cleveland fans brought it, but we still have the best fans in the NBA. So to be back home is great.”

A night earlier, Green had a triple-double to help the Warriors capture their first title since 1975. Curry and Andre Iguodala scored 25 points a piece and Golden State subdued the Cavs with a late barrage of 3-pointers.

For the Warriors, that marked victory No. 83 for

the season. The win total is topped by only two teams — the 1995-96 and 1996-97 Bulls.

Steve Kerr, who played for those Bulls teams, coached this one. He got off the plane in workman style, lugging his suitcase with his left-hand and fist-pumping fans with his right hand — the one also carrying his garment bag.

Iguodala, meanwhile, kept a firm hold of his Finals MVP trophy as he came down the staircase. That the team’s sixth-man — i.e., the top bench player — won the honor sums up the 2015 champs.

Iguodala hadn’t started once all season before stepping in for Game 4 of the Finals. And when he did, the 6-foot-6 shooting guard was doing so to replace Andrew Bogut, a 7-foot enforcer.

The play worked. Of course it did. The Warriors so-called “big” lineup had a

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