# **Mingo Confident Entering Final Season With YHS**



Yankton's Megan Mingo watches her shot during the 2012 S.D. State Class AA Girls' Golf Tournament. Mingo, who finished second last year, will be trying to secure the Gazelles second-ever individual state golf title when Yankton plays host to the 2013 state championships, May 20-21 at Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

## **Gazelles Hope To Utilize Home Course Advantage**

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#### BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE sports@yankton.net

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Despite losing a successful senior to graduation, the Yankton High School girls' golf team is looking forward to a strong season with the major advantage of

home competitions. With the Eastern South Dakota Conference championships, the Yankton Invitational and the state competition all in Yankton, head coach Brett Sime is looking forward to the home course advantage.

"We were a third place team last year, so we're hoping to stay competitive," Sime said. "It's going to be tough in a good field in the state this year, but we're hoping to be in the top six at the

n/at Mitchell	<b>Time</b> 2 p.m. ) 1 p.m. 2:30 p.m. 2 p.m.
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Gorman (FR)	2:30 p.m.
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n/at Mitchell	
on Invitational (H)	10 a.m.
ell Invitational 1	0:30 a.m.
Falls Invitational	9 a.m.
Championships (FR)	10 a.m.
	2:30 p.m.
AA (H)	9 a.m.
	Championships (FR) nnox (FR)

end of the year. I hope it helps that we get to play at home this year. We're hoping to be one of the top teams in the conference, and we're just going to work to

try and get there."

Junior Amber Livingston said the advantage will particularly help the younger team members.

A lot of our girls who don't have a lot of experience who are going to be coming up to varsity have experience playing on these courses," she said. "It's not like they're going into something they don't know like a different course for a big tournament. It's going to be here, so they'll be more comfortable.'

Sime said building off last season's third place finish will also help.

'It's going to hurt to lose Hannah Withrow, but we've got some girls who will play and step up

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#### **BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE** sports@yankton.net

After placing second at the state competition last season, Yankton High School senior Megan Mingo is going into this year's golf season with confidence.

Placing third the year before that, Mingo is hoping to be in the top once again this year.

"I just have to go out there and try," she said. "There are a lot of other great girls in the state right now who are seniors and juniors, so there's going to be a lot of tough competition, but I'll just go out there and try my best. Placing second last year gives me a lot of confidence with that."

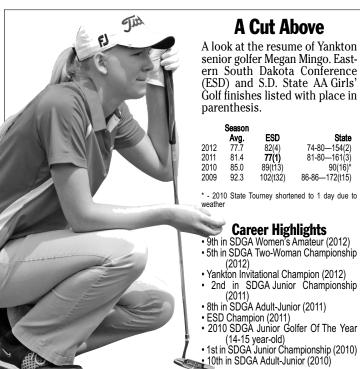
But that confidence didn't come without years of work. Mingo said she has been playing golf since she was four years old, even takes lessons during the winter in Sioux Falls to improve her game.

"I've been doing it my whole life, and I've loved every minute of it," she said. "It's just something I really love to do, am passionate about and want to succeed in. I've been practicing all winter in Sioux Falls, so I've al-ready been playing quite a bit this year.'

Because of that work, head coach Brett Sime said Mingo has been instrumental in the success of the Gazelle team.

"She's been very important the last few years," he said. "She's been playing varsity since she was an eighth grader. She works really hard, and we're just looking at trying to have her keep playing as well as she has. She's been in the top 10 in the state for the last few years, a runner up in the state tournament last year and we're just looking at her to be our leader to hopefully lead us to a good finish this year."

Mingo is planning to do exactly that. As a senior, she said one of her main priorities will be helping the younger girls.



"To me, being a senior means

helping the younger girls suc-

course, giving them tips and

ceed by helping them out on the

helping them learn like I did over

with them and helping them with the course like the girls older

Mingo said she has enjoyed

her time at Yankton High School,

and is looking forward to enjoy-

ing her final year with a success-

"It's been a great time," she

said. "The last couple of years

we've done really well at state -

the last two years we've gotten

third. Me winning ESD was a big

excitement, and us winning ESD as

a team, which was our only Gazelle

ESD golf title, was also a lot of fun.

I'm confident in our team that we

should still do well this year. It'll be

a good year, and I'm excited to see

Sime said getting to play a lot

of tournaments in Yankton is

something Mingo is also looking

how it turns out."

forward to.

the years," she said. "It's about

getting out there and playing

than me did."

ful team.

"She's really excited to get to play a lot of the big tournaments in town, and she's really looking forward to playing the state meet in her hometown at Hillcrest," he said. "It's going to be a lot of fun, and we're just going to keep building on what she's been doing. She's been working to hone in her game a little bit

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more, and she's going to chase that state title. Even after her final year at Yankton High School, Mingo will continue to play golf at Augustana — something Sime is excited to see in her future.

'I'm really excited about that," Mingo said. "What led me to Augustana was definitely the coaches. They were awesome they made me feel at home. The team was amazing with everything as well, and I liked how they did their practices as well as their whole facility. It really drew me in, and I'm really excited."

You can follow Emily Niebrugge on Twitter at twitter.com/ENiebrugge

## Young Bucks Look To Build On 15th Place Finish

BY NICK ROBINSON sports@yankton.net

The Yankton Bucks tennis team is looking to improve on their 15th place performance at the state tournament last spring.

The Bucks finished 3-15, plac-ing seventh in the Eastern South Dakota Conference.

Yankton lost two varsity singles and doubles players from a year ago. They return five from a season ago.

Head coach Brady Muth is confident about his team's chances in the ESD this spring.



## Young, Talented Group Back For Yankton Track & Field Squad

**BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK** james.cimburek@yankton.net

The Yankton track and field team did not have its best state meet a year ago. The boys finished 10th with 31 points and graduated all but a few relay legs from its placewinners. The girls finished 12th with 23 points.

But the continued improvement of those returning athletes this past off-season, along with an influx of young talent, has the Bucks and Gazelles excited about the 2013 season.



'We always expect to compete in the ESD," Muth said. "Our athleticism will win us a lot of points this season. The main thing is we want to see improvement from match to match so that we are playing our best tennis at the end of the year."

Yankton senior John Fanta is also looking forward to a successful season.

"I am expecting big things this year for Yankton Buck tennis," Fanta said. "I want to compete on a high level with every team we play. We have set our goals high for a successful season. Our young squad will get valuable experience this year which will be vital to our success in years to come".

The Bucks will lean on sophomore Luke Rockne, who went 13-6 in singles last year, already has three years of varsity experience under his belt.

Fanta feels that even though he doesn't have the experience, as a senior he must step up into the leader role.

"I may not be the best tennis player on the court but I feel like it is my duty to make sure everyone is playing at their highest level even when faced with adversity," Fanta said. "I will do my best to keep the team focused on bringing home a state championship to this great community."

Paul Fanta, a sophomore, will see a great amount of time on the court this spring. Along with them, juniors Ben Jensen and Brandon Frick will add experience to the roster.

In order to be successful, the Bucks will rely on their athleticism, which they haven't had for the past couple of years.

We will have to stay focused during practice and gradually keep improving as the season goes on," Fanta said.

The 'Achilles Heel' for the Bucks will be their inexperience, only having one senior and lack of

depth. Yankton has had a great offseason and few weeks of practice.

"Our kids have done a good job of playing in the Yankton Tennis Association summer and winter leagues," Muth said. "When you couple that with the amount of court time they have accumulated on their own they have put in a lot of time preparing for the season."

The Bucks will have stiff competition from defending state champions Sioux Falls Washington and the rest of the ESD.

"In the ESD Brandon Valley will be good along with Pierre and Watertown. Sioux Falls O'Gorman will be good again as well as RC Stevens," Muth said.

The Yankton Bucks kick their season off with a triangular against Sioux Falls Roosevelt and

YANKTON **BOYS' TENNIS** 

Date	Event	Time	
April 2	Brandon Valley/at Roosevelt	1 p.m.	
April 9	at S.C. North	4 p.m.	
April 13	vs. Madison/Stevens	9 a.m.	
April 16	vs. Washington	4 p.m.	
April 18	vs. S.C. West	4 p.m.	
April 23	at Vermillion	4 p.m.	
April 25	at S.C. Bishop Heelan	4 p.m.	
April 27	Mitchell/Watertown/at Madison	9 a.m.	
April 30	at Lincoln	4 p.m.	
May 2	vs. Vermillion	4 p.m.	
May 4	Aberdeen/Huron/at Brookings	10 a.m.	
May 6	at O'Gorman	4 p.m.	
May 7	Brandon Valley/at Mitchell	1 p.m.	
May 10	ESD (Brookings)	9 a.m.	
May 16-18	State (SF/Brandon) 9/8:45/8	:45 a.m.	
Home Matches At YHS/SAC Tennis Courts			

Brandon Valley on April 2 in Sioux Falls.

You can follow Nick Robinson on Twitter at twitter.com/theFRAN-CHISE\_9.

"We have a good group of young kids. For me that's a positive," said Yankton head coach Luke Youmans. "We lost a lot of leadership at the top with not having those upperclassmen, but hopefully we'll keep those numbers up through the course of the season."

On the girls' side, Yankton returns all three individual placewinners — senior Kelsey Fitzgerald (3rd in high jump), junior Whitlee Larson (3rd in 800) and freshman Savannah Woods (4th in 3200) — as well as its placewinning 400 and 800 relays. Senior Jessica Wirth, junior Brenna Fitzsimmons and sophomore Danielle Beckman were on both relays. Junior Hailey Luken was on the 400 relay.

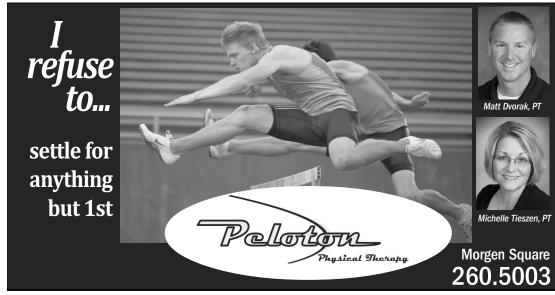
"We've got a great girls' group coming back," Youmans said. "We have a talented group of upperclassmen. Put them together with a young group that's also talent and we have the makings of a great squad."

Wirth, Fitzsimmons and Beckmann highlight the sprint corps, with Wirth off to a great start as a senior, earning top-eight finishes in the 60-meter dash in both of Yankton's indoor meets in Vermillion.

"The funnest part of that first meet was watching those girls in the sprint group," Youmans said. "The days of Yankton not having

**GAZELLES:** Annie Kruse (center)





placewinners.'

the Dan Lennon meet.

