

Post-Season Honors | Women’s Tennis

MMC’s Rockne Named GPAC Athlete Of Year

BY JEREMY HOECK
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The way Vanessa Rockne joked, Monday morning text messages and voicemails, especially ones at 6:50 a.m., rarely mean good news.

This case was, however, a completely different story.

Rockne was awoken early by friends and her coach that the Yankton native and Mount Marty College freshman had been named Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) Women’s Tennis Player of the Year, according to a league release.

“My friend’s text said, ‘Congrats,’ and I had to ask what they were talking about,” Rockne said. “I had no idea. That thought didn’t even cross my mind. I just wanted to have a good season.”

That’s exactly what she had for the Lancers — in their first year of competition in women’s tennis. Mount Marty also put Yankton native and freshman Lexie Klimisch on the GPAC honorable mention list.

Rockne posted a 6-1 record in flight one singles during the regular season, highlighted by an April 4 home upset of previously unbeaten Frankie Eszes of Northwestern, the reigning GPAC Player of the Year.

The only regular season loss for Rockne came against Nebraska Wesleyan’s Maria Mota on April 27. Rockne then suffered a loss in the GPAC Tournament to Katelyn Koll of Concordia, a girl she previously beaten.

All in all, not bad for a newcomer in a new program, MMC coach Rob Klimisch said.

“She was quite the surprise across the league, I think,” he said. “Most, if not all, of the coaches asked what year she was and they wanted to know all about her.

“I’m sure they didn’t anticipate someone coming in right away and beating these established players.”

Rockne and her freshmen teammates guided Mount Marty to a 4-7 overall record and a 2-5 mark in the GPAC in its first season of action. She also found more success in her individual matches.

In GPAC action, Rockne defeated Morningside’s Mary Horton, Northwestern’s Eszes, Concordia’s Koll, Doane’s Kendra Ritter, Hastings’ Ellie Clinch and Midland’s Stuart Booth.

A former standout for the Yankton Gazelles, Rockne ultimately decided a year ago to stay in town and help kick-start a brand new program at Mount Marty — along with friend and teammate Lexie Klimisch.

They and their MMC teammates quickly realized how tough collegiate tennis is, Rockne said.

“People probably don’t think it is because it’s NAIA, but it’s a tough conference; a lot of the matches were pretty competitive,” she said.

Rockne had to jump right in and face some of the best players in the nation, which was no easy feat for a freshman already getting used to college life,

she said.

“In your first year, you’re nervous anyway,” Rockne said. “But when you start a program, you don’t know what to expect. Everything is new to you.”

While the exact recognition Rockne got Monday was a surprise, there were no such feelings about her potential in the GPAC, coach Klimisch said.

“Vanessa is a very talented girl, so I thought she could be near the top of this league,” he said. “She is such a driven, dedicated girl, and she wants to win.”

Being only a freshman and having three more seasons to improve, Rockne still hasn’t reached her ceiling, Klimisch said, crediting her competitive nature.

“When she’s not performing at her highest level, she’s disappointed in herself,” he said. “She’s harder on herself than most people are hard on her. She’s probably not satisfied when she’s winning.”

Of course, Rockne’s success in turn vaulted Mount Marty onto the GPAC radar.

“Not just from the award, but I feel like as a team, we put ourselves out there,” she said. “I just happened to get something like this.”

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck



P&D FILE PHOTO
Mount Marty freshman and Yankton High School graduate Vanessa Rockne was named the GPAC Women’s Tennis Player of the Year. The announcement was made on Monday.

Girls’ Golf | S.D. State Class AA Championships

Knights In Hunt For Fourth Straight

O’G Five Up On Pierre After Day 1; Govs’ Getz Leads By Four In Title Defense

BY JEREMY HOECK
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Even as the only golfer to break 80, Hallie Getz still was not entirely satisfied with her score.

Facing what athletes and coaches are calling a challenging course at Hillcrest Golf & Country Club, the senior from Pierre shot a 76 Monday to lead the individual race by four shots after the first round of the S.D. State AA Girls’ Golf Tournament in Yankton.

The defending champion again finds herself at the top of the leaderboard, despite missing a handful of chances to drop her score even further.

“I’m pretty happy with it, but I know I could’ve shot a few strokes better,” Getz said. “I had a few putts go in that I didn’t think were going to, so that made up for it.”

A South Dakota State recruit, Getz blazed the course Monday morning with a 36 on the front nine, followed by a 40 on the back nine. It wasn’t easy, though, given the way Hillcrest is playing, she said.

“You can tell by a lot of the scores that it’s tough, but it’s in great shape,” Getz said. “I definitely wanted a challenge.”

Even with Getz’s performance, the Pierre Lady Governors are in for a challenge. Three-time defending state champion Sioux Falls O’Gorman leads the team race by five strokes — 341-346 — after the first day.

Though the two perceived favorites are where most expected, the Knights know it won’t be easy, according to head coach Rod Garrison.

“Any time you have a first-day lead, you feel good, but at the same time, it’s a two-day tournament. You have to get ready to play the next day,” Garrison said. “Five strokes isn’t that big of a lead, so it’ll be a dog-fight by the time it all finishes.”

O’Gorman has its top four golfers among the top 15 places after day one, while Pierre has four in the top 18.

The Knights’ duo of Claire Jansa



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Pierre’s Hallie Getz putts on the No. 1 green during her opening round in the S.D. State Class AA Girls’ Golf Tournament, Monday at Yankton’s Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. Getz, the defending state champion, shot a 76 to lead the individual standings by four strokes. Sioux Falls O’Gorman, looking to win a fourth consecutive state team title, holds a four-stroke lead on Pierre entering the final round today (Tuesday).



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Yankton’s Megan Mingo follows through on her tee shot on Hole No. 3 during her round on the opening day of the S.D. State Class AA Girls’ Golf Tournament on Monday at Yankton’s Hillcrest Golf & Country Club. Mingo shot an 81 and is tied for third entering today’s final round.

Gazelles Third Entering Today’s Final Round; Mingo Ranked Third

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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Although the Gazelles wanted a better team score, and some better individual scores, they’re still sitting in third place for the State AA Golf tournament.

Yankton sits in third place with a score of 363, behind first-place Sioux Falls O’Gorman (341) and Pierre (346).

Senior Megan Mingo is tied for third with a score of 81, while freshman Becky Frick is in 11th place (86). Amber Livingston is tied for 22nd place with 95 points, followed by Whitney Specht tied for 39th (101), Rachel Frick tied for 62nd with 110 and Alicia Greigore tied for 78th (115).

“We’re in a solid third place right now, and we’re just hoping to go out and play a little better tomorrow,” head coach Brett Sime said. “If one of those teams falters a little bit maybe we can jump up a spot or two.”

Mingo said the level of difficulty of the Hillcrest course did affect the players, but is still positive for today (Tuesday).

“It is a difficult course, even though it’s our home course,” she said. “The roughs are so thick out here and with it raining it’s just made it worse, but everyone had to go through that.

“We always try to go out there and do our best, and we always try to keep our heads up and forget what happened if it was bad. We just have to go out there with a good attitude tomorrow.”

Frick also noted the difficulty of playing throughout the day.

“The course is in really good condition, but the greens are probably the hardest greens and this is probably the hardest course in the state with all the trees and stuff,” she said. “Today was all right, but a lot of the girls had higher scores today because the course is so hard.”

Higher scores were common with other golfers too, Sime said, but he is still hopeful the Gazelles can pull through.

“The rough was really tough out there — if you weren’t on the fairway it was going to be pretty hard to get on the green,” he said. “It was just a tough day out there — there was only one girl who broke 70, and team scores were a little higher than we were used to seeing. Even though it didn’t rain, the course was playing pretty tough out there and it showed.”

Although Sime said his players can’t control what happens with the other teams, the Gazelles still have the chance to put three players in the top 20 and take third place overall, if not move up a few places.

“We’ve got a few girls who have a chance to break into the top 20 and medal tomorrow, and if we play well we should be able to bring home an award for Yankton High School to display,” he said.

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



TROY MARONEY/BROOKINGS REGISTER
Andes Central’s Kellie Winckler chips onto the green during her round in the S.D. State Class B Girls’ Golf Tournament. Winckler shot a 77 to rank second and help the Eagles to the team lead.

Bears, Trojans Set For Nebraska Class C Boys’ Tourney

Golf: Parkston Girls, Andes Central Girls Lead Respective Events; Lickteig Leads B Boys

FROM P&D STAFF REPORTS

LINCOLN, Neb. — Laurel-Concord-Coleridge and Hartington Cedar Catholic will look to make waves in the team standings as the Nebraska State Class C Boys’ Golf Tournament takes over Highlands Golf Course in Lincoln today (Tuesday) and Wednesday.

Laurel-Concord-Coleridge, led by two-time defending champion Mitchell Klooz (a transfer from Plainview), comes in off a District C-3 championship. The junior joins a veteran LCC lineup, including seniors Nathaniel Granquist and Nathan Schmitt, and juniors Jamy McCoy and Brendan Groene.

Cedar Catholic finished second in the district, and features a slightly younger lineup. Senior Derek Klug is joined by juniors Dalton Lammers, Grant Howell and Logan Schumacher, as well as sophomore Bradley Kathol.

Creighton junior Tanner Homan is also entered in Class C.

Neb. Class D Boys

KEARNEY, Neb. — Hartington brings a

young squad to the Nebraska State Class D Boys’ Golf Tournament, being held today and Wednesday at Meadowlark Golf Course.

The Wildcats feature juniors Trey Morten and Ethan Steiner, and sophomores Derek Jueden, Kolby Jueden and Chase Dendinger.

Randolph senior Nathan Tunink is the only other area golfer qualified in Class D.

S.D. Class A Girls

MILBANK — While the Parkston Trojans came into the 2013 S.D. State Class A Girls’ Golf Tournament as an overwhelming favorite to win a second straight title and third title in five years, Sioux Falls Christian didn’t get that memo.

The Chargers sit just three strokes behind Parkston, 350 to 353, after Monday’s opening round at Pine Hills Golf Course. Hot Springs is a distant third at 402.

Hot Springs’ Cassidy Vollmer, who lost a playoff to Parkston’s Sydney Bormann for the 2012 individual title, holds a one-stroke lead on Christian’s Kiersten Warkenthien after an opening round 82. Bormann and SFC’s Abby Perrenoud are

three strokes back.

Parkston’s Logan Wagner (86) and Jordan Bormann (88) are also in the hunt. The Trojan’s Taylor Bormann (91) and Sydney Weber (95) are also in the top 20, as is Dakota Valley’s Mary High (95).

Vermillion ranks ninth in the team standings after an opening round 424.

S.D. Class B Girls

BROOKINGS — Andes Central holds a one-stroke lead on Deuel entering the final round of the South Dakota State Class B Girls’ Golf Tournament, being held at Brookings’ Edgebrook Golf Course.

Andes Central, led by Kellie Winckler’s 77, shot a team score of 268. Deuel is led by tournament leader Kali Trautman, who ranks three strokes ahead of Winckler at 74.

Also for Andes Central, Krista Winckler shot 90 to tie for 13th after day one.

Irene-Wakonda also ranks in the hardware hunt, sitting in third with a 281. Sydney Nielsen shot an 87 to rank ninth after the first round. Makayla Mohr’s 92 has her in a tie for 16th.

Freeman shot a 312, led by Shelby

Bauer’s 90, to sit in ninth after day one.

S.D. Class B Boys

BROOKINGS — Freeman’s Arron Lickteig will look to add one last stellar performance on his high school golf resume before he heads off to college.

Lickteig, the defending state champion, is tied for the lead with Canistota’s Drew Seubert and McCook Central-Montrose’s Jacob Heumiller entering the final round of the South Dakota State Class B Boys’ Tournament, being held at Brookings Country Club.

All three golfers shot 76s on Monday. Clark-Willow Lake’s Colin LaBrie is one stroke bac, with Garretson’s Derek Dillon and Philip’s Tristen Rush two shots off the pace.

Besides his 2012 championship, Lickteig also finished second in Class B in 2009 and 2011.

The only other area golfer in the top 20 is Parker’s Patrick Gillespie, who is tied for 20th at 84. Platte-Geddes ranks tenth as a team with a score of 267.