

# Mayer Leaving Vermillion For Harrisburg Girls' Program

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VERMILLION — Joining a program looking to turn a corner is one kind of challenge. Than there's the situation facing Nick Mayer.

How about joining a team that went 24-1 and won a state championship?

Mayer, 32, is leaving his position as head girls' basketball coach at Vermillion High School to take the same position at Harrisburg, which will join the Class AA ranks and join the Eastern South Dakota Conference (ESD) next season.

"It's a very unique challenge, that's for sure," Mayer said Thursday. "And now being moved up to the highest level in our state, it'll be fun."

Harrisburg, though, rise to the highest level of its class last season under former coach Marcus Leloux. The Tigers were unbeaten against Class A competition and rolled to the state title — all in their first-ever state tournament appearance.

Mayer, who went 41-48 in four seasons as Vermillion head coach after being promoted from assistant in 2009, said family logistics at-

tracted him to the position in Harrisburg. His wife commutes to and from her job in Sioux Falls.

"I knew there was going to be an opening there for a while, but I didn't want to think about it much during our season," said Mayer, who has a young daughter. "But it's one of those great opportunities for our family."

A Vermillion native and 2004 University of South Dakota graduate, Mayer has spent his entire teaching and coaching career in that district. He finished his eighth year as a teacher this spring and spent seven seasons in all with the Vermillion girls' basketball program.

He was an assistant under former coach Jamie Parish for three seasons, including Vermillion's Class A title run in 2007. Mayer assumed the head coaching position in 2009 and later led the Tanagers to the 2012 state tournament — finishing eighth.

His team last season went 10-11 and lost in the first round of the district tournament.

"I'm sad to leave Vermillion, because that's been our home for a long time," Mayer said. "I get

choked up even talking about it. I've been privileged to work with such great people and great kids."

On the issue of Vermillion's next coach, Mayer said he has two "fantastic" assistants, in J.J. Heyden (a 2007 Mount Marty College graduate) and Mallory Schmidt.

"Each of them could do a great job, if that's the route the district goes," Mayer said. "Ultimately, I know they'll make a good decision and hire the right person."

In his next stop, Mayer will inherit a Harrisburg program that will join Yankton, Brandon Valley, Sioux Falls Lincoln and Sioux Falls Washington in District 2AA next season.

"It'll be interesting to come to Yankton for a game instead of a team camp, plus it'll be nice to play in the Summit," Mayer said.

Travel, of course, will present a new challenge for Mayer. While in Vermillion, the longest road trip for his teams was to Madison, where as he will now travel to places like Pierre and Aberdeen in the ESD.

The prospect of matching up with Sioux Falls schools is some-



P&D FILE PHOTO  
**Nick Mayer, center, addresses the Vermillion Tanagers girls' basketball team during a time-out in the 2012 S.D. State Class AA Girls' Basketball Tournament. Mayer is leaving Vermillion to take over the 2013 Class A champion Harrisburg program, a squad that will compete in Class AA for the first time this coming season.**

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## Track & Field | S.D. State Meet

# YHS Squad Set To Compete

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The Yankton Bucks and Gazelles bring a fairly young contingent to the South Dakota State Class AA Track and Field Meet, today (Friday) in Brandon and Saturday in Sioux Falls, but Coach Luke Youmans still expects a strong effort on the final weekend of the season.

Yankton takes 20 girls and 16 boys to the meet this weekend, with several expected to score points in the meet that caps a tough season to compete in an outdoor sport.

"It's been tough on the kids, tough on everybody. The kids haven't been as excited about track as they usually are," he said. "But we've managed to keep everyone healthy that we really need to keep healthy."

The Bucks are without entries in the 200, 400 and 800, as well as both hurdle races, but Youmans is hoping to see the squad advance its relays to Saturday's finals.

"We have a young crew, especially when you look at the sprint relays," he said. "Our goal is to have as many running on the second day as possible. Our seniors have to to step it up on our sprint relays."

Yankton has the potential to score in the field events, led by junior J.J. Hejna. The multi-sport standout ranks second in the triple jump, third in the high jump and fifth in the long jump. He will also compete on the Bucks' 1600 relay squad.

"J.J.'s been there, and he's had some success," Youmans said. "He's a wild card coming in, because he's continued to get better. If he gets a little better, he could surprise a lot of people."

The Bucks also have two athletes ranked in the top 10 in the pole vault, senior James Hofer and junior Casey Skillingstad. Besides Hejna, the Bucks also have sophomore Lee Rose ranked eighth and junior Richard Culver qualified in the long jump, and sophomore Matt Fitzgerald qualified in the high jump.



P&D FILE PHOTO  
**Yankton junior J.J. Hejna, shown here, is one of the Bucks' top qualifiers in the South Dakota State Class AA Track and Field Meet, which begins today (Friday) in Brandon. Class AA teams will join teams from Class A and B in Sioux Falls on Saturday to conclude the meet.**

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# Eight Area Squads Competing In Class A

## FROM P&D STAFF REPORTS

Eight area teams will be represented at the South Dakota State Class A Track and Field Meet, which begins today (Friday) in Lennox.

Class A competition will begin at 9:30 a.m. today in Lennox. Teams from Class A and Class AA will join the Class B squads in Sioux Falls for Saturday's final day of competition, which begins at 9 a.m.

Here is a look at area teams in Class A, listed in alphabetical order.

### Beresford

The Watchdogs boast a combined eight individual entries and one relay headed to state.

The Beresford girls have the potential to score in the throws, led by seniors Ashley Ostrem and Hannah McKelvey. Ostrem, who placed seventh in the discus a year ago, ranks second in the discus and just outside the top eight in the shot put, while McKelvey, fifth at state in the shot put a year ago, ranks fifth in that event.

Also for the Watchdog girls, Alyson Johnsen, a Sioux Falls basketball recruit, is entered in the 800.

For the boys, senior Dalton Jones is entered in both the 100 and 200, ranking seventh in the 100. Senior Nick Antonson is entered in the 110 hurdles, while junior Riley Schaap is entered in the 1600. The Watchdogs also are entered in the 3200 relay.

### Bon Homme

The Cavaliers will take a full bus to Lennox and Sioux Falls, with 20 athletes, 14 individual

events and seven relays.

The busiest in terms of individual events will be junior Caitlin McLouth, entered in the 100 hurdles, long jump and triple jump. McLouth was eighth in the triple jump a year ago.

Freshman Maddison Hajek is entered in both the 1600 and 3200, with classmates Anna Heusinkveld (200) and Morgan McAllister (pole vault) also set to compete. Eighth grader McKeeley Merkwon is also entered in the pole vault.

The Lady Cavaliers are entered in the 800, 1600 and medley relays, ranking eighth in both the 800 and 1600 relay events.

For the Bon Homme boys, junior Scott Van Winkle is the lone competitor with multiple individual events, competing in the 300 hurdles and the pole vault. He ranks fourth in both events.

Also for the Cavaliers, senior Kodi Larson and sophomore Brendan Bares are entered in the 100, sophomore Jonathan Barrett is entered in the discus and eighth grader Chase Kortan is entered in the long jump after finishing seventh in that event a year ago. The Cavaliers have entries in the 400, 800, 1600 and medley relays, ranking second in the 800 relay and seventh in the 1600 relay.

### Dakota Valley

The Panthers have six individual events each for boys and girls qualified, with three girls' and a boys' relay qualified as well.

For the DV girls, senior Kylie Martin ranks fourth in the state in the shot put. She finished third a year ago. Freshman Sara Bohan is the lone Panther girls' qualifier in more than one individual event, earning spots in the 100 hurdles and the long jump. Also entered for the Panthers are freshman McKenzie Mennenga in the 400, eighth grader Madison Gray in the 800 and eighth grader Marisa Sculz in the 1600.

Dakota Valley also has squads in the 800, 1600 and medley relays. The Panthers rank seventh in the 800 relay and eighth in the medley.

For the DV boys, senior Taylor Lambert will be looking to improve on his seventh place finish in the shot put from 2012. Junior Blake Perryman is qualified in both the 800 and 1600. Also for the Panthers, senior Austin Lewis is entered in the 100, senior Wade Treloar is entered in the pole vault and junior Graham Bacon is entered in the 3200. The Panthers are also entered in the 3200 relay.

Lambert ranks fourth in the shot put. Lewis is ranked fifth in the 100. Perryman is seeded sixth in the 1600. The Panthers are seeded eighth in the 3200 relay.

### Elk Point-Jefferson

The Huskies have five individual and one relay entry, all in the girls' division and led by junior Keely Bertram in the 100 and 200. Bertram ranks seventh in the 100 and eighth in the 200.

Also for EPJ, freshman Josie Hereen is qualified in the 800 and 1600, ranking seventh in the 800. Senior Caitlin Davis enters the long jump ranked sixth. The Huskies are also entered in the medley relay.

### Ethan-Parkston

A strong boys' contingent, nine individual events and all five relays, will represent Ethan-Parkston at state.

Sophomore Weslee Dvorak, third in the pole vault a year ago, will look to improve on that finish as well as try to make saves in the 110 hurdles. Dvorak is seeded fourth in the pole vault and seventh in the hurdle race.

Senior Anthony Huber will also be looking to improve on a state medal from a year ago, a fourth place finish in the discus. He enters the state meet third in that event, and qualified for state in the shot put.

Ethan-Parkston finished sixth in the 400 relay and eighth in the medley a year ago. E-P is seeded fifth in the 800 relay this season. Freshman Camden Myers takes a fourth

seed into the high jump. Also for E-P, senior Jesse Thuringer and sophomore Brady Reiff are entered in the 200, junior Jace Connor is entered in the triple jump and senior Tyler Hohn is entered in the 800.

Ethan-Parkston has one girl headed to state, sophomore Darbi Gustafson in the shot put.

### Platte-Geddes

The Black Panthers take five entries in both the boys' and girls' division.

The boys are led by senior Matthew Randall, who qualified in both hurdle races. Senior Cooper Kemnitz is qualified in the 400 and junior Kole Heller is qualified in the 100 for Platte-Geddes. The Black Panthers are also entered in the 400 relay.

For the P-G girls, senior Shelby Rabenberg is entered in the 800, junior Brianna Erickson is entered in the 400 and freshman Reganne Engbreton is entered in the 200. The Black Panthers also have entries in the 3200 and medley relays.

Rabenberg ranks sixth in the 800. The Black Panthers rank seventh in the 3200 relay.

### Vermillion

A small but senior-dominated lineup will make their way north for state for Vermillion.

The Vermillion girls take five seniors to state, though only one will compete in an individual event, Mackenzie Huber in the pole vault. Huber ranks fourth in a tightly-contested 12-person field.

Seventh grader Maddie Lavin ranks highly in both the 1600 and 3200 for the Tanagers girls, sixth in the 3200 and eighth in the 1600. VHS also is qualified in the medley relay.

The Vermillion boys also have five seniors headed to state, led by Colin Olson, ranked second in the 400. One senior competing in a non-

# Viborg-Hurley Looking For Repeat Performance In 'B'

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Viborg-Hurley ended the 2012 track and field season on top of the championship podium in Class B boys.

It's a feeling that coach Bill Hansen and the Cougars wouldn't mind repeating.

Viborg-Hurley ranks among the favorites in the Class B boys' division as the South Dakota State Track and Field Meet begins today (Friday) in the Sioux Falls area.

"It could be back to back for us," Hansen said by phone on Thursday. Our kids will be prepared. They should do well."

Class B will be held at Sioux Falls' Howard Wood Field both today and Saturday. Class A will be in Lennox and Class AA will be in Brandon, with both bigger school classes joining the small schools in Sioux Falls on Saturday.

Competition in Sioux Falls begins at 9:30 a.m. today, with final round competition beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday.

Here is a look at area teams in Class B, listed in alphabetical order.

### Alcester-Hudson

The Cubs have one girl going to state, senior Jessica Wegh, but she will be busy. Wegh, who finished second in the 100 and 200, and fourth in the 400 a year ago, returns in all three of those events. She ranks fourth in the 100 and 200, and ninth in the 400.

Alcester-Hudson has one boy qualified, freshman Grant Johnson in the 300 hurdles.

### Andes Central

The Eagles have five girls and three boys going to state, with all but one of them competing in field events.

For the girls, senior Sierra Svatos and sophomore Payton Johansson will compete in the high jump, senior Kellie Winckler (a Mount Marty basketball and golf recruit) will compete in the shot put, sophomore Brooke Deurmier will compete in the triple jump and freshman Erica Kitchenmaster will compete in the 100.

Johansson ranks third in the high jump. A trio of juniors are qualified for the Andes Central boys, Aaron Swanson in the long jump, Darrin Hopkins in the discus and Joey Evans in the triple jump.

### Avon

Six individual events and five relays will make up the competition for the Pirates.

On the boys' side, senior Jonah Sturgeon and junior Brandon Koomich are entered in the 200, with Koomich also entered in the 400. Senior Logan Powers is entered in the 800.

Koomich ranks third in the 400, while Sturgeon ranks eighth in the 200.

The Pirate boys are also entered in the 800, 1600 and medley relays.

For the Lady Pirates, seventh grader Cheylee Nagel is entered in the 400 and freshman Heidi Cap is entered in the 800. Avon also has entries in the 800 and medley relays.

The Lady Pirates rank second in the medley entering state.

### Centerville

Two boys and two girls make up the entry list for the Tornadoes, with the girls sporting a pair of seniors, Kieran O'Malley and Brittany Austin, both Mount Marty basketball recruits.

O'Malley, fifth in the triple jump a year ago, returns in that event as well as the long jump. She ranks fourth in the triple jump and eighth in the long jump. Austin will compete in the shot put.

For the Centerville boys, junior Seamus O'Malley will compete in the high jump and sophomore Christian Gruschin will compete in the discus. Gruschin ranks seventh in the discus.

### Freeman

With 10 entries each on the boys' and girls' side, the Freeman Flyers hope to put up big points with both their squads at state.

The boys have the potential for 50 points, based on pre-meet seeds.

Individually, sophomore Brennan Schmidt ranks second in the 400 and seventh in the 200, senior Shaun Becker ranks second in the long jump, junior Grant Preheim ranks fourth in the triple jump and senior Andrew Munkvold is

seeded eighth in the pole vault.

Schmidt finished seventh in the 400 as a freshman.

The Flyer boys are also ranked second in the 1600 relay, third in both the 400 and 800 relays, and fifth in the medley relay.

Also entered for the Flyer boys is junior Joseph Weier in the 100.

Two individuals are qualified in multiple individual events for the Freeman girls, junior Nicole Saarie and sophomore Cailey Roth.

Roth, a state champion in the 800 as an eighth grader, ranks third in the 800, fifth in the 1600 and sixth in the 400. She placed fourth in the 800 and eighth in the 400 a year ago.

Saarie is entered in the high jump and pole vault. Also for the Flyer girls, sophomore Melissa Eberts is entered in the triple jump, freshman Rebecca Eberts is entered in the 3200 and freshman Taylor Hermesen is entered in the discus.

Freeman also has entries in the girls' 1600 and medley relays.

Rebecca Eberts ranks fourth in the 3200. The Flyers rank fifth in the medley and sixth in the 1600 relay. Saarie is seeded eighth in the pole vault.

### Freeman Academy

The Bobcats send just one athlete to state, sophomore Clara Koerner in the girls' 800-meter run.

### Gayville-Volin

For the Raiders, a veteran boys' roster has four field event entries, while a young girls' roster has four distance and two relay entries.

Gayville-Volin has freshman Genevieve Clark and eighth grader Laura Nelson entered in both the girls' 1600 and 3200. Clark, who finished third in the 3200 and fifth in the 1600 a year ago, ranks second in the 1600 and third in the 3200. Nelson ranks fourth in the 1600 and fifth in the 3200. The Raider girls are also entered in the 3200 relay, where they rank fifth, and the medley relay.

For the Raider boys, senior D.J. Hawthorne is entered in both the long and triple jumps, ranking third in the triple and fourth in the long. In the shot put, both seniors John Guy, who finished fourth a year ago, and Zane Jensen rank in the top eight, with Jensen fourth and Guy eighth.

### Irene-Wakonda

Pole vault, hurdles and sprints make up the majority of the entries for the Eagles on both the boys' and girls' sides.

For the I-W boys, three vaulters rank in the top eight: junior Garrett Anderson and senior Dustin Livingston, each in a tie for second, and senior Chris Heings, tied for sixth. Livingston is also entered in the 110 hurdles (ranked third) and the 200, while Anderson is also entered in the 300 hurdles.

Anderson and Livingston went 1-2 in the pole vault a year ago. Anderson also finished fourth in the 300 hurdles and Livingston placed eighth in the 110 hurdles last year.

Also for the Eagle boys, senior Dillon Buchanan is entered in the 400, where he ranks eighth. I-W also has entries in the 400, 800 and 1600 relays. The Eagles' 800 relay ranks second, and their 400 and 1600 relays each rank sixth.

For the Eagle girls, sophomore Lauren Sokolowski will attempt to defend her title in the 100 hurdles, as she is tied for the top time entering the meet. She is also entered in the 300 hurdles, where she ranks fourth.

Junior Rainy Brewer-Nysven ranks third in the pole vault entering that event. Freshman Andrea Sokolowski is entered in the high jump. The Eagle girls rank fourth in the 400 relay and fifth in the 800 relay.

### Marion

The Marion girls have senior Kylie Hughes entered in both the long jump and triple jump. She ranks second in the long jump entering the meet.

The Bear girls also have entries in the 3200 and medley relays.

For the Marion boys, junior Andrew Nelson is entered in both the shot put and discus.

### Menno

The Menno girls have junior Christina Herboldt and eighth grader Courtnee Edelman qualified in the pole vault, with Herboldt ranked sixth. The Bears also have freshman Tara Spencer in the 100 hurdles.

For the Menno boys, junior Dylan Lehr is entered in the 100 and sophomore Austin Handel is entered in the shot put.

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