

Lancers' VanDenBerg Aims For One Last Honor

MMC Qualifies Three For NAIA Outdoor Meet

BY JEREMY HOECK

jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

Abbey VanDenBerg has one final shot at a top-five finish at nationals.

The senior standout at Mount Marty College is gearing up for her fourth NAIA Outdoor Track & Field Championships starting today (Thursday) in Gulf Shores, Alabama, and has also previously competed in three indoor national meets.

VanDenBerg, a Sioux Falls native who has excelled in the triple jump since arriving in Yankton, has never finished better than eighth in that event in an outdoor national meet.

"I'm hoping this is my chance," she said by phone Tuesday from Alabama. "I've never had a season quite like this one."

"If there was ever a chance, it's this year."

VanDenBerg's senior season



VanDenBerg

has indeed been her best. She went a personal best 38 feet, 4 ¼ inches in the triple jump early in the outdoor season to qualify for nationals, and later finished second at the Great Plains Athletic Conference outdoor meet.

As she and two Lancer teammates – Josh Monson (men's marathon) and Allison Cross (women's shot put) – embark on the national meet in Alabama, VanDenBerg has her eye on climbing the ladder.

She has recorded the following finishes in the triple jump at the indoor meet: Sixth (2013), 17th (2014) and ninth (2015). And at the outdoor meet, she has finished 10th (2012), 12th (2013) and ninth (2014).

It would take another career

best for VanDenBerg – seeded 14th out of 25 jumpers – climb into the top-eight. The eighth-seeded jumper comes in with a mark of 39 feet, 4 inches.

"We'll see if the day is right, she could have a good shot," Mount Marty head coach Randy Fischer said. "She's been jumping better than she's ever have."

"She wants a top-eight, but it'll depend on everyone else."

One key advantage for VanDenBerg in her quest for a top-eight finish is experience. Put simply, she's been on that stage enough times not to get overwhelmed.

"It's nice to have that experience, because I don't have the nerves anymore," VanDenBerg said. "I can settle in and jump like I'm used to."

Once again, VanDenBerg won't be the only Mount Marty athlete competing on the NAIA's biggest



Monson

stage. Monson, a senior, is qualified with the fifth-best time in the men's marathon (1:13.39). Athletes qualify for the marathon by reaching certain times in the half-marathon, which Monson did early in the season.

"I have no idea what expect, I'm just going to try to enjoy everything and get mentally prepared to run a long way," he said this week.

The marathon, perhaps more so than any other event, will have to adjust to the warm, humid Alabama climate.

"He'll do the best he can," Fischer said. "You never know what can happen."

That was a similar mantra for Cross, who surprised even herself by qualifying in the women's shot put. The sophomore, who also



Cross

stars on the Mount Marty volleyball team, is seeded 24th out of 24 athletes in the event with a mark of 43 feet, 0 ½ inches.

"I was kind of excited," Cross said.

"Throughout the season and even last year, I wasn't getting the marks I was getting in high school. Once I got to 40 feet, my confidence grew."

Cross' progression as a thrower was exactly what Mount Marty was looking for in its track program: Progress, according to Fischer.

"She's a welcomed surprise as a sophomore; she's really stepping up for the program," Fischer said. "Who knows, maybe she can sneak in there in the top eight. She could do it."

Follow @jhoeck on Twitter

Bucks Aim High At State Tennis

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

James.cimburek@yankton.net

When the Yankton Bucks finished third in the Eastern South Dakota Conference Boys' Tennis Championships a week ago, tying the school record for best finish by a Bucks team, a feeling swept over the team.

Disappointment.

The senior-dominated Bucks are aiming higher than any Yankton boys' team has ever finish when they begin the 84th annual South Dakota State Boys' Tennis Championships today (Thursday) in Sioux Falls.

"A few kids were disappointed at ESD. They wanted to be the first Yankton team to get runner-up at ESD," said Yankton head coach Matt Termansen. The Bucks fell one victory short of that goal. "We had four guys get runner-up at ESD, so there is definitely a lot of momentum going into state."

Luke Rockne, Jason Shindler and Hunter Rockne – Yankton's top three flights – each finished second in their respective divisions at ESD. Shindler and Paul Fanta also placed second at flight two doubles, with the Rockne brothers earning a consolation title at flight one doubles.

"We felt like we were the second-best team there, so that left a bad taste in our mouths," Luke Rockne said. "We are ready to go out and prove ourselves at state."

Shindler and Fanta, both seniors, have been one of the top teams in the state at flight two doubles, posting an 18-3 record. Two of the three losses were to Mitch-

ell's Beau Brown and Kanin Nelson, but the Yankton duo also handed the Kernels' squad their lone setback of the season.

"We practiced a lot in the off-season," Shindler said of their doubles success. "We hit a lot at City Hall during the winter."

Shindler is 14-7 in singles play, with three of those setbacks coming to Brown. Senior Luke Rockne is 13-6 at flight one singles, and teamed with Hunter for a 12-7 record at flight one doubles. Hunter Rockne, a freshman, is 13-8 at flight three singles. Fanta has posted a 10-4 record at flight four singles after not playing a singles match until April 28.

"If I play my best, I feel like I can beat anybody," Luke Rockne said. "Shindler and Hunter are the same way, and our 4-5-6 guys definitely have the potential to place, too."

"At the top, the sky's the limit for us."

Junior Nathan List is 7-14 at flight five singles. Senior Ethan Klimisch is 5-15 at flight six singles. List and Klimisch are 6-13 at flight three doubles.

Just as it was at ESD, the target finish for state is one spot higher than any Bucks team has ever placed.

"My personal goal for the team is sixth. No Yankton team has ever done better than seventh," Termansen said. "We can do it if we get a lot of points from our guys at the top."

Play begins at 9 a.m. with singles action at McKennan Park and Washington High School, and at the Brandon Valley Middle School courts. Doubles play will begin at



P&D FILE PHOTO
Yankton senior Luke Rockne returns a shot during a home match earlier this season. Rockne is one of four seniors for the Bucks, who begin play in the South Dakota State Boys' Tennis Tournament today (Thursday) in Sioux Falls and Brandon.

TENNIS | PAGE 8

Brotherly Love: Tennis Runs In Families For Yankton Boys

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

James.cimburek@yankton.net

Anyone coming to watch a Yankton varsity and JV tennis matchup this season might have looked around and gotten a little confused by the number of players that look almost the same.

One look at the roster, though, would help it make sense.

The top 12 on Yankton's boys' tennis roster this season included four sets of brothers. When the full team is included, there are five sets of brothers on the squad.

"We have really good tennis families," said Yankton head coach Matt Termansen. "They are excited about tennis, which is what you need for the program to keep going."

Luke and Hunter Rockne are both on Yankton's varsity six, and make up the Bucks' flight one singles team. Ethan Klimisch also plays varsity, with brother Isaac on JV. Tanner and Gerrit Dykstra, and Ben and Sam Mooney all play JV for the Bucks.

"We have four sets of brothers in the top 12, which is crazy," Termansen said.

Luke, a senior, and Hunter, a freshman, are in their second season of playing doubles together.

BROTHERS | PAGE 8

Neb. State Track Preview

Crofton Girls Look For Second Consecutive Title

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

James.cimburek@yankton.net

The Crofton Warriors hope to add one final chapter to the legacy of its high-powered senior girls' class as the Nebraska State Track and Field Championships begin Friday at Burke High School in Omaha, Nebraska.

In the past four years, Crofton has won four girls' basketball titles, four cross country titles and a track and field title (in 2014), and nearly added a volleyball title as well. The trio of Allison Arens, Maria Wortmann and Quinn Wragge had a hand in all but one of those titles. (Wragge transferred to Crofton after her freshman year.) As the state meet begins, the Warriors hope another title is in the works.

"All coaches deserve a group likes this one time in their career," Crofton head coach Rod Hegge said. "They take care of themselves. They're competitive."

Allison Arens will compete in the 1600 and 3200, as well as both the 1600 and 3200 relays. Wragge will compete in the 800 and both relays. Wortmann will compete in the shot put, discus and 1600 relay.

"Quinn will do really well in the 800. The last three times at state she's run 2:20. I expect her in the teens," Hegge said. "We came out of districts seeded 1-3 in the mile (1600). Haley Arens (third in the 1600) is seeded second in the two-mile (3200) and we qualified Allison, but I suspect she'll be right up there as well."

Both Wortmann and sophomore Monica Arens are qualified highly in both the shot put and discus, and will compete in a relay. Monica Arens will run on the Warriors' 3200 relay.

"Maria fits so well on that four-by-four. Wayne State is lucky to have such an athlete coming in," Hegge said. Wortmann has signed to play volleyball at WSC. Allison Arens will play basketball at South Dakota. "Monica could be on our four-by-four, too. It's nice to have those mid-distance kids that keep coming up."

Sophomore Kelsey Sanger, who will complete both relays, is also qualified in the 800.

"We have the same crew as last year, with the exception of Haley (a freshman)," Hegge said. "Hopefully we're expecting the same results."

As with their girls' team, Crofton has a boys' thrower qualified on the track. Senior Tyler Koch will compete in the 110-meter hurdles as well as the shot put and discus.

"When you are running, it helps your shot and discus as well," Hegge said.

Also qualified for the Crofton boys is freshman Jaden Janssen in the 3200.

"He ran against two of the best in the state in the kid from Laurel (Laurel-Concord-Coleridge's Aaron Haahr) and Hartington-Newcastle (Brian Santiago)," Hegge said. "He ran a 10:26, that that will do well at state."

Here is a look at other area teams with athletes competing this weekend. Teams are divided by class, and listed in alphabetical order:

Class C

Creighton

The Bulldogs will send four boys in five events, led by senior Beau Schindler in both the shot put and discus. Junior Eli Kliment will compete in the 110-meter hurdles. Sophomore Zac Hazen will com-



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Crofton's Quinn Wragge, back, hands the baton to Monica Arens during the girls' 3200-meter relay at last week's District C-7 meet. The Lady Warriors begin their quest for a second straight state title Friday.

C after Hartington had dropped to Class D the past few years.

"We were fortunate with what we qualified," said Wildcats boys' coach Blair Kalin. "There were a few things we thought would happen. We ran really well at districts."

Senior Griffin Kalin leads the way, having won the 300-meter

to be in the mix if he stays calm and runs well."

The Wildcats will also take four girls to state, with senior Savannah Scoville and junior Camarie Stratman leading the way. Scoville will compete in both the 100- and 300-meter hurdles, while Stratman is entered in the long jump, triple

jump and high jump. Both will be in the 400-meter relay, along with senior Samantha Huss and sophomore Sophie Noecker.

Laurel-Concord-Coleridge

The Bears boast three returning placewinners among the four girls headed to Omaha.

Senior Sadie Petersen finished fifth in the 3200 and seventh in the 1600 a season ago, and returns in both events. Senior Audra Corbit, who tied for fourth in the high jump in 2014, returns as the top seed in that event after clearing 5-6 in districts. Senior Ellie Arduser, who was eighth in the triple jump in 2014, returns in that event, as well as in the 100, 200 and 400.

LCC also brings junior Bayley Holloway in the pole vault.

On the boys' side the Bears have three athletes entered in four events, led by sophomore Jayden Reifenrath in the 100-meter dash and long jump. Senior Collin Dirks is entered in the high jump, while junior Aaron Haahr is entered in the 3200.

Ponca

Senior Lexie Eifert returns to state with hopes of building on the two medals she won a year ago.

Eifert, who placed sixth in the 100 and eighth in the 200, returns in those events, as well as in the 400 and as part of the Indians' 400-meter relay. Sophomore Cassandra Stowe and freshmen Kelsey Fields and Sophie Kramper round out that foursome.

Also for Ponca, senior Michael Walsh is entered in the boys' triple jump.