

# Crofton Volleyball Team Looks To Add To Warrior Tradition

Nebraska State Tourney: CHS Faces Palmyra Today At 11 a.m.

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK  
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CROFTON, Neb. — Crofton High School has a rich tradition of girls' athletics, with state championships in cross country and girls' basketball in 2013, as well as success in track and field.

This fall, CHS aims to add volleyball to that list of banners in the CHS gym.

The Warriors take a 23-4 record into the Nebraska State Volleyball Tournament, which begins today (Thursday) in Grand Island.

Crofton entered this school year with a run of back-to-back state basketball titles and eight state tournament appearances in nine years, but CHS had not been to the state volleyball tournament since 1993. Still, the young Warriors put as much effort in on the volleyball

court as on the basketball court. "Every morning (this summer) we were lifting. Most years, there is a lot of basketball after that," said Crofton senior setter Makenzie Johnson. "We had the volleyball net up a lot this summer."

Add in that Johnson (347 assists, 23 ace serves), the lone senior in the rotation, and junior hitters Maria Wortmann (317 kills, 333 digs, 46 ace serves, 131 blocks) and Allison Arens (190 kills, 368 digs, 51 ace serves, 35 blocks) have been together for three seasons, and you've got a good start to team chemistry. "They are really good at working together," said Crofton head coach Susan Johnson. "They all enjoy the game. They all have the same goal."

After those three, the Warriors are young. Sophomores Allison Tramp (29 blocks, 43 kills), Brittany Guenther (286 assists, 114 digs, 31

ace serves), Breanna Allen (233 digs, 23 ace serves) and Katie Petersen (55 kills, 28 blocks), and freshmen Kelsey Sanger (138 kills, 375 digs, 49 ace serves, 39 blocks) and Monica Arens (97 kills, 53 ace blocks) round out the rotation.

But the Warriors are experienced at playing on the state's biggest stage. Five of Crofton's nine regulars and two other players on the volleyball roster saw time in the Warriors' state basketball championship game win.

"I definitely think it's going to help," said Wortmann. "At a minimum we're going to know what to expect."

Coach Johnson noted that even some of the players who didn't see the floor during basketball last season got to feel what a state tournament was like.

"Even some of (this year's) fresh-

men went to state as managers last year," she noted.

Crofton faces Palmyra (25-5), a team led by junior Klaire Phillips (348 kills, 298 digs) and senior Paige Huxoll (265 kills). Senior Kourtney Kempkes (184 kills), sophomore Moriah Calfee (161 kills) and senior setter Shelby Bruss (909 assists) have also provided offensive weaponry for the Panthers.

But the Warriors aren't as concerned about the firepower on the other side of the net as they are keeping their side under control.

"We need to stay focused and play our side of the net," Wortmann said. "We have to talk a lot, and have fun with it."

Coach Johnson is hoping to see the traits that sent the Warriors to Grand Island in the first place.

"I'm hoping to see confidence and mental toughness," she said. "I hope they have the confidence to go all the way, because I really think

that they could."

Crofton and Palmyra face off at 11 a.m. at Grand Island Northwest. The winner of that match will face the winner of the 9 a.m. match between Hastings St. Cecilia (25-8) and Lutheran High Northeast (23-9) on Friday at 9 a.m. at Grand Island Senior High.

On the other side of the bracket, top-seeded Freeman (25-5) faces Ord (20-11) at 2 p.m., and Humphrey-Lindsey Holy Family (30-2) faces Guardian Angels Central Catholic (29-4) at 4 p.m.

The championship is set for Saturday at 9 a.m. at the Heartland Event Center in Grand Island, with the third place match at noon on Saturday at Grand Island Northwest.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/JCimburek. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

## Athletics | NCAA Signing Day

# Bartos Takes Aim On College Career

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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By signing her name on the proverbial dotted line Wednesday night, Cedar Bartos proved that the sport of archery is developing — and quickly — in Yankton.

The 17-year-old homeschooled archery standout has now gone from national success to a college scholarship.

Bartos, an inaugural member of Yankton's Junior Olympic Archery Development (JOAD) program since its inception two years ago, signed Wednesday with Emmanuel College in Georgia.

"I think it definitely shows the progress of the program," she said during a signing day ceremony at the National Field Archery Association (NFAA) complex. "I can get out there and give our facility some exposure."

"Now people can know South Dakota has archery, even if they don't think we have anything else."

Bartos, who is simultaneously taking junior year classes at Gayville-Volin and doing senior year coursework at home, will enroll at Emmanuel next fall.

Her performance at the Easton JOAD Outdoor Nationals in July in Ohio caught the attention of Emmanuel first-



Cedar Bartos, left, of Yankton signs her National Letter of Intent on Wednesday night to enroll at Emmanuel College in Georgia and compete for the new archery team, starting next fall. Looking on is Eric Tollefson, the head coach at the National Field Archery Association in Yankton.

## Wynot's Schulte Headed To Wayne State

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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WYNOT, Neb. — Next year at this time, Maggie Schulte will take her small-town, small-school success to the top ranks of the NCAA Division II level.

And that's just the way the 6-foot senior standout at Wynot High School wanted it. Schulte was one of five players to sign Wednesday to play basketball at Wayne State College, a program that has qualified for six consecutive D-II national tournaments.

"It's more fun when you win," Schulte joked Wednesday.

A key cog in Wynot's three consecutive Nebraska Class D2 state girls' basketball titles, Schulte has guided the Lady Blue Devils to a 76-9 record in her career.

She averaged 13.5 points, 7.8 rebounds and 2.5 assists per game last season as a junior, helping lead Wynot to a 25-4 record and another championship.

Having received interest from a number of regional NCAA and NAIA schools, Schulte said that yes, it was a relief to have her college decision out of the way.

"Definitely nice, especially with the start of the season coming up," she said.

"I just somehow always knew I wanted to go there."

Schulte said she verbally committed over the summer following another stint with the North East Nebraska Extreme in the AAU circuit.

Though she has one season of high school basketball left, Schulte said it's not hard to start thinking how she could fit in at the D-II level — where the Wildcats won 17 games last season.

"I think I'll fit in well; hope I will," she said. "They play just about the same style I like, where you can push the ball and pressure people."

Her future coach said as much, that Schulte — who figures to play at the three, but move around — fits Wayne State's style.

"Maggie ... will do whatever is needed for her team to win," WSC coach Chris Kielsmeier said in a release. "She is a very smart player that really understands the game."

Not only that, she remains humble, according to Wynot head coach Steve Wieseler.

"She's got so much natural ability, but she's so low key about it," Wieseler said Wednesday. "She's never been about the individual stuff, it's always about the team."

And that attitude has paid off for the Lady Blue Devils, who have realized the stress

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# Elk Point-Jefferson's Bertram Set To Head West



Elk Point-Jefferson standout Keely Bertram, sitting, signed a national letter of intent to attend Black Hills State and play basketball for the Yellow Jackets. Pictured with Keely are parents (left) Rahn and Maria Bertram, sister Kalla Bertram and EPJ girls' basketball coach Gary Nebelsick.

## Huskies' Standout To Play Basketball At Black Hills State

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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Keely Bertram vaulted herself on to the Black Hills State basketball radar thanks to a

Bertram, an Elk Point-Jefferson senior who signed Wednesday to play basketball at Black Hills State, held her own against Kaylee Johnson during a team camp last summer.

Johnson, a 6-foot-3 nationally-ranked forward from Casper, Wyo., is headed to Stanford. So yeah, it was a memorable performance for the 5-foot-9 Bertram.

"I'm pretty sure I held her to 10 and 12 points," Bertram joked Wednesday night. "I might have even knocked her over. I loved making her mad."

Among those who saw the

gutsy effort were the coaches from Black Hills State.

"We already liked her, but after that game, we loved her," head coach Mark Nore said Wednesday.

"She didn't back down one bit, she embraces that kind of a challenge," Nore added. "From our standpoint, we were sold. It was just a matter of hoping that she liked us; that it fit."

Bertram, who ranks third on EPJ's all-time scoring list, has averaged 16.4 points, 5.4 rebounds and 2.7 steals throughout her 64-game varsity career.

Jokingly referring to her as "a tough skinny," Nore said he Bertram's versatility fits the BHSU mold.

"We play all our kids everywhere, and fits our style," he said. "Both kids we signed (Wednesday) fit to a T

what we look for in our players. And Keely is just what we look for; a kid who never quits on plays."

It wasn't until she visited the Spearfish campus that she "fell in love" with the school.

"There was just something about it. The other campuses I visited just didn't feel right," Bertram said. "When we were on campus, what I saw of it wasn't what I expected, but it's gorgeous."

Black Hills State, a member of the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC), has won 12 games each of the past two years after transitioning from the NAIA ranks — where the Yellow Jackets won 28, 26, 26 and 24 games in a 4-year span.

"The RMAC is a physical league, but pretty guard oriented," Nore said. "A lot of the teams run the four out, one in (offense), so it's im-

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# USD Signing Roundup: Softball Team Signs Five

VERMILLION — University of South Dakota head softball coach Amy Klyse is pleased to announce the signing of five players to a National Letter of Intent. The five athletes will be eligible to compete for the Coyotes in the fall of 2014.

The signees include middle infielder Emily Winckler (Sioux Falls/Washington HS), catcher Brooke Curtis (Owasso, Okla./Owasso HS), outfielder Christy Warnock (Omaha, Neb./Millard North HS), third baseman/outfielder Taylor Steinfeldt (Ankeny, Iowa/Ankeny

HS) and pitcher/first baseman Megan Green (Rapid City/Stevens HS).

"Congratulations to Christy, Megan, Brooke, Taylor and Emily," said Klyse. "We are thrilled to have this class join our program. They bring a unique combination

of skills, game knowledge and academic strength. They will bring power to the middle of our lineup and are versatile on the field defensively. We graduate four seniors this year, and we expect this class to have an immediate impact."

Winckler is a two-time team captain who has led Washington to three consecutive Class A state titles. She earned all-state honors as a junior when she hit .333 with four home runs, 16 RBIs and

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# LANCER BASKETBALL

Tomorrow Night! MMC Women vs. Dakota State University

**TIP-OFF: 7:00 PM | CIMPL ARENA**

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