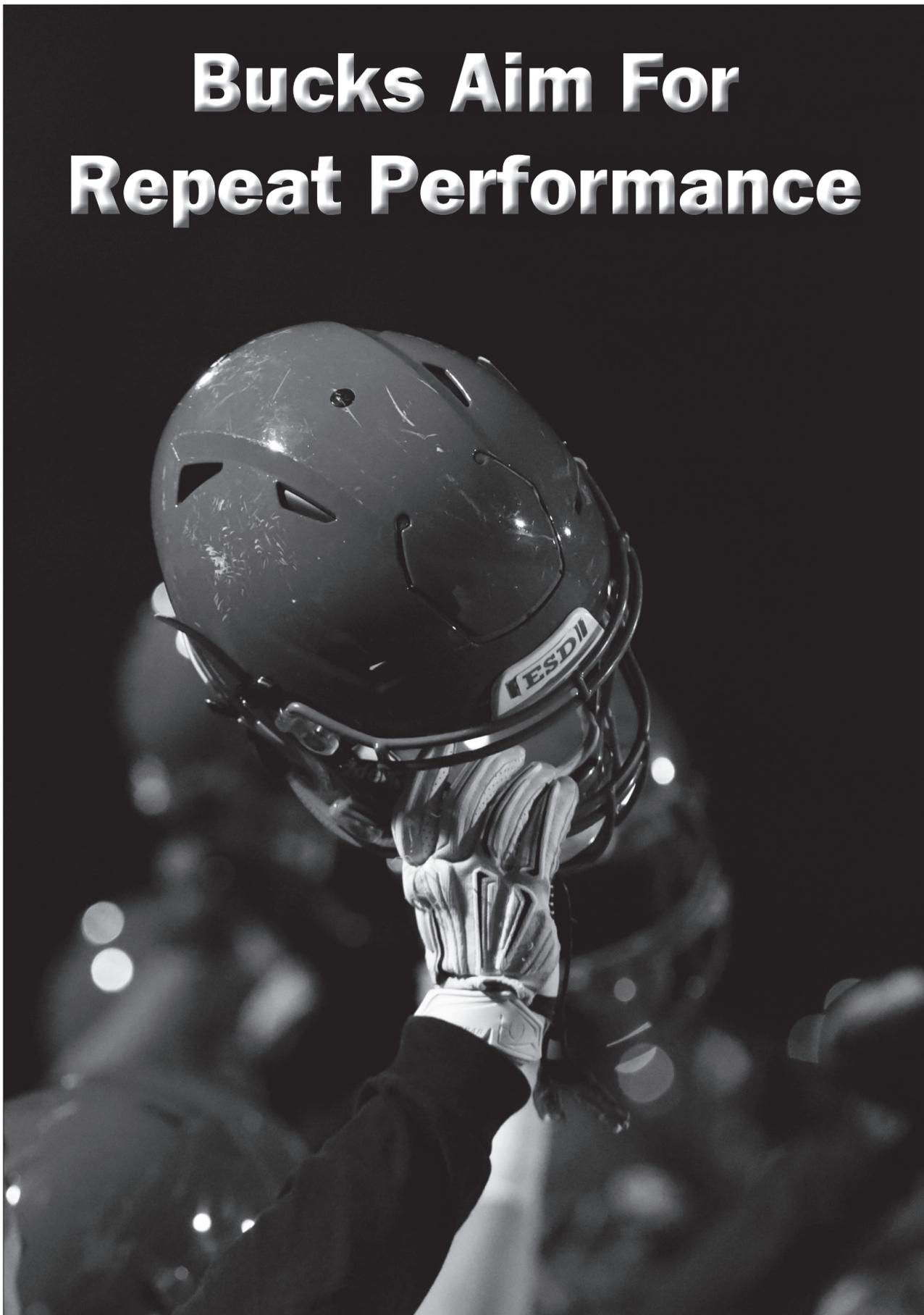


SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FINALS • NOVEMBER 12-14 • DAKOTADOME • VERMILLION

CLASS 9A	CLASS 9AA	CLASS 11A	CLASS 9B	CLASS 11B	CLASS 11AA	CLASS 11AAA
Canistota (12-0)..... 56 Sully Buttes (10-2)..... 8 THURSDAY	W-WS-SC (11-1)..... 22 Wolsey-Wessington (11-1).... 36 THURSDAY	Madison (12-0)..... 28 West Central (10-2)..... 21 THURSDAY (late)	Langford (11-0)..... Harding County (10-1)..... FRIDAY, 10:30 A.M.	Winner (11-0)..... Tri-Valley (7-4)..... FRIDAY, 1:30 P.M.	Yankton (8-3)..... Pierre (9-2)..... FRIDAY, 7:30 P.M.	S.F. Washington (10-1)..... S.F. O'Gorman (9-2)..... SATURDAY, 7:30 P.M.



P&D FILE PHOTO
Yankton football players hold up their helmets prior to the second half kickoff in the Class 11AA semifinal game with Harrisburg on Nov. 6 at Crane-Youngworth Field. The Bucks face Pierre today (Friday) at 7:30 p.m. in the DakotaDome, looking to defend their state title.

Bucks Aim For Repeat Performance

Yankton Faces Pierre With Hopes Of Defending 11AA Title

A handful of Yankton High School football players wrote a short message on athletic tape and stuck it on their helmets during practice this week.

What did it read?
0-31.
It was a reminder of Yankton's first meeting this season with Pierre: A one-

sided victory for the Governors on Sept. 25 in the Capital City. It marked perhaps the low point of the season for the defending state champion Bucks, who committed eight turnovers that night.

"We feel like we've improved a ton since that game," senior wide receiver Blake Savey said. "If we cut down those turnovers and put a few plays the other way, I think it can be a great football game."

That's exactly what Yankton is banking on for tonight's (Friday) Class 11AA championship game against Pierre at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

The matchup between the last two 11AA champions also pits two teams on a roll: Yankton (8-3) has won five in a row, and Pierre (9-2) has won four in a row.

For the Bucks, in particular, it's a chance for a group of mostly new starters – Yankton returned two on defense, in particular – to get their opportunity to capture a state championship.

"It's a dream accomplishment," senior linebacker Colin Muth said. "Every time you play with a team, you want to get to the highest level, and we've done that."

Patience and progression were needed, however, for the Bucks to turn a corner this season.

There was a stretch where Yankton lost three of four games, including back-to-back shutout losses to Pierre and Sioux Falls O'Gorman – on top of earlier injuries to a number of key players.

The Bucks rebounded, though, and haven't looked back.

"And for our kids to mentally and physically come back from that, and keep working and stay together, all of a sudden you could see they saw the potential," head coach Arlin Likness said. "That's been a big plus."

Now comes the matter of improving on that 8-turnover performance against Pierre.

"To win that first one was a good feeling, but we knew that probably wasn't Yankton's high point," Pierre head coach Jayson Poppinga said. "It'll have a different feel."

Six of Yankton's 16 offensive interceptions this season came that night in Pierre, and the Bucks also fumbled the ball twice – putting the defense against a wall.

"I don't think you can really look

BUCKS | PAGE 8A

By Jeremy Hoeck • jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net



**MOUNT MARTY
LANCERS**

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH | LADDIE E. CIMPL ARENA

LANCER BASKETBALL

MMC MEN VS. WALDORF COLLEGE | TIP-OFF: 6:00 PM
MMC WOMEN VS. DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | TIP-OFF: 4:00 PM

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Theme Night:
Super Hero Hype

