

WOKSAPE

YANKTON CLAIMS COMBINED CROSS COUNTRY TITLE

BY JUSTIN GRODE

On Saturday, October 22, 2011, the South Dakota State Cross Country Meet was held at Yankton Trail Park in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

The girl's varsity team finished first at stat and ran great according to Coach Dannenbring.

Jenna Grossenburg had a personal best race, finishing fourth with a time of (14:37), to lead Yankton, which finished at 75 points.

Whitlee Larson (14:53) and Annie Kruse (14:56) were ninth and tenth, which meant the Gazelles had three girls finish before everyone but Rapid City Central had two finish.

Savannah Woods (15:19) finished 20th and Ashtyn Haak (15:41) finished 32nd to wrap up the Gazelles first five scorers.

Also, Tristan Roy (16:49) placed 76th who was followed by Alicia Aune (17:20) who placed 89th for the Yankton Gazelles as the sixth and seventh runners.

Kipp Kinsley led the charge for the Bucks varsity by finishing fourth with a personal best time of (16:07) to help the Bucks finish 8th at the State Meet.

Brice Cowman also earned a top 25 spot by finishing 19th with a time of (16:47). Jacob Bies (17:24) finished 38th, Ryan

Olson (17:46) placed 56th and Justin Grode (17:56) finished 62nd to complete the Bucks' first five scorers. Logan Smith (18:06) finished 69th followed by Evan Bergeson (18:26) who placed 78th for Yankton.

Kinsley and Grossenburg felt it was a fast course and they were both happy with how their teammates backed up their strong showing at state.

Overall, the Bucks and Gazelles tied for first place for the combined team title with Pierre.

Coach Youmans said, "I felt that boy's team ran the best that we've ever run the entire season. The runners one through six for the boys team's times were the closest they've been all year.

The girl's team ran the best that they've ever run the entire season also and the runners three, four, and five for the girl's team basically won it for us. Everybody ran their greatest races."

However, Yankton won the tiebreaker because the team with the least combined points wins and they had the least combined team points.

Dannenbring said that everyone ran their greatest races Saturday to help win the combined team title.

Dannenbring is hoping the returning YHS runners are motivated and expect to win the combined team title again next year—if so, the future looks bright for the Yankton Cross Country Team.



PHOTOS BY TYLER CARR

Above: Top: Junior Evan Bergeson runs toward the finish line. Next: The Gazelles Cross Country team sport crowns as they get ready to conquer the 2011 state meet. Below: Both YHS teams pose with the combined team award.

Gazelles Enjoy ESD Conference Title as They Head Into District Competition

BY TORY GROSS

Despite the ups and downs of the past two weeks, the Yankton Gazelles volleyball team triumphed to claim a share of the ESD conference title. The roller coaster ride started when the Gazelles faced Sioux Falls Washington at home on Wednesday, October 13. Designated "Dig Pink" night, the evening started with a bake sale to earn money for the Susan E. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. The players wore pink uniforms and warm-ups, and the crowd sported pink as well. It was successful night all around, as Yankton finished with a 3-0 victory against the Warriors and a total of just over \$700 from the sale of pink-frosted cookies, cupcakes and more.

That was the high point of the week, as the following night the Gazelles took to the road and were handily defeated by Aberdeen Central Eagles 0-3. The grudge match showed an Aberdeen team all revved up and anxious to avenge their own loss to Yankton back in September. The two teams have handed each other their only loss in the ESD Conference. The Gazelles didn't seem to be firing on all cylinders, and that lack of cohesiveness would

continue to plague them as they traveled to play the Roosevelt Rough Riders in Sioux Falls on Tuesday, October 18. Yankton showed a few flashes of team spirit, but it wasn't enough to salvage the situation in the 0-3 match-up.

On Saturday, October 22, the Gazelles finally got back on track, defeating the Pierre Lady Governors at home. The team's determination to win was evident right from the start.

After spending the morning stocking shelves at Yankton's Contact Center for the "Help Us 'Serve' the Community" food drive, the Gazelles had plenty of energy left over to hand the Lady Governor's a decisive 3-0 loss.

That same winning spirit continued on in last night's victory over the Brandon Valley Lynx. The Gazelles celebrated Senior Night by giving their senior players a 3-0 win that kept them at the top of the ESD, a title Yankton shares with Aberdeen. Both teams have only one loss in the conference – to each other.

That ESD title will hopefully give the Gazelles the boost they need to prevail in their last match of the regular season against the O' Gorman Knights, but more importantly, heading into districts in the hopes of arriving at the State Tournament in November.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Gazelle Tennis Team Completes Season

BY TORY GROSS

The Yankton Gazelles tennis team ended their season on a proud note.

Together, the girls achieved an overall record of 26-4, placed third in the ESD, placed eighth at this year's state competition, and took home the sportsmanship award.

The Gazelles were coached by Ginger Larsen.

One player who had a major individual accomplishment was senior Vanessa Rockne, setting the record for most career wins at YHS.

Rockne, who first played on the varsity as a seventh grader, held 147 singles victories coming into her flight one singles match at State.

Rockne ended up placing fifth in both doubles and singles.

Her doubles partner, senior Lexie Klimisch, followed with 122 singles victories entering her flight two singles fifth place match.

Klimisch also earned the individual singles title of the ESD.

The rest of the varsity team included seniors Dani Gill and Leslie Hendersen, as well as underclassmen Sarah Santos, Sarah Rockne and Taylor Rothenberger.

Although eighth is a solid finish, Rockne had aimed for more. "I wouldn't have minded finishing a bit better. I think if we could have been more comfortable playing in the conditions and maybe been a bit more rested that could have resulted in a better performance, but there were solid teams that finished in front of us," she explains. "All the girls played hard and gave it their all, which is really all you can ask for."

The Gazelles connected not just in their play but in the friendships they have made. Since many of the girls have been playing together for several years, they were able to convert that chemistry and bring it to the court.

"Tennis is such a quiet and serious sport, but with the team it feels the complete opposite, which always made playing fun and less stressful," Rockne adds.

Along with the friendships came a host of great memories.

Rockne recalls two such moments, "I will always remember dancing in the gong show to 'Thriller' mixed with 'Party Rock Anthem' and going to State with Ms. Larsen and Mr. Bosch."

The entire year was a priceless combination of victories, friendships, and memories the girls will never forget.

Bucks Look to Advance in Post Season Play

BY NICK ROBINSON

The story of the Bucks season so far would be: come ready to play and avoid injury to achieve great success. Yankton's record this season so far is 7-3.

Yankton ended their regular season going 1-3 down the stretch but with a 35-29 victory over the Mitchell Kernels on October 14th the Bucks claimed a share of the ESD title.

Yankton started off hot, but Mitchell came ready for a shootout. The score kept going back and forth until the middle of the fourth quarter when the Kernels punched in a touchdown pass on a long drive. Then, with about four minutes left Yankton had an amazing drive that ended with a crazy play from Junior Michael Rucker to Connor Fitzsimmons, which bounced off a Kernel defender and into Fitz's hands in the end zone.

"On the last drive everyone stepped up when we needed it most," Rucker said.

With the win, Yankton continues its 28 straight victories over Mitchell. "It's cool to continue a tradition passed on from the 80's", Jase Likness noted.

Yankton now has 31 ESD titles—an ESD record.

With the sole possession of the ESD on line against Brandon Valley at Crane Youngworth, the Bucks got rolled 49-7. Brandon Valley came out the gate and never looked back scoring on its first drive and putting the pressure on Yankton. The Bucks couldn't capitalize on a 4th down on the 2 yard line. Yankton



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MRS. JAMIE VANWINKLE

Logan VanWinkle, Austin Schwarz, CJ Warren, and Terry Huber make a defensive stop for YHS.

couldn't get any momentum in the contest. They scored their first touchdown late in the fourth quarter with a 25 yard touchdown pass from Senior John Vollmer to Jackson Pasco. Jase Likness said, "It was a tough game; it stung a little bit, but it made us refocus and realize what kind of football we need to play."

As the playoffs arrived, the Bucks got seeded 6 and hosted the Pierre Governors, whom they beat 41-7 in the opening game in August. Pierre came into Tuesday night's game with a new look at offense, a sophomore quarterback, and a run heavy playbook. The injury bug hit the Bucks with Seniors Ty Soulek and Brady Knodel and Junior Evan Schroeder all out of

the lineup. Jase Likness said, "We came to the field not ready to play, but after a Coach Likness halftime discussion we stepped it up and played Buck football."

Yankton was led by Connor Fitzsimmons once again who had four touchdowns for the Bucks, one shy of the opening game for Fitzsimmons. Yankton and Pierre ended the first quarter with a 6-6 match. Yankton looked solid in the second half even with a little lighting issue at Crane. Senior Alex McKee led Yankton with 12 tackles and an interception. Juniors Jase Likness and Kellen Soulek both had nine stops.

Yankton continues their playoff run with Sioux Falls rival O'Gorman at Sioux Falls

(McEaney Field) at 6:30pm. The Knights enter tonight's game as the number two seed in the playoffs.

"This is a huge game for us; a lot is on the line. Not just continuing in the playoffs but getting over the hump and beating a good O' Gorman team," Rucker added.

The Bucks will hope to get some starters back for the game and continue the success from last Tuesday against Pierre.

"Pierre was an improved team, but we're going to need to play all four quarters to beat O' Gorman." Likness also added. The winner of the Yankton-O'Gorman game will face the winner of Brookings and Sioux Falls Roosevelt.