

Yankton, Vermillion Set For State Tennis Tourney



Yankton's Sarah Santos hits a return shot during a home match earlier this season. Santos is the lone senior for the Gazelles, who begin play in the South Dakota State Girls' Tennis Tournament today (Thursday) in Rapid City. Vermillion will also compete in the event.

P&D FILE PHOTO

BY NICK ROBINSON
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The Yankton Gazelles will head to Rapid City this weekend for the S.D. State Tennis Tournament with a chip on their shoulder.

Teams from all around the state will meet in Rapid City for the three-day tournament, which starts today (Thursday).

The Gazelles, with a 10-14 regular season record, are coming off a seventh place finish at the Eastern South Dakota Conference tournament.

Sophomore Sarah Rockne led the Gazelles this season. Rockne leaped from the number five spot last year, all the way up to the number one spot this year. She has the best record on the team, 17-10. In doubles matches, she has teamed up with junior Taylor Rothenberger all year long (num-

ber one in doubles) and has a 16-11 record for the season. The duo has jumped two spots from last year and has made some significant strides.

The Gazelles have three new varsity players from a season ago: Alexa Bryan, Kaityln Frank, and Kim Cap who have been around Yankton tennis since the seventh grade.

Lone senior, Sarah Santos has served the role as the team leader for the Gazelles.

"First and foremost, her (Santos) personality and willingness to do anything," coach Ginger Larsen said. "She really puts the team first."

An issue Yankton has seen this season have been growing pains, having five or their seven players as underclassmen.

"This year we are a really young team," Santos said. "But we have definitely gained a lot of

experience."

A good thing about youth is, "There's a lot of room for improvement," Larsen added.

Yankton has had an issue with serving to start the year out. But with hard work the Gazelles have made it a strength.

Just as Locke and Rothenberger, the whole squad has made leaps of progression. The Gazelles have had better communication on the court with their doubles partner.

"We have worked on making smart shots and being competitive in each match," Larsen said.

Larsen has some simple expectations for the Gazelles to live by for this weekend's state tournament.

"(We) make the most of the experience by playing the best



JULIAN H. GONZALEZ/
DETROIT FREE PRESS/MCT

Detroit Tigers third baseman Miguel Cabrera tips his hat to the crowd after coming out of the game in the fourth inning against the Kansas City Royals on Wednesday at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Mo.

TENNIS | PAGE 9

Cabrera Takes Triple Crown

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Miguel Cabrera became the 15th player to win baseball's Triple Crown on Wednesday night, the reluctant superstar thrust into the spotlight after joining an elite list that includes Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams and Lou Gehrig.

Cabrera's milestone wasn't official until the Yankees pinch hit for Curtis Granderson in their game against the Boston Red Sox. Granderson had homered twice to reach 43 for the year, tied with the Rangers' Josh Hamilton and one shy of Cabrera.

Cabrera went 0 for 2 against the Royals before leaving in the fourth inning to a standing ovation. He finished the regular season with a .330 average, four points better than Angels' Mike Trout, his biggest competition for MVP. Cabrera was the runaway leader with 139 RBIs.

Boston's Carl Yastrzemski was the last player to achieve the Triple Crown in 1967.

"I am glad that he accomplished this while leading his team to the American League Central title," Yastrzemski said in a statement. "I was fortunate enough to win this award in 1967 as part of the Red Sox's 'Impossible Dream Team.'"

Commissioner Bud Selig said also offered his congratulations, calling the Triple Crown "a remarkable achievement that places him amongst an elite few in all of baseball history."

The crowd at Kauffman Stadium gave him a standing ovation before he fled out in the first inning. He struck out in the fourth inning but remained in the game, allowing Leyland to remove him with two outs to another standing ovation from thousands of appreciate fans.

Cabrera high-fived his teammates as he entered the Detroit dugout, then walked back to the top step and waved his helmet. When the milestone became official, it was displayed on the center field scoreboard to another standing ovation.

"I would say without question he's enjoyed it. How could you not enjoy what he's done if you're a baseball player?" Tigers manager Jim Leyland said before the game.

"I would also add to that I doubt very much, knowing him, that he necessarily enjoys all the extra attention, and all the extra conversations he has to have, it's kind of out of his realm in personality, to be honest with you."

Cabrera's pursuit of history has occurred largely in the dark, though, overshadowed by thrilling pennant races, the sheer enormity of the NFL — even the presidential election.

An event that in other years might dominate headlines has been mostly cast aside.

"The entire baseball world should be here right now," said Tigers ace Justin Verlander, the reigning AL MVP, who may soon watch that award get handed off to his teammate.

Perhaps part of the void has to do with Cabrera's very nature.

He's not the boisterous sort, never one to crave attention. He would rather hang out with a couple of buddies than stand in front of a pack of television cameras, answering countless questions about what makes him one of the game's most complete hitters.

"He's not a talkative guy," said Tigers catcher Alex Avila. "One, he doesn't speak English that well, but two, he lets his ability carry through."

It takes a special breed to hit for average, power and in clutch situations, which is why there have only been 14 players to achieve baseball's version of the Triple Crown, an honor roll that includes iconic players such as Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams and Lou Gehrig.

Barry Bonds and Alex Rodriguez never accomplished it, failing to win the batting title, and countless other Hall of Fame players have fallen short of one of sport's rarest feats.

To put it in perspective, consider horse racing's Triple Crown.

The last thoroughbred to win the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes in the same year was Affirmed in 1978, more than a full decade after Yastrzemski's mag-

CROWN | PAGE 9

Raiders Sweep Mount Marty

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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The Mount Marty Lancers are keeping their heads up after a tough loss to the Northwestern Red Raiders Wednesday night.

MMC faced the Red Raiders for their "Think Pink" night in Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) volleyball action at the Laddie E. Cimpl Arena. Northwestern swept MMC 3-0 for the night with scores of 25-12, 25-12, 25-14.

After struggling to get ahead in the first game with the Red Raiders putting up 15 points against MMC's six points, the Lancers would go on to score a total of 12 points against Northwestern's 25 point win.

MMC was able to jump ahead 5-3 in the second set, but Northwestern made a come back with an 11-7 lead. Northwestern kept the lead until their 25-12 win.

The Lancers continued to put up a fight in the third set, but ultimately fell to Northwestern 25-14.

Sophomore Caitlyn Illg said the team will have to stay focused and keep working hard in practice after Wednesday's game.

"We were just a little bit out of focus," she said. "Sometimes we get on the court and we're a little tense, but once we relax we get on a roll."

After competing well for the last three matches, Illg said it was a challenge to keep the momentum going.

"I definitely see us going up though," she said. "We're lower ranked right now, so all we can do is go up."

MMC head coach Candice Klimer said it will be important to focus on consistency to prepare for their next match.

"We were trying different things throughout the night to get the momentum up, like putting in girls we normally wouldn't, but things just weren't clicking tonight," she said.

Illg said the young team will work to put everything together for their next match at Concordia on Saturday.

You can follow Emily Niebrugge on Twitter at twitter.com/ENiebrugge



Mount Marty's Bailey Kuchta, 4, attacks against a Northwestern College double-block during their Great Plains Athletic Conference volleyball match on Wednesday at Laddie E. Cimpl Arena.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

A-MAZING



JOSE LUIS VILLEGAS/SACRAMENTO BEE/MCT

Oakland Athletics closer Grant Balfour celebrates after getting the last out in the 9th inning against the Texas Rangers at O.co Coliseum in Oakland, California on Wednesday. Oakland Athletics defeated the Texas Rangers 12-5 to win the American League West divisional title. Oakland had trailed the Rangers by 13 games earlier this season.

Twins End Season With Loss

TORONTO (AP) — Brandon Morrow struck out a season-high 11, Omar Vizquel wrapped up his 24-year career and the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Minnesota Twins 2-1 on Wednesday night to complete a three-game sweep.

Morrow (10-7) allowed one run and three hits in eight innings, his longest outing since a complete game victory at Chicago on June 6. Toronto's staff leader in wins, the right-hander reached double digits in victories for the third straight season.

Brandon Lyon finished the ninth for his first save as the Blue Jays avoided 90 losses, finishing at 73-89. They finished at .500 last season.

Mike McCoy replaced Vizquel with two outs in the ninth and the veteran infielder left to a standing ovation, hugging his teammates, doffing his cap and tapping his heart to show his appreciation.

The Blue Jays honored Vizquel by having him throw out the first pitch. The three-time All-Star and 11-time Gold Glove winner has said he intends to retire.

Vizquel, 45, made one final start at shortstop. It was his 2,709th game there, the most in major league history.

Fans stood and cheered, many waving Venezuelan flags, when Vizquel came to the plate for the first time in the third. He later drew cheers for a running, no-look basket catch on Drew Butera in

the top of the seventh, and got another ovation after lining a base hit to center in the bottom half, his final at-bat. The hit was the 2,877th of his career.

Starting in Toronto for the first time, Canadian-born rookie left-hander Scott Diamond (12-9) allowed two runs and five hits in five innings. He walked one and struck out three.

Twins infielder Trevor Plouffe had to leave after appearing to land awkwardly on first base on his fielder's choice groundout in the sixth. He was replaced by Alexi Casilla.

Minnesota's Joe Mauer went 0 for 2 with two walks in his career-high 147th game, dropping his average to .319.

The Twins finished 66-96, three wins better than last season, but they finished with the AL's worst record for the second straight year and were last in the division in consecutive years for the first time since 1999-00.

Anthony Gose started a two-out rally with a triple to right-center in the third. Rajai Davis drove in Gose with a single, then stole second and scored on a base hit by Adeiny Hechavarria.

The Twins cut the deficit in half in the fourth, loading the bases with a single and two walks and scoring when Toronto couldn't turn a double play on Matt Carson's fielder's choice.

Jacks' Lally Up For Rice Award

BROOKINGS — South Dakota State University linebacker T.J. Lally was among 16 players named Wednesday to the official watch list for the Jerry Rice Award as the top freshman in the Division I Football Championship Subdivision.

A redshirt freshman from Chicago, Lally ranks second on the nationally ranked Jackrabbits for tackles with 41 and shares the team lead with four sacks. He has twice been named Missouri Valley Football Conference Newcomer of the Week and also was named MVFC Defensive Player of the Week following the Jackrabbits' conference-opening win at Indiana State on Sept. 22. Lally also has intercepted a pass, forced a fumble and recovered a fumble in 2012.

The Rice Award, named for the legendary wide receiver, who played in the FCS (then Division I-AA) at Mississippi Valley State, will be voted on by a national panel of sports information and media relations directors, broadcasters, writers and other dignitaries following the regular season. The list will grow to 20 finalists by then, with the award to be presented Dec. 17 in Philadelphia.

Lally is the second Jackrabbit football player in as many days to be considered for a national award by the Sports Network. Sophomore running back Zach Zenner, who leads the nation in rushing, was officially named to the Walter Payton Award Watch List for the top FCS player, on Tuesday.