

# Lot At Stake In Tonight's Yankton-Pierre Showdown

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Number one meets number two. The two teams in the newly-configured Class 11AA division will square off tonight (Friday) when top-ranked and unbeaten Pierre visits second-ranked Yankton. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Crane-Youngworth Field. And so, it really comes as no surprise that there is a lot riding on tonight's outcome — from Eastern South Dakota Conference (ESD) standings on up to potential playoff scenarios. "We've put ourselves in a position to have a lot at stake here," said Yankton head coach Arlin Likness, whose Bucks (3-3) have won two straight. "Prior to two weeks ago, we were just

hoping to make the playoffs. Now we're looking at, you win this game, you have a shot to maybe host a couple playoff games. "As you keep working and getting better, your goals change." On the reverse side for the Governors (5-0), they are seeking their first out-right ESD title in 25 years. Pierre has twice shared the league crown, according to first-year head coach Jayson Poppinga. "The ESD was one of our goals at the start of the season," Poppinga said. "Our seniors haven't beaten Yankton or Brandon Valley in their careers, so there's a lot stake for us." While Pierre had its bye week last Friday, the Bucks were grinding out a 17-7 win at Watertown in sloppy weather conditions. Yankton had

rushed for a total of 181 yards over its previous four games, but ran for 204 against Watertown — led by 151 from Levi Davis. The miserable weather conditions in Watertown prevented Yankton from doing much through the air — it was just 4-of-16 — meaning the highly-touted Buck Spread offense was essentially grounded. "It should have given us some confidence that yeah, we can run the ball if we put our minds to it," Likness said. "That's what happened. Our kids pinned their ears back and decided we needed to move the ball." With both sides of the Yankton offense now having shown it can dominate a game, the Governors know they have a challenge in front of them, Poppinga said.

"That's the big challenge for us, knowing they have a lot of confidence right now," he said. "They believe they can win against anyone." In the case of Pierre, it hasn't stumbled yet this season. The catalyst for the Governors is senior quarterback Alex Gray, who has passed for 892 yards and 11 touchdowns, also leads the team in rushing (337 yds, 6 TD). His receiving targets have been balanced. Senior Austin Christopher leads the team with 14 catches for 264 yards and six touchdowns, while senior Ethan Case (13-211) and senior Garrett Pochop (10-255, 3 TD) are also threats. Gray, though, is what gets the

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### YHS GAMEDAY

**Pierre (5-0, 3-0 ESD) at Yankton (3-3, 1-3 ESD)**  
7 p.m., Crane-Youngworth Field

**SERIES SINCE 1981:** Yankton holds a 29-10 advantage, including three straight wins in the series.

**LAST MEETING:** The Bucks scored a 27-21 win in 2012.

**LAST WEEK:** Yankton grinded out a 17-7 victory at Watertown. Pierre had the week off.

**NEXT UP:** Yankton closes the regular season at Harrisburg and Pierre hosts Brandon Valley.

**FOLLOW THE GAME ONLINE:** The Press & Dakotan will host a live chat during the game. Find it here: [http://www.yankton.net/yhs\\_gameday/](http://www.yankton.net/yhs_gameday/)

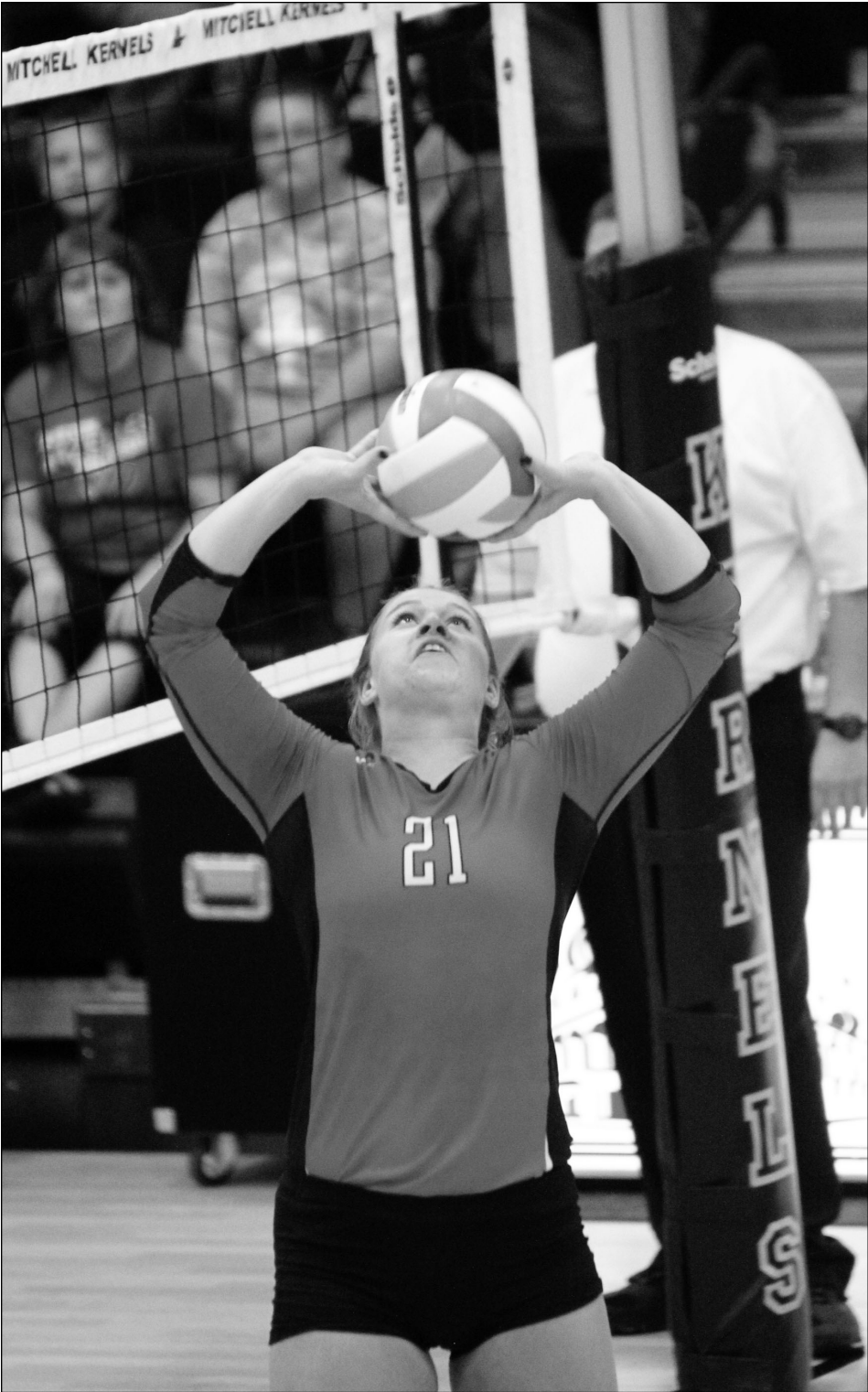
## High School Volleyball

# Mitchell Sweeps Gazelles

BY AARON SAUNDERS  
Mitchell Daily Republic

MITCHELL — For 23 years, Mitchell head coach Deb Thill has been the face of Kernel volleyball. Thill started as the program's first head coach in 1991 and hit another milestone Thursday as the Kernels beat Yankton 25-14, 25-14, 25-13, garnering Thill her 400th career victory. "It is a nice win, but I would prefer that we concentrate on getting more wins throughout the season," said Thill, who joked that the milestone is telling her age. "It doesn't matter how many wins I get. I just want these kids to keep getting wins." She said the majority of credit goes to the players she has coached along the way. "We have had some great volleyball players to come from this program," Thill said. "We have also had some great teams and have always competed pretty well at the double-A level." One of Thill's best teams was her 2003 squad, a team which is the only volleyball team to win the Class AA championship in school history. One of the top players Thill has coached plays this season. Taylin Alm led the Kernels over the Gazelles in the Eastern South Dakota Conference win, recording 19 kills and five aces. Alm, who became Mitchell's all-time career kill record holder Tuesday, helped the Kernels jump out to an 8-3 lead in the first set. Mitchell (7-6, 5-6 ESD) went on to win the set 25-14 with solid serving led by Alm and Kennedy Ischen, who finished with three aces. The Gazelles didn't have much success fending off the Kernels' frontline. Yankton (1-12, 1-11 ESD) trailed 8-4 early in the second set but man-

aged to battle back and tie the game at 10. But the Kernels went on a 5-1 run to take command of the set, eventually winning the set 25-14. Mitchell took the momentum through the third set for the win. The Kernels were in attack mode all night and didn't give the Gazelles many opportunities to score. Mitchel got offensive contributions from Sidney Neugebauer, Emma Schmidt, Rachel Bucholz, Shelly Iburg and Alison Murphy. Schmidt had 29 assists, 10 digs and four kills, while Iburg had six kills. Neugebauer had four kills and 11 digs, Murphy added three kills and Bucholz had two kills. "I thought we did a good job of coming out strong and eliminating errors," senior setter Emma Schmidt said. "Errors have cost us games in the past. I think this win really brought confidence to our team, and we did a good job with serve/receive and playing good defense." First-year Yankton coach Tiffany Beste said the Kernels did a good job of taking her team out of the game. "They took us out of our serve/receive almost the whole match, and Taylin Alm had a good game against us," Beste said. "I think we really struggled to find any rhythm all night." Yankton (1-12, 1-11 ESD) was led by Becky Frick and Sophie Drotzmann. Frick had six kills, one ace and eight digs, while Drotzmann had five kills and one block. Morgyn Jaquith added nine assists and five digs. Haley Mines led the Yankton defense with 10 digs. The Kernels host Aberdeen Central Tuesday, while Yankton hosts Watertown Saturday. In sub-varsity action,



AARON SAUNDERS/MITCHELL DAILY REPUBLIC  
Yankton's Paige Theiman records a set assist during the first set of a high school volleyball game Thursday in Mitchell.

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## Volleyball: Gayville-Volin Wins Home Tri.; Tri-Valley Tops EPJ

GAYVILLE — Gayville-Volin won both of its games against Menno and Irene Wakonda in three sets in a home volleyball triangular Thursday. Menno beat Irene-Wokonda after losing the first two sets and winning the last three sets. **GAYVILLE-VOLIN DEF. MENNO 25-16, 25-12, 25-9:** In the win for Gayville-Volin, Kelia Barta had 18 kills, four digs and two aces. Rachel Haas had eight kills and made nine digs. Vanessa Ryken had 28 assists for the game and six aces. Genevieve Clark had nine kills, made nine digs and two aces. **GAYVILLE-VOLIN DEF. IRENE-WOKONDA 25-15, 25-18, 25-7:** In the win for Gayville-Volin, Kelie Barata had 16 kills, made five digs and had four aces. Rachel Haas had eight kills, three blocks and five digs. Rachel Nickles had seven kills and four blocks. Vnessa Ryken had 22 as-

sists, three digs and two aces. Genevieve Clark had six kills, nine digs and two aces. Viola Ishmael had six digs and four aces. **MENNO DEF. IRENE-WAKONDA 18-25, 16-25, 25-20, 25-23, 25-12:** In the win for Menno, Madison Huber led the team with 21 assists, 18 digs and three aces. Abby Herrboldt had seven kills, three assists and 14 digs. Christina Herrboldt had seven kills, 11 digs and three aces. Tara Spencer had 11 kills, six blocks and 13 digs. Next Menno will play Hanson Saturday, Irene Wakonda will play Andes Central Tuesday.

### Tri-Valley 3, Elk Point-Jefferson 2

COLTON — With 13 digs, Brooklyn King led the Tri-Valley Mustangs in the 3-2 high school volleyball victory against the Elk Point-Jefferson Huskies Thursday night in Colton with scores of 25-22, 16-25, 24-14, 19-25, 15-10.

Emma Johnson had 10 kills in the win, while Kaitlyn Garrison had nine kills and five digs. Olivia Minnaert also put up three aces, while Mariah Swier recorded four assists and two aces. Amy Zeller had 19 digs and seven kills for the Huskies, with Allison Targonski contributing 14 digs. Keely Bertram added 14 kills, and Amber Hanson recorded 14 assists. Elk Point-Jefferson hosts Akron-Westfield, Iowa Saturday, while the Mustangs host Sioux Falls Christian Tuesday. **ELK POINT-JEFFERSON (9-8).....22 25 14 25 10 TRI-VALLEY (11-7).....25 16 25 14 25 15**

### Bon Homme 3, Freeman 0

TYNDALL — The Bon Homme Cavaliers beat the Freeman Flyers 25-22, 25-7, 25-15 in volleyball action Thursday. In the win for the Cavaliers, Allie Adams led the team with 15 assists and eight aces. Caitlin McLouth had 10 kills and two blocks. Kelsey Sutura led defensively with 18 digs. For the Freeman Flyers, Nicole Hincley had three kills and shelly jensen made seven digs. Bon Homme won both the junior varsity and C-matches in two sets. Next Bon Homme will play at Scotland and Freeman will at Canistota.

**FREEMAN (2-11).....22 7 15**  
**BON HOMME (14-5).....25 25 25**

### Madison 3, Bloomfield 1

BLOOMFIELD, Neb. — Madison defeated Bloomfield 3-1 Thursday night in Bloomfield with scores 19-25, 25-23, 25-15, 25-23. Brittany Kerbal recorded 16 digs for Bloomfield, while Lexie Hauger had 10 digs and three kills. Amanda Goeden had four assists, while Kenna Fiedler put up three kills. No stats were reported for Madison. Madison hits the road to face Garretson Tuesday, while Bloomfield travels to play Winside Saturday. **MADISON (10-7).....19 25 25 25**  
**BLOOMFIELD (4-11).....25 23 15 23**

### Parker 3, Scotland 0

SCOTLAND — Amber Avery led the Parker Pheasants to a 3-0 victory (25-18, 25-20, 25-11) with 17 assists, nine digs and one kill against the Scotland Lady Highlanders Thursday night in Scotland. Carley Skorepa recorded 11 kills and five digs

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## Wolves Top Wolters, Bucks In Preseason

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Othys Jeffers had 13 points and six rebounds to lead the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 98-89 preseason victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Thursday night. John Henson led the Bucks with 16 points and Caron Butler added 13. Milwaukee finished with 23 turnovers. The game was played before a sellout crowd of 3,250 at the Sanford Pentagon, the home of the NBA D-League's Skyforce. Fan favorite Nate Wolters, a rookie out of South Dakota State, got the start at point guard for the Bucks. He scored 10 points in 20 minutes.

## Minnesota Football Coach Jerry Kill On Leave

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Even as his seizures have grown in frequency over the last two years, Minnesota coach Jerry Kill has always maintained that his epilepsy would never slow him down. When he wasn't able to make it to a game for the first time in his coaching career last weekend against Michigan, Kill decided it was time to take a step back, put his health before football for once and try to get a handle on an issue that has taken him from the sideline twice in the last month. Kill and the university announced Thursday that the coach is taking an open-ended leave of absence from the team to focus on treatment and management of his epilepsy, and it is uncertain when he will be able to return to the Golden Gophers. "This was a difficult decision to

make, but the right decision," Kill said in a statement distributed by the university. "Our staff has been together a long time and I have full confidence in coach Claeys and them during my time away. Every decision that will be made will be in the best interest of the players and the program. I look forward to returning to the Minnesota sideline on a full-time basis soon." As he has each time Kill has been absent from the sideline, defensive coordinator Tracy Claeys will fill in as acting head coach. Kill and the bulk of his assistants have been together longer than any staff in the country, and they'll lean on that continuity and familiarity now more than ever. "As a staff we are all happy he's made this decision to do this," Claeys said. "We support him 100 percent. We

will represent him well ... for however long it is." Kill has had five seizures on game day in his two-plus seasons at Minnesota. President Eric Kaler and athletic director Norwood Teague have steadfastly stood behind him through those absences, insisting that the issue could be managed and that the progress the program showed under Kill validated their faith in him. But Kill is on record saying he couldn't continue to miss parts of games, as he did for the second half of last season's game against Michigan State. The seizures appeared to worsen this season. He missed the second half of a win over Western Illinois on Sept. 14 and then couldn't even make the trip with the team to Ann Arbor, Mich., last weekend.

## Yankton 10th At State Tennis After Day One

SIoux FALLS — The Yankton Gazelles sit in 10th place after Thursday's first day of the S.D. State Girls' Tennis Tournament, being held in Sioux Falls and Brandon. Sioux Falls O'Gorman leads the standings with 392 points, followed by St. Thomas More (372). Yankton is the fourth Eastern South Dakota Conference (ESD) in the final standings with 198 points. Three of Yankton's six singles players advanced to the third round of the championship bracket, while two of the doubles duos will play in today's (Friday) consolation semifinals. "We're extremely pleased with the first day, it probably couldn't have gone any better," Yankton coach Matt Termansen said. "We had two big upsets where our girls beat their seeded opponent. "The girls fought hard, and they should be happy." In singles, Sarah Rockne advanced to the quarterfinals at flight one, where she will face Berkley Darr of Sioux Falls Washington today (Friday). Alexa Bryan advanced to the quarterfinals at flight four, where she will play Abbey Cerny of Watertown today (Friday), while Yankton's Anne Knoff won both of her Thursday matches and will face Mira Yousef of O'Gorman in today's flight six quarterfinals. Also for the Gazelles, Taylor Rothenberger will face Simone Droge of Madison in the third round of flight two consolations, and Anna Kokesh went 1-1 Thursday at flight five and will play in today's consolation second round.

In flight three singles, Yankton's Kaitlyn Frank won her first match Thursday. In doubles' action, the flight one tandem of Rockne and Rothenberger advanced to the semifinals of the consolation bracket. They will play Huron today. Bryan and Knoff will also play in today's semifinals, against Milbank. The flight three tandem of Frank and Kokesh lost their second match Thursday in the third round of consolation. State tournament action continues today (Friday) in Sioux Falls and Brandon. Pending bad weather prompted a move indoors, according to Termansen.

## Cross Country: Madison, Lennox Win Dakota XII

ELK POINT — The Madison girls and Lennox boys won team titles at the inaugural Dakota XII Conference cross country meet, held Thursday in Elk Point. Madison was first in the girls' division with 26 points, followed by West Central at 44.

Hailey Streff of Madison was the first across the line in a time of 14:37.40, followed by Lennox's Maisey Bainbridge (14:49.94). Madisen Lavin of Vermillion took third place at 14:56.98. On the boys' side, Lennox was first with 32 points, followed by Beresford at 47. Caleb DeWeerd of Sioux Falls Christian took top individual honors at 17:27.56, while Dakota Valley's Graham Bacon was second (17:31.06). **GIRLS' DIVISION**  
TEAM SCORES: Madison 26, West Central 44, Beresford 55, Lennox 79, Canton 97, Dell Rapids 100, Dakota Valley 109, Elk Point-Jefferson 117, Tea Area 155, Vermillion 158  
TOP 10: 1, Hailey Streff, Madison 14:37.40; 2, Maisey Bainbridge, Lennox 14:49.94; 3, Madisen Lavin, Vermillion 14:56.98; 4, McKayla Wiczorek, West Central 15:03.84; 5, Emily Hawkes, Madison 15:14.39; 6, Cami Streff, Madison 15:14.86; 7, Josie Heeren, Elk

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