

Newcomer Caskey Adjusts To Life With Bucks



P&D FILE PHOTO
Yankton running back Brendon Caskey finds running room against the Sioux Falls O’Gorman defense during an Oct. 2 game in Yankton.

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Brendon Caskey had known since last fall that there was a good chance he could play football for the Yankton Bucks.

He just had to wait.

A transfer to Yankton High School from Norfolk (Nebraska) High School – where he was a running back – before the start of the spring semester, Caskey knew he would have quite a challenge: He would be tasked with quickly acclimating himself to a football program coming off a state championship.

“I knew I was going to be moving up here so I kept my eye on their team,” Caskey said before Monday’s practice. “I knew they won state, so I was looking forward to seeing what we could do.”

Now, over halfway through his first – and only – season with Yankton, the senior running back has proven to be quite a weapon for the Bucks (4-3).

“We’re sure glad we have him,” Likness said. “He’s a smart kid. He understands everything we’re trying to do.”

Caskey, though, isn’t the only newcomer making an impact for the Bucks, who host Douglas on Friday night.

In total, Yankton has four newcomers to the program who have played a key role: Nick Rokusek (Jr., Bon Homme),

Devin Millen (Sr., Bon Homme) and Nick Ahrens (Sr., Doniphan-Trumbull HS, Nebraska).

Four transfers is certainly more than Yankton has traditionally seen.

“We’ve had a couple move in at different times, but it’s always been one or two,” Likness said.

Of the four, the 5-foot-9, 170-pound Caskey has had arguably the greatest effect on the offense.

Through seven games, he has carried the ball 53 times for 273 yards and two touchdowns, and has also caught two passes for 60 yards and a touchdown.

Before he could take the field, however, Caskey had to adjust to life in a new location. The family of four – mom and dad, Caskey and a younger sister – settled into their new town last spring.

“It was definitely hard moving after growing up in Norfolk my whole life,” said Caskey, whose father Kevin, is a pastor at Antioch Baptist Church in Yankton.

“Everybody here has helped accept me and bring me in.”

Caskey’s previous exploits in Norfolk weren’t exactly a surprise to the Yankton coaching staff, according to Likness. They were well aware of what he could do with the football.

“We knew about him last spring, but we wanted to wait and see what he

looked like,” Likness said.

What did Yankton find?

“The good news is, he’s a great downhill runner,” Likness said. “The bad news is, that doesn’t necessarily fit into a double wing set. But we’ve adjusted.”

That was the dilemma for the Yankton coaches: How best could they integrate Caskey’s abilities into their system? The result was to use him out of the pistol and power-I offensive formations.

“Everyone has helped me along the way,” said Caskey, who credited assistant coach Brady Muth with helping him learn the offense.

“It’s definitely a different system,” Caskey added. “We ran more pistol stuff back in Norfolk.”

Caskey had perhaps his best game of the season in last Friday’s win in Huron, as he rushed for 78 yards and accounted for two touchdowns.

The three other newcomers, though, have also played critical roles. Rokusek ranks fourth on the team with 28 tackles, while Ahrens – at 6-foot-6 – has been a mainstay on the lines and Millen has been a consistent option on both sides of the ball.

Although Millen and Ahrens both changed schools prior to their senior year, Caskey said the adjustment to a

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Cubs Hit 6 Homers, Top Cards For 2-1 Lead In NLDS

CHICAGO (AP) — The young sluggers of the Chicago Cubs are making themselves at home in the playoffs.

On a rare off night for Jake Arrieta, the Windy City rookies bashed their way to the brink of the NL Championship Series — and into the record book.

Jorge Soler, Kris Bryant and Kyle Schwarber connected as the Cubs set a postseason mark with six home runs in beating the St. Louis Cardinals 8-6 Monday for a 2-1 lead in the NL Division Series. Arrieta struck out nine before departing in the sixth inning, and the bullpen finished the job in the first playoff game at Wrigley Field in seven years.

“To see the ball fly out of the yard as many times as it did was incredible,” Arrieta said.

The Cubs held a share of the previous postseason homer record, hitting five in Game 1 of the 1984 NLCS against San Diego.

A third straight win for the Cubs on Tuesday afternoon, and the once woebegone franchise will advance to the NLCS for the first time in 12 years. The Cardinals, who led the majors with 100 wins this season, have won at least one playoff series in each of the last four years.

Jason Hammel starts at home in Game 4. John Lackey, who won the opener, pitches for the Cardinals.

Jason Heyward and Stephen Piscotty homered for St. Louis, which got to Arrieta for four runs in his worst start in four months. But the Cardinals were unable to keep the Cubs in the ballpark.

St. Louis trailed 8-4 before Piscotty hit a two-run shot with two out in the ninth, a scary moment for a towel-waving crowd of 42,411 used to playoff heartache. But Hector Rondon retired Matt Holliday on a harmless bouncer to second, and the party was on.

Arrieta improved to 18-1 with a 1.00 ERA in his last 22 starts dating to June 21, but he was far from his usual dominant self. He hadn’t allowed more than three runs in a game since a June 16 loss to Cleveland.

And it didn’t matter, not one bit.

“Today we got his back — just like he always got our backs,” second baseman Starlin Castro said.

Schwarber, Castro and Bryant homered against Michael Wacha in his first playoff appearance since he threw the final pitch of the 2014 postseason for the Cardinals, a game-ending, three-run shot for Travis Ishikawa in the NLCS against the Giants.

Bryant’s two-run drive made it 4-2 with one out in the fifth and chased Wacha in favor of Kevin Siegrist. But Anthony Rizzo followed another long ball, a drive to right for his first hit of the playoffs.

Even Adam Wainwright got into the act, serving up Soler’s two-run shot in the sixth. Soler, who struggled with injuries for much of the year, is 4 for 4 with two homers, four RBIs and five walks in the series.



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Wagner players and fans celebrate after the Red Raiders won the first set of their prep volleyball match against Mount Vernon-Plankinton on Monday in Wagner. The Red Raiders won 3-0, handing the Titans their first loss of the season.

Wagner Hands MVP Its First Loss

WAGNER — The Raiders defended their home turf Monday night as they beat Mount Vernon-Plankinton 25-14, 25-20, 25-20. It was the first setback of the season for MVP.

In the win for Wagner, Ali Kuka had 21 digs and 2 blocks. Jensen Holzbauer had 12 kills and Adrian Weber had 11 kills.

For Mount Vernon-Plankinton, Makaela Kaist had eight kills and 10 digs. Mikayla Weiss had 13 assists.

Mount Vernon Plankinton’s next match is against Tripp-Delmont Armour and Wagner’s next match is against Parkston.

MOUNT VERNON-PLANKINTON (18-1)..... 14 20 20
WAGNER (16-5)..... 25 25 25

Parker 3, Beresford 1
PARKER — Not only did Parker defeat Beresford 25-8, 22-25, 25-19, 25-10 on Tuesday night, but head coach of Parker, Jill Christensen,

earned her 749th career victory with the win.

In the win for Parker, Mackenzie Dean had 44 assists and 10 digs. Hannah Carlson had 26 digs and four kills. Alexis Olson had 15 digs and two ace serves.

For Beresford, Katelyn Wilson had six kills and two blocks. Emma Williams had five blocks. Becca Nelson had eight assists.

Beresford’s next match is against Tea Area on October 13 and Parker is against Parkston on October 15.

BERESFORD (11-10)..... 8 25 19 10
PARKER (20-5)..... 25 22 25 25

Hartington-New-3, Randolph 1
HARTINGTON, Neb – Hartington-Newcastle downed Randolph 25-20, 11-15, 25-19, 25-17 in Lewis & Clark Conference volleyball action on Monday.

In the win for Hartington-

Newcastle, Camie Stratman had 15 attacks and 20 digs. Abby Lammers had 13 attacks and 24 digs. Ryley Eickhoff had 29 attacks and 13 digs.

No stats were provided for Randolph.

Randolph’s next match is against Plainview and Hartington-New Castle’s next match will be at the Ponca triangular.

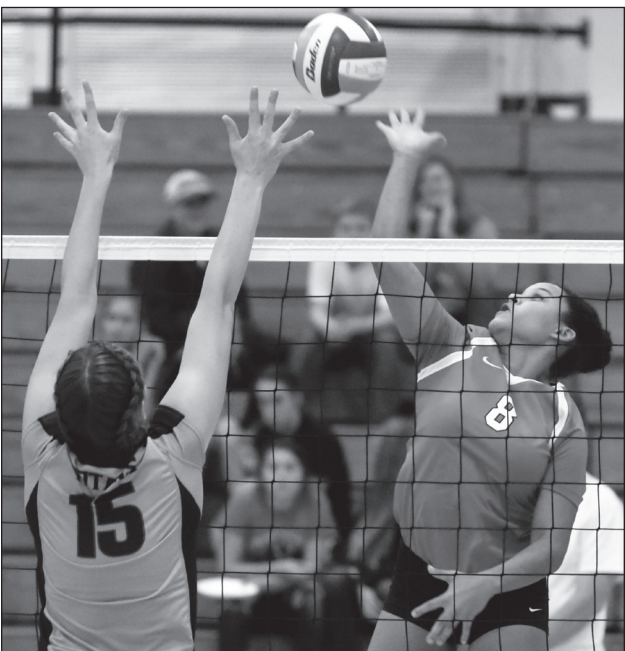
RANDOLPH (10-7)..... 20 25 19 17
HARTINGTON-NEWCASTLE (13-5)..... 25 22 25 25

Madison 3, Garretson 0
MADISON — Madison came to play Monday night as they defeated Garretson in Garretson 25-6, 25-16, 25-11.

In the win for Madison, Marisa Eimer had 25 assists, Valorie Nowstrup had 14 digs, and Olivia Rud had 12 kills.

For Garretson, Peyton Heitkamp and Lara Luke each had 3.5 blocks. Morgan Gloe

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JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Wagner’s Jensen Holzbauer, 8, attacks against the defense of Mount Vernon-Plankinton’s Megan Bultsma during their volleyball match on Monday in Wagner. Wagner won 3-0, handing MVP its first loss of the season.

Royals, Blue Jays Each Force Fifth Game In ALDS Round

HOUSTON (AP) — Almost out of time and out of the playoffs, the Kansas City Royals realized they needed more than a big home run.

They needed a lot of hits — a maybe a little help, too.

The defending AL champions saved their season Monday. They took advantage when Astros shortstop Carlos Correa couldn’t handle a deflected grounder that might have been a double-play ball, rallying for five runs in the eighth inning to beat Houston 9-6, forcing their playoff series to a decisive Game 5.

“We always feel that we’re still in games, and we still have a chance,” first baseman Eric Hosmer said. “That’s the mentality for this whole entire team. It’s never quit, and the character we showed today.

That’s what a championship ballclub does.”

Correa homered twice, doubled, singled and drove in four runs in Game 4 of the AL Division Series. Houston took a 6-2 lead into the eighth, but a tough error charged to the 21-year-old rookie keyed the Royals’ comeback to even the matchup at two games apiece.

“I missed it. That’s what happened,” Correa said. “I wish I was perfect. I wish I could do everything perfect, but I’m not. I’m human.”

Game 5 will be back in Kansas City on Wednesday night. Johnny Cueto is set to start for the Royals against Collin McHugh.

“Everyone that watched that game, everybody that was a part of that game knows how difficult it is to feel like

that game was closing in our favor and then have it not go our way,” Astros manager A.J. Hinch said.

“But it’s a big boy sport. We’ll adjust, and we will be ready to play,” he said.

Late in the game, a tweet from the account of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott congratulated the Astros on advancing to the AL Championship Series. Abbott later tweeted for his personal account: “No predictions. Just support.”

Kansas City opened the eighth with five straight singles off relievers Will Harris and Tony Sipp, with RBI hits by Lorenzo Cain and Hosmer making it 6-4 and leaving the bases loaded with no outs.

“Obviously, we’re pretty late in the game right there and down by four, so not one

guy can get us back in this game. So we got to do whatever we can to keep the line moving,” Hosmer said.

Kendrys Morales followed with a hard, one-bouncer off Sipp’s glove. The ball took two more hops and got past the top of Correa’s mitt, rolling into center field as two runs scored to tie it at 6.

“Just a weird spin on the ball and tough play,” Sipp said. “I’m sure it was tougher than it looked. Game of inches, and I barely missed it.”

Alex Gordon’s RBI ground-out off Luke Gregerson later in the inning put Kansas City ahead.

Hosmer launched a long, two-run homer in the ninth for insurance.

It was the second time in franchise history that Kansas

City had rallied from a four-run deficit after seven innings to win a postseason game. Last year, the Royals trailed Oakland 7-3 in the eighth of their AL wild-card game before eventually winning in the 12th.

Blue Jays 8, Rangers 4
ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Sure, R.A. Dickey was disappointed when he saw Blue Jays manager John Gibbons walking toward the mound.

The 40-year-old knuckleballer had a six-run lead and was one out shy of qualifying for a win in his first postseason start.

Dickey also knew he was handing the ball off to a fellow Cy Young winner, and Toronto went on to beat the Texas Rangers 8-4 on Monday to force a deciding Game 5 at home in the AL Division Series.

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