

ESD Volleyball: Arrows Hold Off Yankton 3-1



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton's Emily Oswald attacks over a pair of Watertown blockers during their Eastern South Dakota Conference volleyball match with the Arrows on Thursday at the Summit Center.

BY MICHAEL HAMMOND
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Macy Denzer led a group of attackers for Watertown as they defeated Yankton in four sets.

"She's one of our go-to players," Watertown coach Kim Rohde said. "She does a good job of placing the ball on the court, finding those open spots."

Denzer led the Arrows in kills with 13 and tied for the team lead with 22 digs and three aces in their 25-16, 23-25, 25-18, 25-20 win over Yankton on Thursday in Yankton.

"Not being able to run points and put things together consistently is what's hurting us right now," Yankton coach Tiffany Beste said. "You can see good offense at times, you can see good defense at times, and we just have to find a way to be consistent."

After being tied at nine in the first set, Watertown took over to take the set 25-16. Denzer had three kills in the set along with two aces, while Alexa Gloe added three aces and Madison Smith three kills.

Yankton won the second set after blowing a 19-14 lead and

being forced to call a timeout down 23-21. From there, the Gazelles would score every point for the rest of the set with Danielle Salvatori and Emily Oswald recording kills, and Sophie Drotzmann blocking an attack from the Arrows to secure a point. Yankton recorded five blocks in the set for points and Becky Frick had four kills.

Watertown came alive again in the third set and won it without any doubt after starting with a 8-1 lead. Denzer was a force in the set with five kills, while attacking partners Smith and Danielle Gottsleben added three.

The Arrows secured the win in the fourth set with the only scare coming on Yankton's four point streak to save match point. Smith finished the Gazelles off with a kill following the streak.

In the loss Yankton excelled at blocking attacks with 11 blocks, with six from Drotzmann and four from Josie Saylor.

"They play well and are a very aggressive team," Rohde said of Yankton. "They have a lot of tall athletes and played well on the block and we knew

we had to come out and go around that."

Beste wants her team to believe that they can win in the future.

"I think if we are walking on the court right now not sure if we can win," Beste said. "If we walked on the court knowing that we can win, we will, and that has got to be a mentality thing on our side of the court."

Beste is also a former coach of the Watertown team three years ago with the seniors being her last group of players.


"It's always interesting," Beste said. "These are the last group of girls that I had, they are a talented group, and it would have been fun to get a win against them."

Watertown will travel to play Mitchell on Tuesday before finishing up with the top two teams in seed points, Harrisburg and Brandon Valley.

"Our last two games are going to be tough against those great ESD teams, so we are really going to have to play some great volleyball," Rohde said.

Yankton will return to action Friday on a trip north to Aberdeen Central.

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YHS GAMEDAY

**Douglas (2-5)
at Yankton (4-3)**

7 p.m., Crane-Youngworth Field

LAST MEETING: Yankton and Douglas have never faced off in football.

LAST WEEK: Yankton bounced back from back-to-back setbacks to roll past Huron 45-18. Douglas dropped an overtime game with Harrisburg, 21-20.

NEXT UP: Yankton finishes the regular season at Harrisburg on Oct. 22. Douglas travels to Class 11A Belle Fourche on Oct. 22.

FOLLOW THE GAME: Jeremy Hoeck (@jhoeck) and James D. Cimburek (@jimburek) will follow the Bucks all season. Follow them on Twitter to keep up with the action.

Bucks Face Douglas For First Time

BY JEREMY HOECK
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Fresh from a jolt of confidence, the Yankton football team is looking to now develop that into momentum.

The Bucks, who had been shut out in two straight games, responded with a 27-point rout of Huron a week ago. It was a welcomed change of fortune for Yankton (4-3), according to senior linebacker Colin Muth.

"Last week was a big week for us," said Muth, the team's leading tackler (67). "We had some rough losses to push through, and we had to be more accountable, like, 'What are we going to do to get better?'"

That's the question for tonight's (Friday) 7 p.m. home game against Douglas: How do the Bucks continue moving forward?

The biggest thing, according to head coach Arlin Likness, is to repeat some of what keyed the Bucks a week ago in Huron.

"Last week was a motivator for our kids," Likness said. "We executed for two and a half quarters consistently, and that's something we hadn't done all year."

"We did the little things correctly, and that made a big difference."

In what will be Yankton's final regular season home game, the matchup with Douglas – the first-ever between the schools – also presents the Bucks with an opportunity to help their bid for a playoff home game.

Heading into tonight's action, Yankton and Harrisburg are tied for second in Class 11AA in power points, while Mitchell is a close fourth – the top four teams get a first-round home game.

First, though, comes the matter of Douglas.

The Patriots (2-5) own wins over Huron and Sturgis, but have also lost to Class 11A teams Hot Springs and St. Thomas More. Douglas, however, has also lost games by margins of 4 points and 1 point – last week in overtime to Harrisburg).

Yankton knows it can't exactly expect an easy game, given Douglas' nature for tight games, Likness said. "Douglas is a team that I think if you underestimate them, they'll get after you," he said. "They've got enough skill and enough speed to be able to be pretty good."

The Patriots, led by left-handed throwing senior quarterback Tucker Severson and senior running back Colton Hiltshew, boast an offense that caught Yankton's attention this week. Muth said.

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Cross Country | State Qualifying Meets

Crofton Sweeps D-2 Titles

BY JEREMY HOECK
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PENDER, Neb. — Even for handily winning her race, Haley Arens didn't have much time to soak in what she had just accomplished.

The Crofton sophomore was joined shortly after by a handful of teammates who were also crossing the finish line.

Highlighted by Arens' individual title and four other runners in the top-15, the Crofton girls' cross country team captured the District D-2 championship on Thursday at Pender's Twin Creek Golf Course.

"It's awesome to see them right there behind me," said Arens, who repeated as district champion. "When you're done, you can turn around cheer for them."

The trip to Pender was made extra special for Crofton when the boys' squad also captured the team title, marking the third straight year that the Warriors swept the championships.

That was the goal all along, according to head coach Jayne Arens.

"They both really wanted it, and to see them reach that goal was a lot of fun,"



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

The Crofton girls' cross country team walks back from the finish line at Thursday's District D-2 meet at Pender's Twin Creeks Golf Course.

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C-2: Hartington Girls Score Historic Victory

Wildcat Boys Qualify Three For State Meet

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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NORFOLK, Neb. – The Hartington cross country team made history on Thursday, not only earning its first-ever team berth into the Nebraska State Meet but winning the District C-2 girls' title. The meet was held at Skyview Park in Norfolk, Nebraska.

The Wildcat boys just missed state as well, finishing fourth in the district meet for a second straight season. Hartington will take three runners to state on the boys' side.

"It's been an amazing season, for both our boys and girls," said Wildcats head coach Mandy Hochstein.

In the girls' race, Hartington put four runners in the

top 12 to easily outdistance Wayne 28-39 for the team title. Columbus Scotus earned the district's third team spot, finishing with 56 points.

"I felt like we worked more as a team today," said Hartington's Allie Rosener, who finished third. "We helped each other, pushed each other."

It marked the first time this season that the Wildcats beat out Wayne in a meet.

"We knew they were a big threat," Rosener said. "We knew we had to chase blue (Wayne's uniform color)."

Fort Calhoun's Taya Skelton won individual honors, clocking a 20:24.44 over the 5,000-meter course. Norfolk Catholic's Audrey Stelling (21:19.53) was a distant second, followed by

Rosener (21:31.42), Scotus' Kaylee Tonniges (21:39.92) and Wayne's Hannah Leonard (21:46.75).

Hartington's Karli McCain (21:48.87) and Anna Burbach (21:49.99) followed in sixth and seventh. Addison Peitz finished 12th (22:08.13) to round out the Wildcats' scoring. Sydney Christensen (24:47.13) finished 41st for Hartington.

"I proud of our teammates and how far we've come," McCain said. "It's exciting."

The emergence of Peitz, a senior in her first season of cross country, was a key in helping the team build, according to Hochstein.

"Especially this year with these girls, adding Addison

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JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Hartington runners collect the District C-2 championship plaque after winning the girls' title at the District C-2 meet on Thursday at Skyview Park in Norfolk, Nebraska.

Gazelles First, Bucks Second In Regular Season Finale

BROOKINGS – The Yankton girls won and the Yankton boys finished second in a cross country quadrangular on Thursday in Brookings.

In the girls' race, Yankton put four runners in the top six to hold off Harrisburg 30-43. Brookings was third at 47.

Savannah Woods led Yankton, winning in 19:11 to beat out Brookings Eleanor Abraham by four seconds. Yankton's Madison McClure (19:44) was third, with Lauren Eidsness (20:57) fifth and Tessa Folkers (21:00) sixth.

The Brookings boys beat out Yankton 25-42, putting three runners in the top four. Harrisburg's Alexander Auch won in 16:55.

Andrew Peitz (17:15) and Nathan Zimmerman (17:33.28) finished fifth and sixth to lead

the Yankton boys. Sam Gusso (17:43.41) was eighth, Brady Jaquith (17:55.53) 11th and Gabe Dannenbring (17:56.91) 112th for the Bucks.

With the regular season complete, Yankton now turns its attention to state, Oct. 24 at Yankton Trails Park in Sioux Falls.

Mitchell, which did not compete in the varsity races, swept the JV team titles.

In the JV girls' race Yankton finished second with 66 points, led by Kylie Bochman's (17:56.34) eighth place finish in the 4,000-meter race.

Mitchell scored 31 to beat out Brookings (41) and Yankton (56) in the boys' race. The Bucks were led by Noah Anderson, who placed second in 14:52.18.

Lavin, Beresford Girls Win Region 3A

BY MARK UPWARD
For the Plain Talk

BERESFORD – Eleven teams chased the Region 3A team title on the Bridges Golf Course in Beresford on Thursday. On the girls' side, Beresford put up a team result of 1:21:32.50 to best all comers while Sioux Falls Christian took the team title on the boys' side with a team result of 1:1:02.03.

Vermillion's Maddie Lavin set the pace for the girls on the course as she had a personal best time in the 5,000 meter event. Lavin's time was 19 minutes and 23 seconds, nineteen seconds ahead of Elk Point-Jefferson's Josie Heeren's time of 19:42.28.

"I took the lead on the back part of the course and it felt very good and I felt like I could do it today," said Lavin. "It has been a work in progress all season and

I came into this meet with fresh legs and it just felt good."

"I am super excited about our girls' performance today," said Vermillion Coach Kelly Fischbach. "We knew that everyone had to pick up one or two places from a week ago and everyone did just that and more."

The top three teams in varsity competition move on to the State Cross Country meet next week to be held in Sioux Falls at the Yankton Trails park. The teams moving on to state include Beresford (1:21:32), Sioux Falls Christian (1:25:44) and Vermillion (1:26:06).

On the individual side of the event, the top twenty boys and girls from each region will automatically qualify for individual honors at the State Cross Country Meet. The girls qualifying our of Region 3A individually are Lavin

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MARK UPWARD/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

Vermillion's Maddie Lavin claimed the girls' title at the Region 3A cross country meet on Thursday in Beresford. She helped the Tanagers finish third as a team, qualifying for state.