

Vermillion Notebook: Balanced Offense Key To Football Team's Great Start

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first installment of a new weekly Vermillion High School notebook.

VERMILLION — The Vermillion High School football team has used a balanced rushing attack to jump out to a 2-0 start to its season, with wins over Lennox (30-14) and South Sioux City, Neb. (24-21).

One of the main reasons for Vermillion's success on the field is the impact of their running game. The Tanagers have a couple of key running backs that have really stood-out this season — in two games, senior Dexter Mehlhaf has rushed for 231 yards and two touchdowns, while junior D'Andre Fore rushed for 119 yards and a touchdown in his one game.

"When we approach every game we would like to see both Dexter and D'Andre each rush for over 100 yards in a game," Vermillion head coach Gary Culver said. "We feel like this season we are multi-dimensional with our two running backs this season."

Culver said that the success of the run so far this season has helped the passing game which showed in the Tanagers' recent game against South Sioux City. VHS

senior quarterback Tyler Husby completed three passes for 82 yards and two touchdowns. Husby has also been a threat on the ground with two rushing touchdowns.

"Once we have the rushing game established it has been easy for us this year to go into play action passing game," Culver said. "Tyler and Ben Kozak connected twice so far this year, but we feel like we have other wide receivers that are able to catch those passes like Chayse Meierkort and Cody Nelson.

"We haven't really rushed the quarterback like we have with Husby in recent years."

Culver said that he also sees good things to come from sophomore Michael Sand, who returned an 82-yard kick-off for a touchdown against Lennox.

"Michael has mostly been a special team guy for us this season," he said. "He has rotated in for us in the running game and he's got a few carries.

"I have been very impressed on how Michael has made a very quick transition from playing freshman football and has made rapid improvements even from week one to week two."

The Tanagers are hoping to continue their strong play this weekend against one of their toughest opponents of the season in St. Thomas More.

"We recognize that St. Thomas More is one of the preeminent teams in Class 11A," Culver said. "It will be a great challenge for our kids to go out to their home turf."

"If we can continue playing like we have been in the first two games, it should be a good game."

Tennis

After play this week, the Vermillion girls' tennis team will already be at the halfway point of its season. And head coach Dan Hanson said that he likes how his team has improved for far.

"Going into the middle part of the season I have really seen a lot more maturity," he said. "Things seem to be coming together better now than at the beginning of the season."

"The doubles teams seem to be meshing together better, which is great for us."

One player that Hanson was looking to make a direct impact after being out last season is junior Valerie Robinson.

"Val is playing great tennis right now," he said. "Nothing seems to be bothering her and she is moving well all over the court."

"She won a match against Rapid City Central and in number one doubles she's been playing very well."

Robinson has partnered with number one player Clarie Jones and Jones has been a quality player for the Tanagers this season. Starting off the season, Hanson said he wasn't sure which girls were going to step up and fill the fifth and sixth positions and he believes that those spots are filled.

Eighth grader Sophie Van Den Hul has stepped up in that fifth spot and fellow eighth grader Abby Weiss is

in the sixth spot.

"Both of them has a successful win at the number three doubles against Rapid City Central, which ultimately helped us earn the victory as a team," Hanson said.

The Tanagers have a big week coming up with three meets in four days. Hanson said that these meets are going to be very important to the season. After Tuesday's 7-2 win over Madison, the Tanagers will compete in the Yankton Triangular on Thursday and the Brandon Invite on Friday.

"There will be five teams at the Brandon Invite," Hanson said. "Seeing those five teams in one weekend is going to be great experience especially when the state tournament rolls around. We just look forward to seeing some of the teams that we don't normally play during the regular season."

Cross Country

Vermillion's cross country boys' and girls' team have gone through two meets so far this season and head coach Kelly Fishbach said the boys' team has had a lot of positive experiences.

"From the end of last year to the beginning of this year the boys' team in general is much improved," he said. "Even from a week ago, every one of the boys' have improved their times."

On the boys' side, one of the runners that Fishbach didn't really know what expect coming into the season, but has made vast improves starting out the season is sophomore Matthew Hirsch.

"Matt has been a huge surprise starting out the season," she said. "He has been with us for the past two years and he finished sixth at the USD Don Baker Invite behind fellow runner Alex Card."

Card, a senior, has been the key for Vermillion this season finishing fifth at the Beresford Invite and the

USD Don Baker Invite.

On the girls' side, they took second place in the Beresford Invitational and saw two individuals in the top six with sophomore Blair Gilkyson and senior Ashley Brunick.

"Brunick's leadership as a senior has been a great contribution to our team this season," Fishbach said. "She has done really well getting the girls together this summer and working out."

"Gilkyson has just been solid again for us for the four years that she been with us."

Fishbach has also said sophomore Morgan Hower and senior Jana Bye both have improved early in the season and are hoping to continue to build.

"Morgan has already improved her time by 45 seconds from the first meet to the second meet," she said. "Jana has also helped out this season as a senior."

The Tanagers just ended their first meet in Vermillion and they will compete in their last meet in Vermillion on Sept. 17 until the Region 3A Meet in October. Fishbach is hoping that the familiarity of the course is going to help them gain confidence before going on the road for the next four invites.

"I think since the boys did so well in the meet on Sept. 3 is going to give them that confidence going into this upcoming meet," she said. "We will also be able to go and train on the course that the region meet will be, so that will help us and eliminate the excuse that we didn't know the course."

Fishbach said that going into the middle of the season, she is hoping that the girls' squad will be able to stay healthy with their top two runners doubling up in sports this fall.

"Ashley is playing soccer and Blair is plain volleyball so I'm keeping my fingers crossed that they both will stay healthy," she said. "They both were bit by the injury bug last year, so I'm just hoping they both keep healthy."

YHS

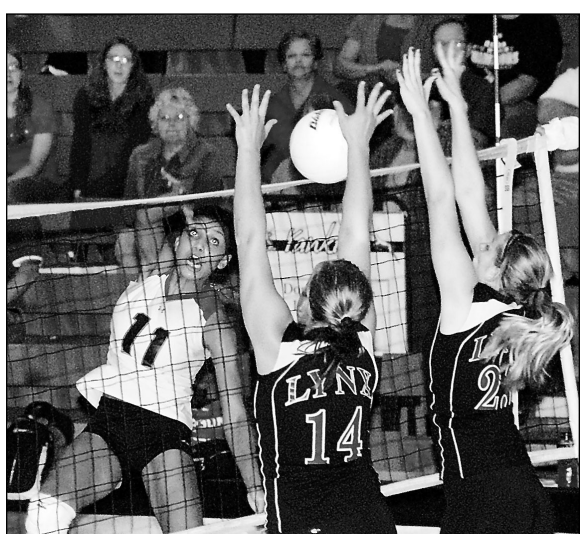
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nine-point run to take a commanding 14-2 lead. The Lady Lynx got a point back, but with Chloe Cornemann at the serving line, the Gazelles scored another five points for a 19-3.

Brandon Valley got a couple more points here and there, but the Lynx wouldn't be able to overcome the big deficit as Yankton won the second set, 25-12.

"Brandon is a young and pretty inexperienced team, and even being down by 10 points, it is really hard to think there is any chance of making anything out of that," Woodward said. "As a coach, when we get down that bad, we just want that set to get over with and start 0-0 again."

First year Brandon Valley head coach Lindsey Smith said that despite taking the tough loss in that second set, it isn't over until a team wins



Yankton's Mikala Hora, left, attacks against the double-block of Brandon Valley's Andrea Hanson, 14, and Heidi Hoff.

three sets. "We are a very young team and at the beginning, the girls are so ready to play," she said. "Once they lose a tough set, they get so down on themselves, I just have to encourage them that it isn't over until a team reaches three sets."

At the beginning of the final set, it was almost a

repeat of the first set with each team playing point for point. It wouldn't be until the ninth point when Yankton was able to create some space from the Lady Lynx.

The Gazelles took a 14-9 lead and didn't give up to much ground trading points with Brandon Valley, but Yankton would go on another four-point

run and later took a 22-14 lead. The Gazelles finished off Brandon Valley in the final set 25-15.

"As the match progressed, we had opportunities to get different kids on the floor," Woodward said. "That is one of those things if a starter gets hurt, we needed to take that opportunity to get kids into a match when we can."

Hora powered the offensive with 16 kills and three aces. She also had six digs, while Emily Anderson added eight kills in the win.

"I saw Mikala this morning in the hallway at school and she was all bubbly and ready to play tonight," Woodward said. "She is a kid that is a very competitive person."

"Obviously she is our go to hitter and everyone else knows that, but they still have to stop her," Woodward added.

Emily Fedders led the team in assists with 31, while Cornemann led the team in digs with 16. Fitzgerald had a solid night with seven kills and Lauren Fanta added 11 digs.

The Gazelles continue

their busy week hosting Eastern South Dakota Conference rival Watertown today (Friday).

"Watertown could very easily be a team that we could cross brackets with in November and be the difference between watching the state tournament played on our home floor, or playing in the state tournament," Woodward said. "That is just more incentive to be ready and play well tomorrow night."

Yankton won the JV match, 26-24, 25-17. Mindy Doering had 10 kills and two aces in the win, while Fanta added 15 assists and four digs.

Brandon Valley took the sophomore match, 25-14, 25-14. Whitney Specht had three kills in the loss, while Maria Binder had six assists.

Brandon Valley took both of the freshmen games winning the "A" match, 25-9, 23-25, 25-15, and the "B" match 25-18, 25-20. Morgan Tessier and Hailey Bockholt each had four kills for Yankton in the "A" match, while Amber Livingston had three kills in the "B" match.

USD

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"We're finding that teams are able to expose our weaknesses quite a bit, and we can't have that," said Green, whose team was coming off a 3-2 double overtime win on Monday. "We had a big letdown from having our best game to this one."

"We have to realize that once we give up a goal, we're giving up on things."

Creighton's Emily Orbell scored on a penalty kick at the 17:28 mark of the first half, and a minute later, Andrea Zuniga scored on an assist from Lauren Cingoranelli. At the 38:59 mark, Zuniga scored again, this time on a pass from Brittney Neumann.

The Bluejays — who won 13 games last season — put on a display on how to connect passes, intercept shots out front and move without the ball.

"We shouldn't have come out and though, 'Oh, it's Creighton, we can't beat them,' because we could have," Teslow said. "It was just another team on our schedule."

In the second half, the Coyotes played with an energy that both Green and Teslow said were miss-

ing in the first 90 minutes.

USD's first clean look at a goal came at the 41:32 mark when Teslow, the team's leading scorer, saw her shot sail high.

At the 49:45 mark, Creighton's Kayla Nsien scored an easy goal out front after a Creighton shot was deflected away by USD goalkeeper Jen Ogren.

From that point, though, USD's offense had a handful of other looks, including Teslow's fourth goal of the season at the 80:06 mark.

"What we did in the second half was against their starting defenders, and we should've been doing that all along," Green said.

Added Teslow, "Toward the end, we decided to compete again. We need more of that."

The Coyotes will continue their six-game homestand on Saturday afternoon against Idaho (3-2) at 4 p.m. in Vermillion.

Idaho returns eight starters and 17 letterwinners from last year's 9-10 team that posted the nation's second-best win improvement.

"They're a quality team; we can't just expect to have it easier," Green said. "We have to come out and play more consistent. If we do that, we can compete against a lot of good teams."

VOLLEY

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digs, one kill, and one ace. Dakota Christian (1-3) will travel to the Platte-Geddes Tournament on Saturday. Menno (3-1) will host McCook Central-Montrose next Thursday. Dakota Christian claimed victory in the JV match 2-0.

DAKOTA CHRISTIAN (1-3).....25 25 24 26 15
MENNO (3-1).....21 27 26 24 12

Big East Conf. Tourn.

PARKER — The Parker Phasants won two games on their home court in the first two rounds of the Big East Conference Tournament, which began Thursday in Parker.

Sioux Valley and Chester each came away with victories on the day, while Baltic took two tough losses.

The Big East Conference Tournament will continue in Baltic on Saturday.

PARKER DEF. BALTI, 25-21, 25-8, 25-14; Jess Kleinsasser had nine kills and three digs for Parker (6-1), while Micalanene Hanten added seven kills, eight digs and two aces.

Baltic's Marissa Whipple had six kills and two digs in the loss.

PARKER DEF. CHESTER AREA, 25-22, 25-16, 23-25, 19-25, 15-11; Kleinsasser led the team with 15 kills and six digs for the Phasants (7-1), while Tessa Wealdreyer added 13 kills. Chester Area's Nicole Huve and Elena Borah each posted 11 kills. Borah also had 37 assists and two blocks in the loss.

CHESTER AREA DEF. SIOUX VALLEY, 25-19, 25-19, 24-26, 25-18; Huve led the Flyers with 11 kills and three blocks, while Kaylie Eich added 26 set assists in the win.

For Sioux Valley, Taylor Olson had 12 kills, and Krista Heylens posted 20 assists and 10 digs.

SIOUX VALLEY DEF. BALTI, 25-16, 22-25, 25-20, 25-22; Haley Hillestad led the Sioux Valley Coxsacks with 14 kills and three blocks, while Heylens added 26 assists and two blocks.

Whipple had 12 kills in the loss for Baltic.

Wagner 3, Gregory 0

GREGORY — The Wagner Red Raiders claimed a 25-9, 25-15, 25-16 win over the Gregory Lady Gorillas on Thursday in Gregory.

Devon Brecke led the Red Raiders by pounding down 13 kills, eight digs, and two blocks. Jessa Doom tallied up 34 assists, eight digs, and three aces. Alexa Cimpr had eight kills, and three aces, while Brianna Chuka added six kills and six blocks.

Also for Wagner, Talia Peters posted nine digs and two aces, while Sidney Breen and Nicole Weber both had nine digs.

Bridget Stukel led the Lady Gorillas with five kills, while Tanya Talsma added four kills and Taylor Anshutz had eight digs.

Wagner (7-0) will be at home for their next match against Avon on Tuesday. Gregory (4-2) will travel to Dakota Christian for their next match on Tuesday.

The Wagner JV squad defeated Gregory's JV 2-0. Gregory won the C-match 2-0.

WAGNER (7-0).....25 25 25
GREGORY (4-2).....9 15 16

Wakefield Tourn.

WAKEFIELD, Neb. — The Hartington Cedar Catholic Trojans remained unbeaten with a pair of pool play wins on Thursday in the Wakefield Tournament.

Cedar Catholic defeated Winside 2-0 and

Pierce 2-0. In the other pool play bracket, Pierce defeated Wakefield 25-21, 22-25, 25-23 and Winside beat Wakefield 25-22, 25-18.

CEDAR CATHOLIC DEF. WINSIDE 25-22, 25-19; Dana Dicks recorded seven kills for the Trojans, while Tracy Peitz had five kills and Taylor Miller added three kills. Kendra Lammers chipped in with 15 set assists.

No stats were reported for Winside.

CEDAR CATHOLIC DEF. PIERCE 25-12, 25-17; Lammers posted 23 set assists in the win for the Trojans, while Dicks had seven kills, while Peitz and Kendra Arens recorded four kills.

No stats were reported for Pierce.

HCC will play Wakefield on Saturday morning to wrap up pool play action.

Wausa Triangular

WAUSA, Neb. — The Wausa Vikings get in the win column by taking two matches Thursday in a triangular in Wausa, Neb.

Allen also claimed a win as Bloomfield took two losses on the day.

WAUSA DEF. BLOOMFIELD 25-17, 25-20, 28-28; Payton Swanson had a solid game for the Vikings (1-3) with six kills, 15 digs, seven aces and two blocks. Abby Haggie added five kills and 20 digs.

No stats were available for Bloomfield.

Wausa and Bloomfield will meet up with each other again on Monday. Allen will play in a triangular in Ponca on Tuesday.

WAUSA DEF. ALLEN 25-23, 25-20, 25-21; Swanson led her team in kills with 10 for Wausa (2-3), she also had 14 digs and three blocks. Leslie Cum had six kills and 15 digs in the win.

No stats were available for Allen.

ALLEN DEF. BLOOMFIELD 25-19, 25-23, 25-22; No stats were reported for either team.

Freeman 3, Gayville-Volin 0

GAYVILLE — Freeman was able to edge Gayville-Volin in the first two sets, but handed them easily in final set as Freeman wins, 25-23, 25-23, 25-11 on Thursday in Gayville.

Kathryn Stern led the Flyers (2-1) in kills with eight, and she also had 12 digs. Brianna Bauer posted 20 assists and 11 digs in the

victory.

Taylor Anderson had five kills and five digs for the Raiders (0-5), while Maggie Bertrand and Meghan Rice each added four kills. Bertrand also had four assists and three aces.

Freeman will host Scotland on Monday, while Gayville-Volin will travel to Viborg-Hurley on Tuesday.

Freeman also won the JV game 27-25, 25-14. Dina Soulek had four kills, five aces and five digs in the win.

FREEMAN (2-1).....25 25 25
GAYVILLE-VOLIN (0-5).....23 23 21

Alcester-Hudson 3, Freeman Academy 0

ALCESTER — The Alcester-Hudson Cubs defeated the Freeman Academy Bobcats 25-21, 25-11, 25-16 on Thursday night in Alcester.

Ivy Pearson smashed down 18 kills, adding eight assists and two aces, to lead Alcester-Hudson. Alyce Johnson tallied up 10 kills and 12 assists. Alexis McCormell had 11 assists and three aces. Sarah Haisch held strong on the defensive side with eight digs.

Kristin Walner led Freeman Academy with three kills and six digs. Sara Friesen put up two blocks and had six digs. Karina Ortmann had four aces, while Brittney Ries had two assists.

Alcester-Hudson (4-1) will travel to Platte to take part in the Platte-Geddes Tournament on Saturday. Freeman Academy (1-2) will travel to Wakonda on Tuesday to take on Irene-Wakonda.

Alcester-Hudson won the JV match 2-0.

FREEMAN ACADEMY (1-2).....21 11 16
ALCESTER-HUDSON (4-1).....25 25 25

Avon 3, Centerville 0

CENTERVILLE — Lanea Van Gerpen and Voni Finck each had seven kills to lead the Avon Lady Pirates past Centerville, 25-22, 25-14, 25-19 on Thursday in Centerville.

Van Gerpen also had five digs and three aces, while Paige Vilhauer added 19 digs and three aces for Avon (2-3).

Lexi Halvorson led the team with 13 assists in the win.

The Tornadoses (2-4) were led by Becca

EMT Basic Class
Beginning September 20th, Yankton County EMS will be conducting an EMT Basic class. The class will be held on Monday and Thursday evenings at the YCEMS training center at 805 Capital. Applications can be picked up at 805 Capitol St. or on our web site at yanktonems.com. You can also call Randy or Steve at 668-9033 for information. Preregistration is required by September 13th. Class size is limited.

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