

Press & Dakotan

DAILY DOSE

Daily opinions from the P&D Sports Staff on local and national high school, college and professional sports.



BY JEREMY HOECK

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Minutes after defending Class AA champion Sioux Falls Lincoln dominated fourth-ranked Yankton in a 3-game volleyball sweep on Thursday night, I called it a "stunner" in my Twitter update. Someone then replied, saying I might be pushing it by saying "stunner."

No, I'll stick with it. I was using Thursday night as a kind of barometer of the rest of the season for the Gazelles, who came in with a 5-0 record.

Would they be able to beat the champs? Or would they battle tooth and nail but come up short?

Yankton's Loss To Lincoln Probably Just A Roadblock

Instead, the answer was neither.

And while the Gazelles made a few late runs against the Patriots, the offensive flow just wasn't there for the home team. Junior middle hitter Mikala Hora did what she usually does, recording 17 kills, but other than Kelsey Fitzgerald's nine kills, there wasn't much else.

Now, Yankton must rebound for Saturday's home match with No. 2 Aberdeen Central.

Will they? Yeah, I'd put good money on the Gazelles getting things figured out between now and then.

Though the loss to Lincoln comes to a district opponent, the good news is that it comes at the early stages of the season and not in the post-season.

Soccer: Sioux Falls Sweeps MMC

SIoux FALLS — Former Great Plains Athletic Conference foe Sioux Falls swept Mount Marty in men's and women's soccer action Wednesday night.

In the men's game, Ryan Keohane had a goal and two assists to lead USF to a 3-2 decision. Brice Holiday and Zack Jurgens added goals for the Cougars.

Jose Marquez-Garcia scored both Lancer goals, as MMC tried to rally from a 3-0 halftime deficit. Josh Koch added an assist.

USF's Kyle Simons and MMC's Jeremy Kiehn each had four saves in goal.

In the women's match, Desiree Parmenter had three goals and two assists to lead USF to a 6-1 victory.

Sarah Stoebner had two of the Cougars' first three goals, and Erika

Olson added two assists in the win.

Julie Girard netted the Mount Marty goal.

Samantha Maybon made three stops in goal for USF. MMC's Jennifer Nelson had nine saves.

Mount Marty hosts Rocky Mountain Saturday. The matches, which were moved to Lewis & Clark Soccer Park, will be held at 9 and 11 a.m.

Sioux Falls left the GPAC after the 2010-11 school year to pursue a move to NCAA Division II.

Mustangs End Northwestern GPAC Regular Season Volleyball Win Streak

SIoux CITY, Iowa — Morningside College opened the 2011 Great Plains Athletic Conference volleyball season by handing Northwestern its first league loss since 2007, a 25-20, 23-25, 24-26, 25-20, 15-13 victory

over the Raiders Wednesday.

The match marked the first league loss for the Raiders since a 3-0 loss to Dordt on Oct. 3, 2007, a span of 58 matches.

The Morningside program has experience in ending long streaks, as the Mustangs also ended Dordt's 55-match league run in 2006.

Punt, Pass & Kick Competition Sunday

Yankton Sertoma Youth Football will host the local competition for the Punt, Pass and Kick competition Sunday, Sept. 18, at the Sertoma Park Football Field, located at the corner of 15th Street and Ferdig. Registration begins at noon, with competition beginning at 1 p.m.

The competition is open to boys and girls ages 6-15 (ages as of Dec. 31, 2011). A parent is required to sign the parent consent form at time of registration.

For more information, contact Becky at yanktonjuniorleaderfootball@hotmail.com or 605-665-2550.

MMC Baseball Home Run Derby, Alumni Game Saturday

The Mount Marty College baseball program will host its eighth annual home run derby and alumni baseball game Saturday at Riverside Field.

Mount Marty players will hit at 9 a.m., with the derby opened to the public and alumni at 11 a.m. The alumni game will be held at 1 p.m.

There is a cost to participate in the derby, with the overall winner receiving a gift certificate to Murdo's. Each participant receives a complimentary MMC Home Run Derby t-shirt.

Contact coach Andy Bernatow at 665-660-3589 for more information.

SCOREBOARD

VOLLEYBALL

SOUTH DAKOTA SCORES

Aberdeen Christian def. Wolsey-Wessington, 24-26, 25-21, 25-15

Aberdeen Roccaelli def. Britton-Hecla, 25-14, 25-21, 23-25, 25-14

Arlington def. DeSmet, 25-13, 25-12, 25-13

Beresford def. Madison, 25-23, 25-22, 25-13

Bison def. Tiopspaya Topa, 25-10, 25-12, 25-16

Bon Homme def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-13, 25-20, 24-26

Brookings def. Huron, 25-11, 28-26, 25-15

Centerville def. Marion, 25-21, 26-24, 25-21

Chamberlain def. Wessington Springs, 25-13, 25-23, 19-25, 25-21

Chester def. Flandreau, 25-7, 25-9, 25-15

Clark/Wilcox Lake def. Hamlin, 20-25, 25-12, 25-25, 15-10

Colman-Egan def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-15, 25-22, 25-19

Dakota Valley def. Canton, 25-14, 25-23, 25-20

Edgemont def. Hemingford, Neb., 25-12, 25-22, 25-9

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Estelline, 21-25, 25-17, 20-25, 26-24, 15-5

Eureka/Bowdle def. Hoven/Edmunds Central, 25-10, 25-13, 25-16

Faith def. Wall, 25-20, 25-22, 25-18

Gettysburg def. McLaughlin, 25-9, 25-11, 25-16

Grant-Deuel def. Wilmot, 26-24, 25-12, 20-15, 25-23, 23-21

Great Plains Lutheran def. Florence/Henry, 25-16, 25-14, 21-25, 21-25, 15-6

Hanson def. Avon, 25-22, 25-27, 25-21, 17-25, 11-11

Harding County def. Halett, Wyo., 25-17, 25-15, 25-18

Hickcock-Tulare def. Highmore-Harrod, 25-11, 20-25, 23-25, 25-22

James Valley Christian def. Plankinton, 25-23, 25-17, 25-12

Kadoka Area def. New Underwood, 25-20, 25-19, 22-25, 18-25, 16-14

Lead-Deadwood def. Custer, 25-19, 25-18, 25-20

McCook Central/Montrose def. Menno, 25-10, 25-11, 22-25, 25-13

Milbank def. Redfield/Doland, 25-20, 25-20, 25-19

Miller def. Faulkton, 25-13, 25-19, 25-12

Michell def. Pierre, 25-22, 25-14, 25-16

Newell def. Hill City, 26-28, 25-15, 25-15, 25-23

Northwestern Area def. Ipswich, 25-3, 25-6, 25-11

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. Lake Preston, 25-11, 25-13, 25-19

Parker def. Alcester-Hudson, 17-25, 25-12, 25-17, 21-25, 15-5

Harrison def. Lennox, 25-22, 26-24, 22-25, 25-20

Rapid City Stevens def. Sturgis, 25-7, 25-15, 25-9

Red Cloud def. St. Francis Indian, 25-16, 22-25, 15-25, 25-13, 12-12

Rosholt def. Wauabay/Summit, 25-10, 25-22, 25-18

Rosholt def. Wauabay, 25-10, 25-22, 25-18

Sarban Central/Woonsock def. Mt. Vernon, 25-16, 25-19, 25-19

Sioux Falls Christian def. Harrisburg, 25-17, 25-13, 25-18

Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Yankton, 25-17, 25-21, 25-20

Sisseton def. Webster, 25-12, 25-16, 25-18

Spearfish def. Douglas, 25-20, 13-25, 20-

NEBRASKA SCORES

Adams Central def. Doniphan-Trumbull, 25-16, 25-22, 21-25, 21-25, 15-13

Allen def. Emerson-Hubbard, 25-18, 25-11, 25-7

Ashland-Greenwood def. Louisville, 25-13, 25-12, 24-26, 25-14

Aurora def. Central City, 25-14, 25-16, 25-13

Bellevue East def. Omaha Gross Catholic, 25-14, 25-12, 25-21

Bennington def. Blair, 25-18, 25-21, 25-17

Chase County def. Wauneta-Palisade, 25-14, 25-9, 25-6

Clewiston/Orchard def. Neligh-Oakdale, 22-25, 25-19, 25-15, 17-25, 15-10

Dodge def. Lindsay Holy Family, 25-17, 25-14, 25-12

Edgemont, S.D. def. Hemingford, 25-12, 25-22, 25-9

Elgin/Pope John def. Creighton, 25-20, 23-25, 21-23, 22-25, 15-7

Filmora Central def. Wilber-Clatonia, 25-11, 25-7, 25-12

Fremont def. Omaha Bryan, 25-12, 25-13, 25-21

Friend def. Dorchester, 25-15, 25-22, 25-12

Garden County def. Morrill, 19-25, 25-21, 25-19, 18-25, 15-12

Gilmer def. Palmer, 25-16, 25-15, 25-22

Grand Island Northwest def. Seward, 25-22, 23-25, 25-15, 25-14

Gretna def. Omaha Westside, 18-25, 21-25, 25-18, 25-16, 15-13

Hastings St. Cecilia def. Aquinas, 25-22, 25-13, 25-16

Hitchcock County def. Medicine Valley, 25-6, 25-15, 25-19

Holdrege def. Hastings, 25-21, 22-25, 25-16, 22-25, 15-9

Homer def. Ponca, 25-9, 25-15, 25-12

Howell def. Newman Grove, 25-23, 25-12, 25-19

Kearney Catholic def. Centura, 25-18, 25-14, 25-16

Laurel-Concord/Coleridge def. Plainview, 25-20, 25-3, 25-23

McCool Junction def. Harvard, 23-25, 25-21, 25-16, 25-21

Minden def. Cambridge, 25-4, 25-14, 25-5

Ogallala def. Ainsworth, 25-4, 25-9, 25-4

Omaha Brownell-Talbot def. Omaha Christian Academy, 25-11, 25-22, 25-22

Omaha Duchesne Academy def. Beatrice, 25-21, 25-20, 25-21

Orad def. West Holt, 25-21, 22-25, 26-24, 17-25, 18-16

Oscodesa def. Hampton, 25-10, 22-25, 25-20, 25-21

Papillion-LaVista South def. Omaha Burke, 25-20, 25-13, 25-11

Plattsmouth def. Ralston, 25-20, 25-20, 18-25, 25-15

Potter-Dix def. Burns, Wyo., 25-15, 25-17, 19-25, 16-25, 15-13

Randolph def. Crofton, 25-16, 15-25, 25-20, 25-18

Raymond Central def. Fort Calhoun, 25-11, 27-25, 21-25, 25-16

Sedgwick County, Colo. def. Creek Valley, 25-13, 25-14, 25-22

Shelton def. Lawrence-Nelson, 25-19, 25-13, 28-26

Superior def. Tri County, 25-16, 25-27, 21-25, 25-14, 15-13

Sutton def. Centennial, 25-14, 25-19, 23-25, 20-25

Twin River def. Fullerton, 25-13, 25-18, 25-15

Valentine def. S.D., 25-10, 25-19, 25-18

Valentine def. Bennett County, S.D., 25-10, 25-18

Wagner, S.D. def. O'Neill, 16-25, 26-24, 25-18, 29-27

Wakefield def. Pender, 25-20, 25-22, 25-19

Wausa def. Santee, 25-10, 25-9, 25-19

Weeping Water def. Conestoga, 25-11, 25-18, 25-20

Winside def. Bloomfield, 25-14, 25-20, 25-12

Wynot def. Lynch, 25-6, 25-6, 25-5

Yutan def. Wahoo, 25-21, 22-25, 26-24, 25-23

NUDEGAS Tournament

Class B
 Fifth: Falls City Sacred Heart def. Lewiston, 25-13, 25-16

Third: Johnson-Brook def. Southern, 25-18, 24-26, 25-13

Championship: Palmyra def. Johnson County Central, 23-25, 25-13, 25-11

Class A
 Fifth: Freeman def. Meridian, 20-25, 25-17, 25-19

Third: Pawnee City def. Nebraska City Lourdes, 21-25, 25-21, 25-15

Championship: Burning-Davenport/Shickley def. Exeter/Milligan, 25-23, 25-21

NEBRASKA LUTHERAN TRIANGULAR

Cedar Bluffs def. Nebraska Lutheran, 25-13, 25-21

Shelby def. Cedar Bluffs, 25-11, 25-23

Shelby def. Nebraska Lutheran, 24-26, 25-17, 25-19

Newcastle Triangular
 Newcastle def. Walthill, 25-4, 25-15

Newcastle def. Omaha Nation, 25-6, 25-9

Omaha Nation def. Walthill, 25-12, 25-11, 25-21

Norfolk Catholic Triangular
 Madison def. Boone Central, 25-15, 25-15

Norfolk Catholic def. Boone Central, 25-5, 25-13

Norfolk Catholic def. Madison, 25-10, 25-16

Omaha Benson Triangular
 Omaha Benson def. Council Bluffs Jefferson, Iowa, 25-13, 25-14

Omaha Benson def. Omaha Northwest, 28-15, 25-19

Omaha Northwest def. Council Bluffs Jefferson, Iowa, 25-19, 23-25, 25-23

Overton Triangular
 Elm Creek def. Wilcox-Hildreth, 25-12, 25-8

AREA CALENDAR

Friday, September 16
CROSS COUNTRY, PREP Norfolk Inv. (YHS, 4 p.m.); Vermillion Inv. (Bloomfield, Crofton, Niobrara-Verdige, 4 p.m.); Vermillion Inv. (Vermillion, 3:45 p.m.)
FOOTBALL, PREP YHS at Aberdeen Central (7 p.m.); KYNT-AM, KVHT-FM; Andes Central at Avon; Ballic at Irene-Wakonda; Bancroft-Rosalie at Hartington; Bloomfield at Howells; Bon Homme at Garretson (KKYA-FM); Crofton at Wisner-Pilger, Dakota Valley at Lennox; Dodge at Newcastle; Elk Point-Jefferson at Platte-Geddes-Dakota Christian; Freeman at Chester Area; Gayville-Volin at Marion; Hartington Cedar Catholic at West Holt; Marty Indian at South Central; McCook Central-Montrose at Parkston; Menno at Centerville; Niobrara-Verdige at Wausa; Parker at Howard; Plainview at Laurel-Concord-Coleridge; Ponca at Stanton; Randolph at Emerson-Hubbard; Santee at Elkhorn Valley; Scotland vs. Tripp-Delmont-Aurora at Tripp (HC); Vermillion at Canton (KVTK-AM); Viborg-Hurley at Alcester-Hudson; Wagner at Beresford; Winnebago at Allen; Wynot at Humphrey St. Francis
GOLF, WOMEN'S Great Plains Athletic Conference #1 at The Ridge GC, Sioux Central (MMC)
GOLF, BOYS' Mitchell Inv. (YHS, 9 a.m.); Husky Inv. at Elk Point CC (Beresford, Bon Homme, Elk Point-Jefferson, Vermillion, Wagner, 9 a.m.)
SOCCER, WOMEN'S USD vs. Boise State at Omaha (4:30 p.m.)
SOCCER, BOYS' S.F. O'Gorman at Yankton (6 p.m.); Vermillion at Chamberlain

SOCCER, BOYS' JV S.F. O'Gorman at Yankton (4 p.m.)
SOCCER, GIRLS' S.F. O'Gorman at Yankton (8 p.m.)
SOCCER, GIRLS' JV S.F. O'Gorman at Yankton (6 p.m.)
TENNIS, WOMEN'S Jayhawk Inv. at Lawrence, Kan. (USD)
VOLLEYBALL, WOMEN'S MMC at York (7:30 p.m.)
VOLLEYBALL, WOMEN'S J.V. MMC at York (6 p.m.)
VOLLEYBALL, GIRLS' Niobrara-Verdige at Wausa
 Saturday, September 17
CHEER & DANCE, PREP Brookings Inv. (YHS, 11 a.m.)
CROSS COUNTRY, COLLEGE Woodley Greeno Inv. at Lincoln (MMC, USD, 10 a.m.)
CROSS COUNTRY, PREP Wagner Inv. at Pickstown (Avon, Bon Homme, Marty, Scotland, Wagner, 9 a.m.)
FOOTBALL, COLLEGE Northwestern Oklahoma State at USD (Hall of Fame Day, 4 p.m., KYNT-AM, KYBB-FM)
GOLF, GIRLS' Plainview Inv. (Crofton, 9 a.m.)
SOCCER, MEN'S Rocky Mountain at MMC (11 a.m.)
SOCCER, WOMEN'S Rocky Mountain at MMC (9 a.m.)
SOCCER, BOYS' Watertown at Yankton (1 p.m.); Vermillion at Lead-Deadwood
SOCCER, BOYS' JV Watertown at Yankton (11 a.m.)
SOCCER, GIRLS' Watertown at Yankton (3 p.m.)
SOCCER, GIRLS' JV Watertown at Yankton (11 a.m.)
SOFTBALL, GIRLS' Lennox Fall Classic (Yankton vs. West Central, 9:30 a.m.; Yankton vs. Watertown, 3:30 p.m.; Yankton vs. Lennox, 5 p.m.)

SOFTBALL, GIRLS' JV Lennox Fall Classic (Yankton vs. West Central, 9:30 a.m.; Yankton vs. Watertown, 3:30 p.m.; Lennox vs. Yankton, 5 p.m.)
TENNIS, WOMEN'S Jayhawk Inv. at Lawrence, Kan. (USD)
VOLLEYBALL, WOMEN'S USD at Southern Utah (2 p.m.); MMC at Doane (11:30 a.m.)
VOLLEYBALL, WOMEN'S J.V. MMC at Doane (10 a.m.)
VOLLEYBALL, GIRLS' Aberdeen Central at YHS (5 p.m.); Bridgewater-Emerly Tour (Avon); Cavalier Classic at Tyndall (Alcester-Hudson, Andes Central, Beresford, Bon Homme, Dakota Valley, Parker, Parkston, Tripp-Delmont-Aurora, Vermillion, Viborg-Hurley, Wagner, 8:30 a.m.); Flandreau Indian Tour (Marty); Stanton Tour (Hartington Cedar Catholic, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge, 10 a.m.); Ewing/Hartington/West Holt at Creighton
VOLLEYBALL, GIRLS' JV Aberdeen Central at YHS (2:30 p.m.)
VOLLEYBALL, GIRLS' SOPH Aberdeen Central at YHS (3:45 p.m.)
VOLLEYBALL, GIRLS' 9TH Aberdeen Central at YHS (2:30 p.m.)
 Sunday, September 18
SOFTBALL, GIRLS' Yankton/Pipestone at Madison (2 p.m.)
SOFTBALL, GIRLS' JV Yankton at Vermillion (DH, 12:30 p.m.)
TENNIS, WOMEN'S Jayhawk Inv. at Lawrence, Kan. (USD)

Overton def. Wilcox-Hildreth, 25-10, 25-12

Overton def. Elm Creek, 25-22, 25-15

Paxton Triangular
 Paxton def. Perkins County, 21-25, 25-19, 25-22

Paxton def. South Platte, 25-14, 25-9

Perkins County def. South Platte, 25-8, 25-10

SMC Triangular
 Hyannis def. SMC, 25-17, 25-18

Sandhills/Theoford def. SMC, 25-16, 25-10

Sandhills/Theoford def. Hyannis, 25-20, 25-16

Omaha Gross Catholic 23, South Sioux City 14

Tampa Bay (Shields 15-10) at Boston (Beckett 12-5), 6:10 p.m.

Chicago White Sox (Humber 9-8) at Kansas City (Faulino 3-6), 7:10 p.m.

Cleveland (U Jimenez 3-2) at Minnesota (Slovey 0-5), 7:10 p.m.

Detroit (Fister 6-13) at Oakland (Callahan 11-13), 9:05 p.m.

Texas (C. Wilson 16-6) at Seattle (Beavan 4-5), 9:10 p.m.

Cincinnati 6, Chicago Cubs 6, 11 innings

Philadelphia 2, Florida 10, 11 innings, 2nd game

San Francisco at Colorado, 8:40 p.m.

Pittsburgh at L.A. Dodgers, 10:10 p.m.

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE
Wednesday's Games
 Toronto 5, Boston 4
 Detroit 6, Chicago White Sox 5, 10 innings
 L.A. Angels 4, Oakland 1
 Kansas City 7, Minnesota 3
 Texas 9, Cleveland 1
 Baltimore 6, Tampa Bay 2
 Seattle 2, N.Y. Yankees 1, 12 innings
Thursday's Games
 Tampa Bay 9, Boston 2
 Texas 7, Cleveland 4
 Kansas City 7, Chicago White Sox 2
 Detroit at Oakland, 10:05 p.m.
Friday's Games
 L.A. Angels (Haren 15-8) at Baltimore (Tom-Hunter 3-4), 6:05 p.m.
 N.Y. Yankees (Sabathia 19-8) at Toronto (Cecl 4-9), 6:07 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE
Wednesday's Games
 Atlanta 4, Florida 1
 St. Louis 3, Pittsburgh 2
 Philadelphia 1, Houston 0
 San Francisco 3, San Diego 1
 Cincinnati 7, Chicago Cubs 2
 Washington 2, N.Y. Mets 0
 Colorado 6, Milwaukee 2
 L.A. Dodgers 3, Arizona 2
Thursday's Games
 Washington 10, N.Y. Mets 1
 Philadelphia 3, Florida 1, 1st game

FOOTBALL

SOUTH DAKOTA SCORES
 Lyman 58, Lower Brule 8

NEBRASKA SCORES
 Elkhorn 34, Boys Town 20
 Greeley-Walbach 51, St. Edward 30
 Lincoln Northeast 42, Bellevue East 34
 Lincoln Southwest 16, Millard West 14

Bucks

From Page 8A

"They've got a couple of kids we've got to know where they're at," Likness said. "Fust is a good player at receiver and Alex Ruelas is quick and a good receiver."

Fust has hauled in 14 balls for 213 yards and two touchdowns while Ruelas has racked up 123 yards on only four catches.

Orr, a 6-3 senior, has thrown for 375 yards, three touchdowns and seven interceptions.

"They've got a two-year starter and a senior at quarterback, and he can both throw and run with the ball," Likness said of Orr.

Protecting Orr is a considerable offensive line, led by Chris

Bobzein, a 5-11, 200-pound senior. Tackle Conner Rumpka is 6-2 and 300 pounds while junior tackle Carter Paulson (6-2, 210) was a starter as a sophomore. Guards Schyler Kumpf (5-9) and Zach Weig (6-2) are both 215 pounds and quick.

As the Bucks prepare for a tougher second half of the season beginning with next week's Pioneer Day game against Brookings, Likness is still focusing on the development of the 2011 Yankton edition and possibly adding to array of season highlights.

"I like the way we're developing," Likness said. "This week, we've added a few things; we'll find out if it fits, if it's too much, or if we can execute it."

The Bucks will also receive another chance to get a feel for the road before settling in at Crane-Youngworth Field next week.

"I want us to be tested on the road again, and Aberdeen should give us a good test so we can see how much we can improve," Likness said.

The Bucks will be tested as their game preparation on Swisher Field's turf will be shortened — a soccer game will be played there and is scheduled to end 40 minutes before kickoff.

"We haven't been on turf yet this year, and we're going to have to make quick adjustments before the game," Likness said. "Hopefully we can relate to the turf in a positive way; the ball bounces a little differently on turf than it does on grass."

With that, the will have to avoid looking ahead to Brooking and Pioneer Day.

"I really think we're focused on tonight," Likness said. "We'll worry about homecoming next week."

YHS

From Page 8A

'B' affair.
 Paige Thieman had

eight kills and Jaclyn Arens added six ace serves for the Yankton 'A' team, while Kaylee Wooten posted 10 kills and Charlotte Ekeren had 12 digs for the Gazelles 'B' squad.

Rivalry

From Page 8A

The battle between the two small schools has increased in intensity up a few notches this season, leaving little doubt to the rest of the state that once again the title runs through Region 3B. Aiding in the good-natured, yet competitive, rivalry is that the schools — located 29 miles from each other — routinely face each other in regular season meets.

As was the case Wednesday in Freeman when Irene-Wakonda took five of the top 11 places to beat Parker 9-17 in the team race.

Still, it's the Eagles who chase the Pheasants.

"It's pretty cool to be in the spotlight," Parker sophomore Ryan Olson said. "We're the ones all the teams shoot for now, but it motivates us to want to defend it."

"We don't want them (I-W) to take it from us."

Though Irene-Wakonda is easily the deeper team — with everyone back from last year — this fall, Parker returns four of its five runners from the state meet, high-lighted by defending champion Jongeling (Jr.).

Also back are Ryan Olson (So., 25th), Michael Olson (So., 26th) and Seth Olson (Sr., 32nd). Jordan Wetering, 55th a year ago, transferred to Sioux Falls Roosevelt.

"Success is contagious," Parker coach Phil Bjorneberg said. "Last year was one of those years where literally everything clicked at state. One slip-up could've cost us the title."

And make no mistake, Irene-Wakonda is well aware of how close it came.

The Eagles bring back all five of their state meet runners, including Jack Johnson (Fr., 9th), Vollmer (17th), Cash Murphy (Sr., 30th), Dillon Buchanan (Jr., 39th) and Jed Murphy (So., 61st). Jumping into that mix this season has been

eight-grader Bob Murphy.

"They look up to the Parker kids; really emulate what they do," Irene-Wakonda coach Bridget Sees said. "They saw the success they had and watched them (Parker) get the first-place trophy."

"I think it hit them how close they really were."

'Best Of Both Worlds' For Parker

In the case of the Pheasants, last fall's run to a state championship wasn't exactly a surprise, but the way Ryan Olson sees it, the start to the season was eye-opening.

"Last year in our first varsity race, I think we came out of nowhere," he said Wednesday. "I don't think many people expected us to do that well right away. But that confidence took us to where we wanted to go."

Parker had finished fifth at the 2009 state meet, but the biggest asset in the team's rise to the top of the Class B ranks since then is its bond between teammates.

"Part of our strength is that the kids get along so well," Bjorneberg said. "They're all talented runners. You can have all the work ethic in the world, which we do, but you've got to have the horses to be competitive."

"We have the best of both worlds."

To that end, there needs to be a sense of leadership passed down through the program, Jongeling said.

"The last couple years, the seniors were good leaders," the junior said. "They showed us that