

STATE

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Miller said, "because they were on the other side of the bracket, but we both ended up winning and making it to the championship, and that was cool."

Sunday's win was the peak moment for the young players' who already had experienced plenty of high points during the year, ever since beginning practice in mid-May.

Miller, a Vermillion native and Vermillion High School graduate, came home for the summer in May to begin his first-ever experience as a head coach of a young baseball squad.

"I had seen some of these guys play, because my little brother played on their team last year, so I knew some of the kids," he said. "The big thing I wanted was to get them mentally prepared. I knew that they had a lot of physical talents, so my big thing was mental toughness.

"We said the whole season that our goal was to play well in the playoffs. We didn't have to go to the state tournament, we certainly didn't have to win the state tournament," Miller said. "We were just trying to get better as a team. Most of these kids are heading into high school now, and basically this was supposed to be a learning season. It ended up being a lot more than that, and that is really cool."

Vermillion Red breezed to an easy win in their first game of the tournament, defeating Crooks 9-2. They faced a bit more of a challenge in their second game Saturday night at Prentis Park, but came out on top, defeating Parkston 8-6 to pave their way to the championship game against Dakota Valley.

To spectators, the process of winning for the Vermillion team appeared somewhat easy. Miller noted that besides the fundamentals of the game, he wanted his young squad to master some of its mental aspects – a process that he felt was even more important than winning.

"Something that's hard for 13-year-olds and 14-year-olds playing ball is to experience striking out, or making errors in the field, and the frustration that follows when those things happen," he said, "and you really got to learn to overcome that as a baseball player.

"Right from the beginning, we knew these guys had a



Vermillion powerhouse Billy Mount was on the mound taking care of the Red's pitching for all seven innings of Sunday's game. Only one Dakota Valley player managed to score, thanks to the strength of Billy's pitching and the excellent defensive play of the Red.

(Photo by David Lias)

tremendous amount of talent, so the during the whole season, our whole thing was to tell them to be mentally tough enough, to learn that they are going strike out sometimes, that they are going to make errors. That happens; that's part of the game and you have to overcome it," Miller said. "That's was our big thing – toughness and overcoming problems and mistakes."

The entire process – even if it hadn't included a championship trophy – far exceeded Miller's expectations.

"This is my first season ever coaching, and I had this idea that I was going to talk to them, and they were going to learn from me, and I was going to give signs over at third base, and that was going to be my job," he said.

"What ended up surprising me so much is the connection – I love these kids, man. I feel like I'm best friends with every one of them. Late in the season, when stuff was happening on the field, I was feeling emotions with them because I we have become so close."

It was evident that, during each game, the Vermillion Red had no better cheerleader than

their coach. While at bat, Miller stood at third base, giving signals to his batters and baserunners, and keeping up a constant stream of encouraging chatter.

During each mid-inning break in action, or at each inning's start, Miller would meet his team on the third base line as they returned to the dugout, congratulating each player for their effort, and providing encouragement to anyone who had just had a bad time in the field or in the batter's box.

There were also opportunities off the field, such as during car trips to games or practices, when the coach and his players had a chance to simply talk and get to know one another.

"That's what makes this (win) so nice," Miller said. "The trophy is nice, but man, I love these kids, and so it is cool to have them win this championship."

It was particularly obvious during Sunday's championship game that the Vermillion Red received tons of support this season from more than just their coach. The grandstand and bleachers at Prentis Park were filled with parents, grandparents and friends of hometown team members, who provided a

constant stream of vocal support and applause throughout the game.

"All of the parents from day one embraced me," Miller said. "They did so much – getting kids to practice and little things like that ... they were always talking to me, helping me out, picking me up and picking up their boys.

"And then when they're all in the stands, it creates a very rich support system that these guys have," Miller said. "It was really nice for me as a coach to turn around and know that they (the parents) were going to say, 'you're doing a good job; everything is going alright,' and that was really nice."

The coach said he couldn't help but be a bit anxious as the championship game started, even though he and his team were familiar with the opposing team.

We knew them (Dakota Valley), and we knew what Billy Mount can do on the mound when he is 'on.' With him pitching the way he did – I'm happy to see it," Miller said, "and I was nervous coming into this game, but I really shouldn't have been, because he has pitched so well all year. He has zero losses this season, and you just know

what you're going to get out of him."

The Red offense went on the attack early, building a 2-0 lead by the fifth inning while stifling any attempt Dakota Valley made to score.

"As soon as we scored that second run, I thought 'this game is over, because they can't hit Billy,'" Miller said.

By the top of the seventh inning, Vermillion was sitting on a 7-0 lead, and during that inning, the Red defense faltered just a bit, allowing one Dakota Valley player to reach home plate.

With two outs in the seventh, a Dakota Valley player hit a dribbler that rolled into Mount's glove. He was able to casually throw the ball to first baseman Hunter Christopherson for the third and final out that clinched the championship for the home team.

After VFW officials made medal and trophy presentations to the two teams, a grand celebration that included the Red team, their parents, and their friends, began on the Prentis Park diamond.

"This is great. This is really nice," Miller said.

Clay County Fair set for Aug. 7- 10

Schedule of events –
<http://www.claycountyfair.net/>

Wednesday, August 7, 2013

4-7 p.m. Enter & Interview all non-livestock 4-H projects (4-H Center)
4-7 p.m. Entry of Open Class Exhibits (4-H Center)

Thursday, August 8, 2013

8-Noon Beef, Sheep, Swine, goat, poultry, rabbit - weighed & checked-in
2 p.m. Livestock Judging School
4 p.m. Open Class & 4-H Exhibit Buildings Open
4 p.m. Cat Show
5-9 p.m. Vendor Booths
5-8 p.m. LIVE MUSIC by Bluffs Ridge Band (High Street)
5:30-6:30 p.m. Community BBQ and Mini train rides
6 p.m. 4-H Swine Show (Covered Arena)
6-6:25 p.m. Kids Pedal Tractor Pull Sign up (High Street)
7 p.m. Kids Pedal Tractor Pull (High Street)
7 p.m. Dog Obedience Demonstration (Street)
7 p.m. Barnyard Olympics
7 p.m. Entry of Open

Class Table Settings (4-H Center)
9 p.m. Buildings Close

Friday, August 9, 2013

9 a.m. 4-H Sheep Show (Covered Arena)
9 am Exhibits Open
10 a.m. 4-H Goat Show (Covered Arena)
11 a.m. 4-H Rabbit Show (Rabbit/Poultry Barn)
11 a.m.-9 p.m. Inflatable's & Mini Golf
Noon 4-H Poultry Show (Rabbit/Poultry Barn)
1-9 p.m. Vendor Booths
1-3 p.m. Free Craft Session (preschool - fifth grade) Com. Building
2-5 p.m. Mini Train Rides
2-4 p.m. Fair Princess Contest (Main Stage)
4 p.m. Rocket Building Workshop Ages 7 & up (Open Class Building)
4-6 p.m. LIVE MUSIC by 32AD Band (High Street)
4:45 p.m. Sanford Jump Rope Event (Street)
6 p.m. Arena Gates & Beverage Garden Open
7 p.m. Demolition Derby (Open Arena)
9 p.m. Buildings Close
9-11 p.m. Kids Night Inflatables

Saturday, August 10, 2013

10 a.m. 4-H Beef Show (Covered Arena)
Noon-1 p.m. Open Class Fruit Pie Contest (4-H Center)
9 a.m. Exhibits & Vendor Booths
12:30-2:30 p.m. Kids Carnival Games
1-4 p.m. Mini Train Rides
11 a.m.-8 p.m. Inflatable's & Mini Golf

11 a.m.-1 p.m. Great Plains ZooMobile
1 p.m. 4-H Round Robin Contest (Covered Arena)
1-3 p.m. Digital Camera Scavenger Hunt (4-H Age) (Office Building)
2 p.m. Free Craft Session (grade school) Com. Building
2 p.m. Celebrity Round

Robin Contest (Covered Arena)
2:30 p.m. 60 years of Clay County Fair Board Members
3 p.m. Kids Water Wars (Covered Arena)
4 p.m. Livestock Awards (Stage)
4 p.m. 4-H Fashion Review and 4-H Livestock Awards (Stage)
4:45 p.m. Pie Auction

(Stage Area), Free Ice Cream Treats to follow
5-8 p.m. Live Music (High Street) - Bottled Rock-its
6 p.m. Arena Gates & Beverage Garden Open
6 p.m. Dog Obedience Demonstration (Street)
7 p.m. REZA The Illusionist (Arena)
9 p.m. Buildings Close

The University of South Dakota
Facility Worker
The University of South Dakota is seeking a Facility Worker to provide custodial services. Duties will include, but are not limited to: room set ups, wet mop, strip and wax floors; vacuum and shampoo carpets; mop and/or buff floors; collect and remove trash; clean and dust furniture, windows and walls; clean and disinfect bathrooms and restock supplies; change light bulbs and clean light fixtures; remove snow; report needed repairs; and maintain a safe environment by cleaning up spills and removing hazards. Successful applicant should also be able to perform the essential duties, such as reading and following warning labels and written instructions in English and should have good work attendance and be able to work outside in all weather conditions.
For more details and to apply, go to <https://yourfuture.sdbor.edu>
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The University of South Dakota
HVAC Specialist/Off Hours
The University of South Dakota is seeking an HVAC Specialist. Successful applicant will have significant experience in industrial level HVAC systems and equipment. Preference will be given to applicants with experience working with food service equipment and the candidate must have a Freon certificate or be able to obtain one within 6 months of hire. Applicant must also have a valid driver's license or be able to obtain one. This position requires varied off hour shifts in order to provide staff coverage 24/7 365 days a year.
For more details and to apply, go to <https://yourfuture.sdbor.edu>
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
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her·voice YANKTON STAYCATION GIVEAWAY

Staycation Package #1:
Best Western Kelly Inn.....One Night's Hotel Stay
Fox Run Golf Course.....One 18 Hole Round with Cart & 3 Range Tokens
Summit Activities Center.....\$50 Gift Certificate
Avera Sacred Heart Massage.....\$60 Gift Certificate
Xtreme Salon & Spa.....\$50 Gift Certificate
The Old Lighthouse.....\$50 Gift Certificate
Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce.....\$50 in Chamber Bucks

Staycation Package #2:
Fox Run Golf Course.....One 18 Hole Round with Cart & 3 Range Tokens
Summit Activities Center.....\$50 Gift Certificate
Avera Sacred Heart Massage.....\$60 Gift Certificate
Riverfront Events Center.....One Night's Hotel Stay
Xtreme Salon & Spa.....\$50 Gift Certificate
The Old Lighthouse.....\$50 Gift Certificate
Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce.....\$50 in Chamber Bucks

Be One Of TWO Lucky Winners! All entries must be received by Tuesday, August 20, 2013. See hervoiceonline.com for rules and information.

Enter Online at... hervoiceonline.com or at the Press & Dakotan