

Real Sports:

Comings and goings
- 'How Tweet it is'

By Alan Dale

alan.dale@plaintalk.net

Recently I received a comment to one of my tweets on Twitter which got my heart a little twitterpated (thank you Thumper – I wonder if he tweets?).

Someone said that they appreciated the coverage The Plain Talk had been delivering online and in print of the University of South Dakota football team since they took the preseason practice field.

If many of you hadn't noticed, we have gone to a daily format with our online edition – plaintalk.net – and things have already skyrocketed.

But, something needs to be understood. It is something that so many in the sports world really don't understand and I believe needs to be said.

You see, a good sports article is only as successful as the writer's willingness to report accurately then to want to put fingers on the keyboard to produce great copy.

That's the part of the story many readers see, but there is another side to the equation:

The coaches and the players.

Since my arrival here I have been overwhelmed by the support of the USD coaches and already in the early days, by the willingness of the Vermillion Tanager coaches to give a hand.

I don't cover sports to be good at it... I expect to be great at it everywhere I go.

However, that is not possible without the assistance of said coaches and their players as well.

Vermillion, you need to know something important to this whole process.

If you are a Coyotes' or Tanager fan and you read a story that appeals to you or if you enjoy the coverage your teams and schools are getting... please thank the coaches.

You see, we can only report what we are granted access to and can write about. Even that can be minimal. Without the cooperation of coaches to answer questions – some hard, some easy – and to provide us with a chance to interview the players, those stories are not as simply told and quite frankly may not be so fun to read.

So let's pinky swear with each other people of Vermillion.

The next time you see a coach of one of your favorite teams that we here at the Plain Talk have been able to cover, go over to them and thank them for allowing us to do our jobs and hopefully well.

We recognize that we can only do so much without their help.

We hope you can recognize this as well.

Thanks again, coaches. Talk to you again real soon.

Baseball in Tanager Red

Yes, the Teeners' 15-16 squad didn't make it to the state title game, but they represented well in finishing third at the Class A state finals in Volga.

I have only been here for about three weeks, but I can tell when I see good baseball. This here, is good baseball. Just by being able to stay awake after the third inning tells me I am watching the finest the game as to offer in South Dakota.

You should be proud, Vermillion. The coaches care – enough to call me minutes after games end – and they teach the game well. Also, the players seem to be stand up young men who play hard.

Call me crazy, but I think you all are going to be good for a long time.

Fall is upon us

Lower temperatures, crispy evenings, and the sense that fall sports are approaching just adds to the melodrama as a new sports season approaches.

So many questions are being asked about both the athletic programs at USD and Vermillion. Many of them hopeful and most of them lined with the anticipation that this fall could be as good as it gets. Stay tuned as The Plain Talk will report on all the team and their season's hopes over the next few issues.

This week we preview the Vermillion boys' golf and girls' soccer teams while we plan on giving plenty of attention next week to the USD women's soccer squad and the Tanager boys' soccer and girls' tennis teams.

On Aug. 29 we will have plenty of fall previews as the *Press & Dakotan* along with the *Plain Talk* will preview USD football, volleyball, golf, and cross country along with VHS football, volleyball, and cross country, along with plenty more.

Good reading!

Online in print

Some of you may have noticed that last week we ran a few pages of our online content in the print version of the Plain Talk and that we have done it again this week.

We did this to show our print-only subscribers some of the content that we are providing online and we

hope they can enjoy these stories as time goes by. You wanted more content and we have responded.

The best part about it is that there is a lot more to come.

Change is a good thing and The Plain Talk is making those changes you asked for and deserved.

Keep reading... it's only going to get better.

VHS girls' soccer celebrates sanctioned status

By Alan Dale

alan.dale@plaintalk.net

High school girls' soccer in Vermillion has always been a fabric of the fall sports season.

In 2014 it just might mean a little bit more.

This season the Vermillion Tanager girls' soccer team will be a high school sanctioned sport and they will now enter the fray as a Class A squad and no longer will compete as a club team.

They play their first game Thursday, Aug. 20 at 5 p.m. at Cotton Park.

Sure they will still be a self-funded team as the school district will mainly give a stamp of approval if not a check to carry expenses, but regardless, the move is a landmark for the program.

"We are finally sanctioned we finally get to do this," senior goaltender Hailey Freidl said. "If we weren't sanctioned we probably wouldn't have had a soccer team at all this year. We are continuing to get better and we should be pretty good this year."

Junior midfielder Autumn Barnett agrees with Freidl.

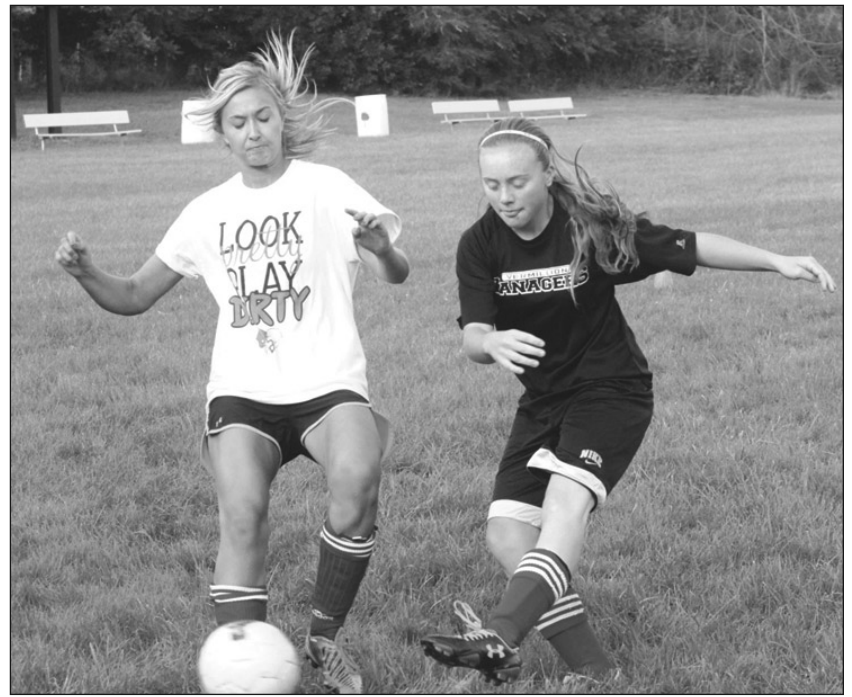
"We should be pretty good this year," she said. "We are making progress and we are going to be really good actually. We have played together for a really long time and now that we are sanctioned we get to play teams we haven't played before and it will give us a better opportunity to have other people see us."

First-year head coach Shannon Fitzsimmons believes being able to play for the Class A state title in South Dakota adds to the team's endgame.

"It's great that we can play games and compete for that state tournament," Fitzsimmons said. "We now have an end goal there. Now that it is completely connected to the school it connects us to the community. Now school, coaches, and community can work together as a team."

There are some drawbacks to losing the team's club status.

"We will miss the club team because there were some really good girls from Elk Point and Gayville-Volin and it will be hard to leave them and our old coaches," Freidl said. "But this also means that girls playing soccer in kindergarten won't have to worry about not having a team. The team does have to do



There are plenty of high expectations for the Vermillion High School girls' soccer team this fall.

Alan Dale / Plain Talk

more work than most others because essentially they have to raise all funds to survive."

"We have been playing since we were 4-5 years old because Vermillion has done a good job keeping up with soccer and we were sad that we were going to lose the team after all those years so we were happy that we got sanctioned," senior striker Tori Gregoire said. "We had a couple of (fundraisers). The Main Street Pub gave 100 percent of their profits and team members' parents and grandparents helped us a lot."

"The fundraiser was great to see and all the proceeds from 3-10 p.m. went to the soccer program,

Fitzsimmons said. "To know that people showed up and put in their time to make it happen. The girls recognized that this is something not to take for granted because it could have gone the other way." The fact they are able to play has given the girls a sense of obligation.

"This is the first year and we have to show them what we have and that we earned it," Barnett said.

"It's motivation to play harder and thank them for what they did for us and prove that we should be sanctioned," Gregoire added.

As for the product on the field? "I am excited because the possibilities are endless," Fitzsimmons said. "We have a nice mixture of youth and girls that have been playing for a while. Having that

mix will help us. I have girls that have been playing a long time and we will be able to build off of that."

The squad appears to be a powerful one athletically and that definitely won't hurt.

"We have a lot of strength and power," Fitzsimmons said. "We are great at using our head and working with the ball at our feet. We have every position covered and didn't see a position either on offense and defense that we didn't have someone who could play there. There isn't one area the other team can attack."

Strategically the Tanagers will be relentless in looking for an opening to exploit.

"I like to control the game and play for the counter," Fitzsimmons said. "We want to make the other team make mistakes. We want to force the action and control the game. Control and counter and counter quickly."

Seven other teams besides Vermillion reside in Class A – Belle Fourche, Garretson, Groton Area, Sioux Falls Christian, St. Thomas More, Tea Area, and West Central.

"The competition will be great," Fitzsimmons said. "We have a nice mix of smaller towns and then Sioux Falls Christian and St. Thomas More who are known for their sports. Even if we are the smaller class I don't think that will lessen our level of play."

"We will come to play and play to

Vermillion 15-16 Teeners end season with third place at state

By Alan Dale

alan.dale@plaintalk.net

It may have not been the ending the Vermillion 15-16 Teeners baseball team had in mind, but the summer could have ended a lot worse.

At the 2014 South Dakota 15-16 Teener Class A State Tournament in Volga between Aug. 8-10, the Vermillion boys ended up as the third best team after they wrapped up play with a 9-5 win over the hosts Sunday at Hoff Field.

So for the second straight season head coach TJ Beacom saw his club win its final game even if it wasn't the one that would declare them state champions.

Still a strong finish led to a final 26-10 record and a wrap that salvaged a tough summer season for Vermillion baseball. The successful campaigns of both the American Legion and 13-14 Teener teams ended short of respective start tournament, but Beacom's boys broke through to help the baseball season end well for representatives of Clay County.

"I really think it goes back to the end of June

where some kids stepped up and filled some shoes," Beacom said. "Carter Kratz and Billy Mount played American Legion all year and that helped. Cole Anderson stepped up and took over the shortstop position at end of the June and that came just as we started our winning streak."

Taking third doesn't replace the missed opportunity of winning a title, but there is still plenty of good to take from getting that far.

"Third place puts our name out there and being top three is still finishing with the elite teams of the state," junior Joe Miller said. "It keeps Vermillion's baseball image. It means that the respect for Vermillion baseball is still there."

The 5A Region champions were in cruise control until the state semifinals. There, following a 5-1 quarterfinal win over Madison, they ran into a strong pitching duo from Dell Rapids to fall 5-0 and land in the third-place game for a second straight year.

Usually it was a stacked pitching staff from Vermillion that would have

the edge and that played a big role in their big state run.

"That's a credit to maybe playing a lot of games and we had the opportunity to develop those guys," Beacom said. "We'd be better suited for a double elimination tournament because we can go five or six guys deep."

Wyatt Marker, Jon Bensen, Hunter Christopherson, and Anderson all started a number of games and gave Vermillion plenty of hurling options.

It didn't hurt that the play behind the pitchers got better as the season rolled along.

"The defense turned it on the last month and our offense was good all year," Beacom said. "We had a lot of guys hit for a high average. This was probably my most complete team I have had in three years. It was probably my deepest team also."

Beacom has had all of his team make the state finals and next year despite a number of expected losses he won't be resigned to not making it a fourth time.

Maintaining the Vermillion way of solid baseball is the priority according to Miller.

"I grew up watching

■ STATE, Page 3B

NSU Basketball to hold fall skills academy

ABERDEEN — Northern State men's basketball will be holding its 2014 Fall Skills Academy beginning Sept. 7. The annual academy is designed to promote maximum skill development prior to the start of the upcoming basketball season.

Head Coach Paul Sather and staff, along with current NSU student-athletes, will focus on

individual development on both offense and defense.

The Academy will be made up of five, two-hour sessions. All sessions will be held on Sunday afternoons from 4 to 6 p.m. at Wachs Arena, on Don Meyer Court. Campers will be able to develop their skills and take home numerous drills to continue improving their game.

Make your financial future a priority.



Curt Robinson
Financial Advisor
23 Market Street
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-624-2028
www.edwardjones.com

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Member SIPC

SPORTSWRITER

The Yankton (S.D.) Press & Dakotan, a six-day-a-week daily newspaper, is seeking applicants for a part-time sportswriting position.

The position will aid in covering a dynamic sports market that features an NCAA Division I college athletic program. The successful applicant will assist in the sports coverage, which will include taking area game reports, staffing area events and some feature writing.

Strong writing skills and sports background are needed. Page design and photography skills are a plus.

To apply or for more details, contact Sports Editor James D. Cimburek, 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078; call (605) 665-7811; or e-mail james.cimburek@yankton.net.

YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

319 Walnut, Yankton, SD • www.yankton.net
605-665-7811 • 1-800-743-2968
Equal Opportunity Employer

The University of South Dakota has several positions open in the areas of:

- Director of Operations & Maintenance
- Assistant Director of Planning & Construction
- Buildings Engineer II
- Energy Engineer
- HVAC Specialist - Off Hours (\$26/hr)
- Boiler Specialist - Off Hours (\$26/hr)
- Procurement/Inventory Specialist
- Custodial Supervisor II
- Custodial Supervisor I
- SR Building Maintenance - Off Hours
- Program Assistant II
- Grounds Keeper

For detailed descriptions and to apply, go to <http://yourfuture.sdbor.edu>



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH DAKOTA
EEO/AA