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Tanagers Set To Continue Progress In 2015 Season



BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK

The Vermillion High School football team began practices last Friday to prepare for the fall season. The Tanagers open the season at Canton on Friday, Aug. 28.

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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Progress seems to be the word down at Vermillion High School's first week of football practices.

The Tanagers went 5-5 in 2014, including a dramatic overtime win against Tea to move on to the second round of playoffs, much improved from the 2-8 season in 2013, and head coach Andy Homan is looking to continue building off last year's progress.

"(We) made a lot of great strides as a program," he said. "We improved in all areas of the game."

The continued progress won't come easy as the Tanagers have some positions to fill after losing a number of seniors from last season along with many strong opponents in the schedule.

"We will find out in camp who will be taking the right steps toward filling those holes we have on both sides of the ball," he said.

For Homan and the Tanagers, this year's fall camp has

two purposes.

"One is to find the right guys to fill the gaps we have with last year's seniors being gone," Homan said. "Second is to gain confidence in what we are doing on offense and on defense. With confidence our guys will play fast and harder."

The team has been weightlifting and attending camps during the summer to prepare for the upcoming fall. Homan is expecting every player on the team to contribute to the team's success.

"We are looking for the whole team to step up this to make an impact for us. It is going to have to be a team effort this year to have success," Homan said. "The schedule is very tough this year. We play a lot of good teams and we have no easy games this year. We will have to take one week at a time, and prepare for a fight every week."

The Tanagers open the season on Aug. 28 at Canton beginning at 7 p.m. The first home game is scheduled for Sept. 4 against Dell Rapids at 7p.m.

VHS Golfers Take Sixth At Milbank

BY MARK UPWARD
For The Plain Talk

The Vermillion boy's golf squad headed north on Monday to compete at the 16-team Milbank Invitational. The Tanagers finished in sixth place shooting a team score of 345 to finish behind champion Milbank (318), Madison (337), Sisseton (340), Tea Area (340) and Chamberlain's 342.

Parkston's Jacob Lee 18 hole score of 75, 39 on the front nine and 36 on the back nine, earned him medalist honors. Vermillion's Cooper Williams (81) placed in a tie for fifth place and senior Cole Anderson's 18 hole score of 82 tied for him for ninth.

"When you look at the team scoring, we were only eight strokes out of second place," said Vermillion Head Coach Kirk Hogen. "We lost three seniors from last year's team, but with our three seniors this year and our underclassmen we did well today."

Tanagers who competed in the Milbank Invitational were seniors Anderson (82), Sam Craig (89) and Paul Schwasinger (93). Williams (81) was the only junior competing for the Tanagers while freshman Ryne Whisler (111) and seventh grader Hunter Lavin (110) rounded out the team.

The Tanagers got off to a slow start at the tournament, but turned it around and were able to finish strong.

Anderson stepped up in the line-up this year as a senior and competed well in the tournament while Whisler saw his first action as a varsity competitor.

"I was impressed with our guys today," said Hogen. "None of these guys had ever played the course at Milbank. It is more of a finesse/target course where you have to have good club selection. The other teams at the tournament had played the course before."

The importance of this Milbank tournament becomes clear when it's realized that this tournament is the tune up, although early, that the Vermillion golf team needed as they prepare themselves for the state tournament which will be held in Milbank on October 5-6.

The Tanager golf team had a tournament at West Central cancelled on Tuesday due to weather conditions, but will see action Friday at Dakota Valley and Monday at Dell Rapids.

Volleyball Looks For A Fresh Start In New Coach

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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The Vermillion High School volleyball team is looking at a clean slate.

The Tanagers will begin 2015 with a new year, a new coach and a new team with the goal of making it to the state tournament.

Gabi Jarchow is taking over as head coach and isn't shy about her expectations for this year's team.

"When we first met her at open gym, she was like 'my goal is to make it to state' and we were all really shocked because we haven't been to state in years," said senior Emily Schmitz.

The team will have a lot of work to do after coming off just two wins last season, but Jarchow is confident in her player's abilities to be competitive this season.

"I feel like we're a really well balanced team where we don't have just good passers and just good hitters," she said. "I would say that the girls just need to know that they can compete with these tougher teams. They have to just believe in each other and themselves and know that they can do it. If they have that type of attitude they'll be able to beat anybody."

Jarchow is coming to Vermillion from Dakota Valley where she coached the Panthers to a third-place finish at last year's state tournament.

She says the most important aspect she can ask from her team is consistency and keeping a positive attitude and after the first week of practices she likes the direction in which the team is moving.

"The girls do a really good job of



FILE PHOTO

Vermillion High School senior Kayla Stammer in action during a game last season. Stammer will be one of four seniors on the Tanager volleyball team this year as they push for a state tournament appearance.

Girls' Tennis Opens Season Saturday

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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Vermillion High School girls' tennis will take to the courts on Saturday at the Yankton quadrangular and head coach Betsy Hughes wants to start off right where the team left off last year.

"We were pleased with the wins we started seeing for some of the girls last year," she said. "We hope to continue that again."

The team has just three returning players, who will all be moving up in flight this year. Junior Libby Sykes will be taking on the No. 1 spot for the Tanagers to begin the season with Alex Rosdail and Brandi Styles, both sophomores, playing at 2 and 3.

"We have not had our challenge matches yet, so (I) can't say for sure who will be where as tournaments get started," Hughes said.

Sophomore Shinayne Whipple will be looked at to move up this year, as well as showing much improvement from last season during the first week of practices.

"I can tell (she) has been taking seriously the learning and improvement of technique," Hughes said. "She is much more confident this year and I look for her to really improve over the course of the season."

At the Yankton meet, Hughes hopes to see the focus of this week's practices start to show through in the skills of the players. Improvement in technique and a solid skill base will be the difference in this year's team.

"Any bad habits that get started now will plague us through the season," Hughes said. "That means making some adjustments to what we are doing now which can be a challenge to change and improve. The girls are really working at it."

The schedule sees the Tanagers opening the season in Yankton on Saturday with the first home meet on Thursday Sept. 3 against Harrisburg.

"We predominantly play smaller teams with some of the larger teams sprinkled in at triangular and quadrangular matches," Hughes said. "We are scheduled to play the Sioux Falls teams at the end of the season just before the state tournament."

The schedule gives Vermillion time to improve before facing the larger schools later in October.

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SOCCER

SOUTH DAKOTA

VS. IOWA STATE

SUNDAY - 1 P.M. - USD SOCCER COMPLEX

VS. DRAKE

THURSDAY - 4 P.M. - USD SOCCER COMPLEX

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