

'14 Finish Drives Veteran Gazelles Soccer Squad



Haley Schild • Yankton

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally ran in the Aug. 14 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect the ongoing season.

A season ago the Yankton Gazelles fell just short of making the post-season falling in what ended up being a win-or-go-home match against Pierre in the regular season finale.

With that setback driving them, the Gazelles have worked to prepare for the 2015 season, which began Aug. 14 at home against Watertown.

"It's motivated us a lot, having that heartbreak at the end of last season," said senior striker Brianna Benjamin. "We've all stepped up a lot."

While the Gazelles took some graduation hits, they return six seniors and 10 juniors, many of which saw plenty of time on the field due to some key injuries. Yankton also returns senior Erin

YANKTON

Girls' Soccer (1-2)

8/14	vs. Watertown	L 1-6
8/18	vs. Brookings	L 3-4
8/21	at Mitchell	W 4-1
8/25	at S.F. Washington	8 p.m.
8/27	vs. O'Gorman	6 p.m.
9/1	at Harrisburg	4 p.m.
9/3	at S.F. Roosevelt	6 p.m.
9/8	vs. Brandon Valley	4 p.m.
9/11	at Aberdeen Central	1 p.m.
9/15	vs. Pierre	3:30 p.m.
9/22	vs. S.F. Lincoln	4 p.m.
9/24	at Huron	3 p.m.
9/29	Playoffs First Round	
10/3	Playoffs Quarterfinals	
10/6	Playoffs Semifinals	
10/10	State Final at Mitchell	

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Luken, who missed part of last season due to injury.

"We gained a lot of experience last year," said Yankton head coach Tyler Schuring. "We're going to fill some spots with other talented players."

The Gazelles return their top two scorers from a season ago, Benjamin and junior Madason Tessier.

"Brianna Benjamin's going to be big for us up top. Brianna and Madason Tessier, our leading scorers from last year, are both back," Schuring said.

"We've got Sophie Bisgard back. Britany Bradwisch is back out this year. Erin Luken came back from injury, so she's going to help us in those offensive positions."

Many of the Gazelles' graduation losses were on defense, meaning Schuring will lean heavily on senior Amanda Gravholt.

"Amanda Gravholt, she's just a block back there. She's going to have to be our defensive leader," he

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Soccer: Young Bucks Look To Build On 2014 Success

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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A year ago, a veteran Yankton boys' soccer team made an undefeated run through the Eastern South Dakota Conference before falling in the state semifinals.

This year a younger team will try to build on that success.

Yankton boasts just three seniors as it began the 2015 season Aug. 14 at home against Watertown.

"This year is going to be a little different from last year," said Yankton head coach Warren Brenner. "This year is going to be year of change."

Yankton will start the season with just 12 players who will be considered just varsity players, as well as four who will play both varsity and JV. While this year's squad does not have the depth of the 2014 team, they have plenty of talent.

YANKTON

Boys' Soccer (1-2)

8/14	vs. Watertown	L 1-2
8/18	vs. Brookings	L 2-4
8/21	at Mitchell	W 6-0
8/25	at S.F. Washington	8 p.m.
8/27	vs. O'Gorman	4 p.m.
9/1	at Harrisburg	6 p.m.
9/3	at S.F. Roosevelt	8 p.m.
9/8	vs. Brandon Valley	6 p.m.
9/11	at Aberdeen Central	3 p.m.
9/15	vs. Pierre	5:30 p.m.
9/22	vs. S.F. Lincoln	6 p.m.
9/24	at Huron	5 p.m.
9/29	Playoffs First Round	
10/3	Playoffs Quarterfinals	
10/6	Playoffs Semifinals	
10/10	State Final at Mitchell	

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"What I see from the players that are playing varsity is quality," Brenner said. "Those 12 players can all step up and play well and play together."

One major change from a season ago will be in strategy. Last year's team won games by shutting down opposing offenses. This year's team is built on outscoring opponents.

"Normally we've been a defensive attacking team. We attack out of the backfield quite a bit, and we defend really well,"



Treyson Slate (16 in white) • Yankton

Brenner said. "This year we're going to be offensive-heavy. We hope our midfield to produce a lot of shots and allow our strikers to be more open."

In order to better utilize their talent, much emphasis

has been placed on short, sharp passing.

"We've been pinpointing on possession, keeping the ball, because if the other team doesn't have the ball they can't hurt you," said junior midfield-

er Treyson Slate. "We really try to play a simpler, small-sided style of play, not resort to anything that's long balls over the top. It's a smoother-looking style."

Brenner expects to start juniors Cole Lewno and Gabe Wenzlaff at strikers. Senior Chase Huber, juniors Treyson Slate and Isaac Schulz, and sophomores Jack Wolfram and Evan Dvorak will anchor the midfield. Seniors Jared Rafferty and Cody Perakslis, and sophomore Cooper Kuchta will start on defense, with sophomore Trevor Rafferty manning the goal.

"There will be some big shoes to fill. We lost some quality players," Brenner said. "But what we've got back is a lot of talent, dedication and commitment. They're putting in the extra effort in order to be a very competitive team."

While the Bucks are young, their expectations have not changed.

"Our first goal is to win state," Huber said. "To do that, we need to stay focused, stay positive all the time."

Jared Rafferty echoed that, noting that the semifinal loss

to Sioux Falls Lincoln helped push the team through off-season training.

"We had a really good season last year, but we also got so close to a state championship. It got away from us toward the end," he said. "It hurt a lot of guys, and it made everybody work harder this off-season, that's for sure."

An aggressive offensive mindset – and the talent to execute it – should make for some exciting action this season, Brenner noted.

"Spectators are really going to enjoy watching this team play," he said. "They should put on a very good show."

The Bucks have a 12-game regular season schedule, facing all eight of the other ESD schools, as well as all four Sioux Falls Class AA programs. Twelve teams will qualify for the post-season, which begins on Sept. 29 and concludes with the state finals on Oct. 10 in Mitchell.

Through three matches, Yankton is 1-2 overall and in ESD play.

Follow @JCimburek on Twitter.

Young Yankton Boys' Golf Squad Set For Season

BY JEREMY HOECK
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally ran in the Aug. 17 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect the ongoing season.

A new wave of golfers will hit the tee box this season for the Yankton Bucks.

Having graduated a large group that led Yankton to a fourth-place finish at the conference meet and a fifth-place finish at the state tournament, the Bucks now turn to some new — and mostly young — faces this fall.

"It's a young team, but a team that when I look at it, shows some real promise," said head coach Brett Sime, whose team opened the season earlier this week in Brandon.

Just how young are the Bucks?

Of the 17 golfers on the

YANKTON

Boys' Golf

8/17	Brandon Valley Tour.	cod.
8/25	at Brandon Valley	2 p.m.
8/28	Huron Inv.	10 a.m.
9/1	at Mitchell	2 p.m.
9/3	at Lennox	2 p.m.
9/11	Yankton Inv. (Hillcrest)	10 a.m.
9/12	Brookings Inv.	8 a.m.
9/17	vs. Sioux Falls Washington/ S.F. Lincoln (Fox Run)	2 p.m.
9/18	Mitchell Inv.	10:30 a.m.
9/26	ESD (Brookings)	9 a.m.
10/6	State AA (Rapid City)	9 a.m.

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roster, there are three seniors, three juniors, five freshmen, two 8th-graders and four 7th-graders.

Put together, that means more than half the roster is barely out of middle school or still in middle school.

"Are we going to compete at the level of the last few years? That's yet to be seen,"

Sime said. "That's what we're going to work for."

Senior Mason Sundleaf is the most seasoned player on the roster, with three state meet trips under his belt.

Fellow senior Mat Jensen also returns with state tournament experience.

They will be joined by A.J. Fernandez (Jr.) and Michael Frick (Fr.), while Chase Erickson, Chris Eilers (Sr.) and Jimmie Cunningham (7th) were battling for the last two spots for Monday's opening lineup.

"Mason has been playing really well early in the season, hopefully he'll be a leader for us," Sime said. "I'm looking for some senior leadership out of those guys because they've been there before."

Among the four seniors Yankton will look to replace are two college-bound golfers: Jace Guthmiller (Nebraska) and Mitch Schlingman (S.D. Mines).

"It's going to hurt losing the two seniors we did," Sime said. "When you lose guys like that, it's hard to fill those spots."

Not only on the scoreboard,

but on the leadership scale.

To help give the younger golfers an early chance to play with veterans, Sime mixed up the foursomes — youth alongside experience — for pre-season qualifying rounds.

"That way, those younger can see what it takes to get there," Sime said. "If they have some questions while they're out there, they've got those guys to ask."

That kind of mentorship should no doubt come in handy by the end of the season.

The Eastern South Dakota Conference tournament will be held Sept. 26 in Brookings, while the S.D. State Class AA tournament will be Oct. 5-6 in Rapid City.

"If we keep our goals reasonable, maybe the top half of the conference, you never know in golf what can happen," Sime said. "It'll be interesting to see how it goes our first time out at Brandon Valley."

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Mason Sundleaf • Yankton

Bucks

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every game — a successful 2014 season should provide enough carryover to this fall, Savey said.

"We have a lot tougher schedule this year, I feel like," he said. "We have a lot of core guys back, so we think we can handle the schedule."

The Bucks will also welcome a group of newcomers,

who will all likely provide some help to both sides of the ball. And for newcomers, returners and new players to varsity, the experience of a pre-season 3-night stay at a team camp in Nebraska should translate to the field.

"We're all getting together after that team camp we had. We all got closer and closer," Frick said. "I think that will help out a lot, because now we know we have each other's backs."

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Football	8/28 at Winside	7 p.m.	9/8 at Allen	
	9/4 vs. Randolph	7 p.m.	9/10 at Viborg-Hurley (V)	
	9/11 at Humphrey St. Francis	7 p.m.	9/15 vs. Hartington-Newcastle	
	9/18 vs. Wausa	7 p.m.	9/24 vs. Boyd County	
	10/2 at Emerson-Hubbard	7 p.m.	9/29 Ponca Inv.	
	10/9 vs. Allen	7 p.m.	10/1 at Homer	
	10/16 at Bancroft-Rosalie	7 p.m.	10/5 at Randolph	
	10/22 vs. Lyons-Decatur Northeast	7 p.m.	10/16 at Emerson-Hubbard/vs. Walthill	
			10/8 at Winside	
			10/10 Wisner-Pilger Classic	
			10/13 at Bloomfield	
			10/15 vs. Wausa	
			10/20 at Osmond	
			10/27 Lewis & Clark Conf.	

Volleyball

9/3	Wynot Quad	
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AVON PIRATES

Football	8/28 at Scotland	7 p.m.	9/3 vs. Andes Central-Dakota Christian	6:15 p.m.
	9/4 at Tripp-Delmont-Armour (T)	7 p.m.	9/8 at Tripp-Delmont-Armour (T)	6:30 p.m.
	9/11 vs. Gayville-Volin	7 p.m.	9/10 vs. Centerville	6:15 p.m.
	9/18 at Corsica-Stickney (C)	7 p.m.	9/15 vs. Wagner	6:15 p.m.
	9/25 vs. Colome	7 p.m.	9/17 at Hanson	6:15 p.m.
	10/2 vs. Burke-South Central	7 p.m.	9/19 Cavalier Clash (Tyndall)	8:30 a.m.
	10/9 at Marty	2 p.m.	9/22 at Colome	6:30 p.m.
	10/16 vs. Andes Central-Dakota Christian	7 p.m.	9/24 at Irene-Wakonda (W)	6:15 p.m.
			10/5 vs. Mitchell Christian	6:15 p.m.
			10/6 at Burke-South Central (Bonesteel)	6:30 p.m.
Volleyball	8/27 at Bon Homme	6:30 p.m.	10/8 at Bridgewater-Emery (E)	6:15 p.m.
	9/1 vs. Parkston	6:15 p.m.	10/15 at Freeman	6:15 p.m.
			10/19 vs. Ethan	6:15 p.m.
			10/20 vs. Corsica-Stickney	6:15 p.m.
			10/23 at Menno	6:15 p.m.
			10/26 vs. Gayville-Volin	6:15 p.m.

Cross Country

8/29	Mitchell Inv.	10 a.m.
9/9	Freeman Academy Inv.	3 p.m.
9/16	Flyer Inv. (Freeman)	1 p.m.
9/19	Wagner Inv.	9 a.m.
9/21	Bon Homme Inv.	2 p.m.
9/26	Platte-Geddes Inv.	10 a.m.
9/30	Parker Inv.	2 p.m.
10/8	Ethan-Parkston Inv.	4:15 p.m.

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IRENE-WAKONDA EAGLES

Football	8/28 at Viborg-Hurley (H)	7 p.m.	9/1 Dakota Valley Inv.	4:15 p.m.	9/8 vs. Beresford	5 p.m.
	9/11 vs. Parker	7 p.m.	9/12 Scotland Inv.	4:15 p.m.	9/10 vs. Bridgewater-Emery	6:15 p.m.
	9/18 Mount Vernon-Plankinton	Site TBD	9/12 Nike Heartland Preview (SF)	4 p.m.	9/15 at Freeman Academy	6:15 p.m.
	9/25 vs. Alcester-Hudson	7 p.m.	9/16 Flyer Inv. (Freeman)	1 p.m.	9/17 vs. Bon Homme	6:15 p.m.
	10/2 at Centerville	7 p.m.	9/21 Alcester-Hudson Inv.	4 p.m.	9/22 at Baltic	6:15 p.m.
	10/9 at Chester	7 p.m.	10/1 Cougar Inv. (Burke)	2 p.m.	9/24 vs. Avon	6:15 p.m.
	10/16 vs. Chelton	7 p.m.	10/5 Howard Inv.	3 p.m.	9/28 vs. Canton	6:15 p.m.
	10/22 vs. Baltic	7 p.m.	10/13 TV/Cirene-Wakonda Inv.	3 p.m.	10/1-3 Tri-Valley Conf.	TBA
					10/6 at Gayville-Volin	6:15 p.m.
					10/8 at Menno/vs. Gayville-Volin	6 p.m.
					10/10 Chester Classic	TBA
					10/13 vs. Alcester-Hudson	6:15 p.m.
					10/15 vs. Centerville	6:15 p.m.
					10/20 at Viborg-Hurley (H)	6:15 p.m.
					10/26 at Marion	6:15 p.m.

Cross Country

8/28	Beresford Inv.	10 a.m.
8/27	at Scotland	6:30 p.m.
8/29	vs. Parker	4 p.m.
9/1	vs. Freeman	6:15 p.m.

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