



Elly Melby, Amber Waker and Coach Upward watch as Jade Fossveldt performs her bar routine at the first match of the season at Sioux Falls Lincoln. Jennifer Morse prepares for her vault. (Photo by Penny Tucker)

Young VHS gymnastics team tempered by experience

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

It's admittedly still a very young team, but the Vermillion High gymnastics team is at least a very young team with an extra year of experience.

Coach Mark Upward is working with a squad of nine athletes, five of whom are freshmen who participated as varsity gymnasts last year while still in the eighth grade.

Upward's Tanagers are paced by a pair of juniors, Elly Melby and Amber Walker, who were the team's high scorers last season. Joining them are sophomores Christine Epping and Cassie Donahoe and freshmen Morgan Hower, Alexis Reich, Jade Fossveldt, Rory Tucker and Grace Olson.

The Tanagers opened the 2009-10 campaign Tuesday night with a dual against some of the best possible competition around. Sioux Falls Lincoln topped Vermillion in a dual meet, 139.25 to 111.65, at Sioux Falls. Melby was the only Tanager who placed within the top five in any of the four individual events, scoring an 8.0 and earning third place on the balance beam. She was sixth in the all-around standings.

Vermillion is off for a week until the next competition at Wagner's invitational tournament on Saturday, Dec. 12. Highlighting the home schedule this season will be the Winter Wonderland meet at VHS on Dec. 29.

Tanager winter sports season is now underway

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

The Tanager wrestling team will be the first of Vermillion High School's winter sports teams to compete before the hometown crowd.

Coach Joe Delvaux and his matmen will be on the VHS mats Tuesday for a triangular with Madison and Tea Area with the first match set to start at 5:30 p.m. Before that, however, the Tanager wrestlers will be at Roosevelt's invitational tournament in Sioux Falls Saturday.

The gymnastics team, again coached by Mark Upward, has a week off after a season-opening loss to Sioux Falls Lincoln Tuesday. The gymnasts' next action will be at Wagner's invitational on Dec. 12.

The Vermillion basketball

teams will open their seasons together at Harrisburg next Friday with the first games tipping off at 4 p.m. The varsity games will be at 6:30 p.m. for the girls and 8 p.m. for the boys.

The Tanager boys will be mentored by second-year head coach Jay Drake while the girls start a new era with Nick Mayer succeeding Jamie Parish as head coach. The girls don't have a home game until Jan. 12, but the boys will be at home for the first time against Lennox on Dec. 15.

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Wichita State escapes South Dakota women 65-60

By Vance Janak
Yankton Media, Inc.

A big first-half deficit was too much for the University of South Dakota women's basketball team to overcome.

Wichita State used relentless defensive pressure to keep the Coyotes from establishing an offensive flow in the opening half while the Shockers built a 13-point halftime advantage.

While the Coyotes managed to close within a point in the final minute, the Shockers used perfect offensive execution and got a pair of made free throws from Haleigh Lankster in the closing seconds to hand USD a 65-60 loss on Sunday at Charles Koch Arena in Wichita, KS.

"It was too big of hole on the road," USD coach Ryan Williams said. "We don't have a lot of depth right now and we played so hard to get back in it."

Besides struggling offensively in the first half, the Coyotes couldn't consistently hit free throws. USD made 16 of 27 attempts for the game while the Shockers sunk 24 of 34 throws.

"We were horrible from the foul line and it could have been a much different game if we made a few more," Williams

said. "We just dug ourselves too big of a hole and we were just too timid at the beginning of the game."

After Wichita State's Jessica Diamond, who came off the bench to score 15 of her game-high 17 points in the first half, hit a jump shot with 14:51 remaining in the second half, the Shockers had their largest lead at 38-21.

The Coyotes (1-2) outscored the Shockers 16-5 to close within 43-40 on a pair of free throws by Abby Kinder with 8:56 left.

After struggling with the Shockers pressure in the first half, the Coyotes scored 10 consecutive points by spreading the floor, driving to the basket and passing the ball to the perimeter to find open shooters.

"We used their pressure against them," Williams said. "We did a good job with (Annie) Roche at the one. She's really fast with the ball and she plays with an attack mentality. And we just made some baskets. We had some decent looks in the first half, but they didn't fall."

After the Shockers (3-1) scored their next 10 points from the free throw line, the Coyotes closed to 53-51 on a 3-pointer from Amber Hegge, who scored a team-high 15 points.

But a Lankster three and a jumper by Morgan Boyd made it 58-51 with 2:33 left.

"I have to give credit to South Dakota for the way they came out and the mentality that they had in the second half," Wichita State coach Jody Adams said. "They took it at us and they weren't scared. They believed in one another. They did their roles very well. I thought we were a very passive team."

USD made one final push, closing to 58-57 on a putback by senior Jasmine Mosley with 44 seconds remaining.

Boyd made a layup and knocked down two free throws with 21 seconds left to make it 62-57.

Roche, who scored 10 points, made a layup, but Marisah Henderson hit a free throw with 14.3 seconds left to hold the advantage at 63-59.

Roche answered with a made free throw with 8.1 seconds before intentionally missing the second, but couldn't come up with the rebound.

Lankster then iced the game.

"The late-game execute by Wichita State was good," Williams said. "They went inside and that hurt us. I thought the foul line was good to them tonight and not too friendly to us."

Thomas drains nine three's in USD win

By Jeremy Hoeck
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How good was Jake Thomas feeling?

So good that by the time his ninth three-pointer of the game rattled in, a wide smile crept across his face as he threw his arms in the air, as if even he couldn't believe his performance.

And neither could the crowd.

Thomas, a freshman guard, set a new school record with nine threes as the University of South Dakota men's basketball team easily handled Midland Lutheran 104-71 on Sunday afternoon in the DakotaDome.

The native of Racine, WI, drained his first four treys in the game's first two minutes and 58 seconds, and already had six in the first half.

He then set the new USD record at the 12:24 mark of the second half, breaking the old mark that had last been set in 2003.

"It was just one of those days, I guess. I really don't know," said a smiling Thomas, who scored 31 points on 9-of-12 from long range in the win for the Coyotes (4-3).

"I've been feeling pretty good lately," he added. "Everyone's been telling me to shoot it, so I listened to them."

Propelled by Thomas' quick start, the Coyotes came out strong in the first half, unlike the performance in Saturday's win over Dana College.

After Thomas hit his fourth three, sophomore point guard Louie Krogman followed with a layup, giving USD a 16-4 lead.

"I knew Jake was hot after those first two, because he can get hot as fast as anybody I've ever seen," said Krogman, who added 18 points on four three-pointers. "It was amazing to watch."

The Warriors, an NAIA school in the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC), sliced into the lead, pulling to within 26-21 six minutes later.

And that's when the drama ended. Within three minutes, the Coyotes had pushed the margin back out to 41-26 on a three-pointer by Thomas.

"When we get him open like we did, he'll have a good chance to make a bunch of shots," USD coach Dave Boots said. "There have been some great shooters in this building, so for him to set that record is pretty impressive."

After leading 51-32 at halftime, the Coyotes began the second half on a 12-4 run to pull ahead 63-36. And for the rest of the game, mostly reserves for USD kept the momentum rolling.

The Coyotes cracked the 100-point barrier at the 3:54 mark on a jumper by freshman Conrad Krutwig, who was one of five USD players in double figures.

Including Saturday's 100-

Turn to USD on Page 9

Tanager wrestlers dominate in season-opener

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

If Tuesday's season-opening triangular is any indication, it's going to be another winter of excitement and high achievement for Vermillion's wrestlers.

The Tanagers, led again by head coach Joe Delvaux, blistered Lennox 70-6 and dominated Brandon Valley 47-13 at the Lennox gym.

Against the Orioles Vermillion won all seven of the matches decided on the mat, six of them by pin. Brett Bye put the clamps on Matthew Mazourek at 103 pounds to start the dual on the right foot. Niko Cruz pinned Adam Petrich at 145, Bennett Johnson followed with a pin over Tyler Kock at 152 pounds, and Chris Mart pinned Dylan Klinghagen at 171 pounds.

Vermillion's strength at the heaviest weights continued unabated from last winter when Nick Mart scored a major decision over Austin Lynde at 189, Will Mart pinned Chris Plucker at 215, and heavyweight Chase Allen pinned Eric Frazeur.

Regan Bye at 112, T.J. North at 119, Lance

Burkhart at 1430 and Tanner Mart at 160 all won by forfeit.

Against Brandon Valley Brett Bye and Regan Bye opened the dual with wins at 103 and 112, respectively. Brett scored a 10-3 decision over Adam Presler while Regan decisioned Braden Heidbrink, 12-9.

North's first match of the year was a 21-9 major decision over Noah Halma. Earl Kiertzner started with a pin over Nate Manger at 135 pounds. Burkhart shut out Andrew Amundson 7-0 in his first action on the mat. Johnson decisioned James Burkmann 7-2.

The Marts gave VHS four straight wins, starting with a win by Tanner over Danny Larson at 160, followed by Chris' 17-1 technical fall win over Garrett Bratland, Nick's pin of Sam Seydel and Will's 19-4 technical fall over Mike Vigants. Allen finished the dual with a 3-1 win over Dylan Treloar.

The VHS grapplers go to Roosevelt's invitational on Saturday, then will be the first VHS winter sports team to compete at home on Tuesday when Tea Area and Madison come for a triangular starting at 5:30.

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