

Bucks Optimistic Entering Season

BY NICK ROBINSON
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The Yankton Bucks wrestling team is coming into the 2013-14 season with optimism for the future.

"We really turned over an entire crew from a season ago," Yankton head coach Ryan Hage said. "This year our main guys are coming in with little experience."

After losing five seniors with at least two years of varsity experience from a season ago, Yankton will lean on their younger wrestlers with varsity experience.

"This year we're going to lean on Noah Vetter (120), Spencer Huber (125), Casey Skillingstad (125), and Cody Hanzlik (170)," Hage said.

With a load of young talent, Yankton is looking to learn quick in practice and take the techniques learned onto the mat in competition.

"I'm expecting the guys to come to practice ready to work hard and learn fast," Hage said. "We're going to need to keep our heads up and walk off the mat with our heads held high."

Even though the squad is young, Hage has been impressed with how his team has embraced each other.

"The guys are really gelling well as a team," he said. "The whole team as a unit are welcoming the young guys. We want to be a close-knit family by the end of the season."

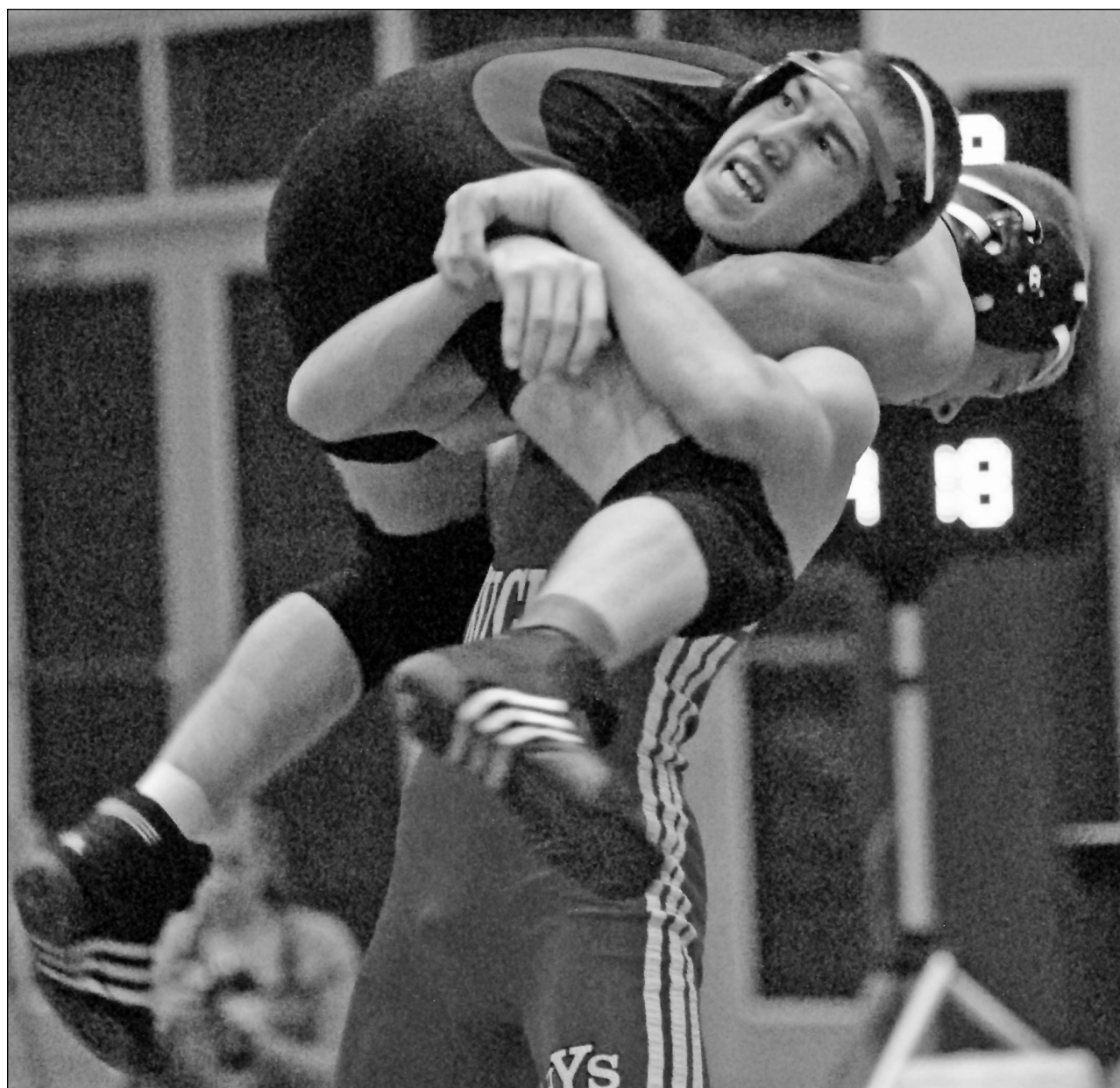
This past weekend, Yankton opened the season in a dual in Watertown.

"We finished off going one and three on the weekend," Hage said. "We defeated Milbank and got beat by Watertown, Aberdeen and Huron."

According to Hage, this year is loaded with talent across the state.

"I'd have to say Aberdeen Central is atop of the state and the ESD of now," he said. "Pierre, the defending state champions will be up there. Huron will be very competitive, so will Rapid City Central and Sturgis is always a tough squad."

You can follow Nick Robinson on Twitter at twitter.com/RobinsonNick2013. Discuss this story at yankton.net.



BUCKS: Casey Skillingstad (top photo, lifting other wrestler) and Noah Vetter (bottom photo, on top)



Gazelles 2013-14 Schedule		
Dec. 10	at Watertown	7 p.m.
Dec. 17	vs. Huron	7 p.m.
Dec. 19	at Brandon Valley	7 p.m.
Dec. 20	at S.F. Washington	6 p.m.
Jan. 4	vs. Mitchell	7 p.m.
Jan. 7	at Brookings	7 p.m.
Jan. 9	vs. Harrisburg	7 p.m.
Jan. 14	vs. S.F. Lincoln	6 p.m.
Jan. 17	at Pierre	7 p.m.
Jan. 24	vs. Watertown	7 p.m.
Jan. 25	vs. Aberdeen Central	4 p.m.
Jan. 28	at Huron	7 p.m.
Jan. 31	at Mitchell	7 p.m.
Feb. 4	vs. Brookings	7 p.m.
Feb. 7	at Harrisburg	7 p.m.
Feb. 8	at S.F. O'Gorman	6 p.m.
Feb. 11	vs. Brandon Valley	7 p.m.
Feb. 15	at Aberdeen Central	4:30 p.m.
Feb. 18	vs. S.F. Roosevelt	6 p.m.
Feb. 21	vs. Pierre	7 p.m.

State — March 13-15 at Brookings

YHS Girls

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hard work, too.

"No one will accuse this group of not playing hard this year," he said. "Our girls have bought into what we're trying to do, and they've worked incredibly hard."

Tessier also knows this season will be different from last season.

"It's going to be a lot different," she said. "I got a lot of experience last year, and that's going to help us bring those younger players in and get some more experience."

Pesicka said the Gazelles' strength will come from their depth.

"Right now we have a number of kids we're comfortable putting into a game," he said. "That's comforting to know we have a number of kids we can rotate and that we'll have a deeper rotation."

"Even though we aren't very big, we have kids who can do things with the basketball. That will be nice — we try to cater our offense around that particular skill."

After losing Kelsey Fitzgerald, Mikala Hora and Brianna Newman to graduation, Pesicka knows his team is not very big, and is staying realistic.

"Really, our biggest goal is trying to get better every single minute," he said. "A lot of coaches say they're getting better every day, but we really shot that down to every second — we're just trying to improve."

"Success is a journey; basketball is a three and a half month journey, and we're just taking the first steps of that. If we take care of the fundamentals we'll get better as a team."

Tessier said she knows the team will get will continue to work hard during the entire journey.

"We've had our low points, and we've had our high points, but when we have a low point we always bounce back from it," she said. "We'll get out of it what we put into it, and we're putting in a lot of hard work."

You can follow Emily Niebrugge on Twitter at twitter.com/ENiebrugge. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

WRESTLING		
Bucks 2013-14 Schedule		
Dec. 7	Watertown Dual Tour	
Dec. 10	Lincoln/Washington/Lennox	
Dec. 13	Brandon Valley/Dakota Valley/Vermillion	5:30 p.m.
Dec. 21	Washington Inv.	9 a.m.
Jan. 6	Roosevelt/Brookings	5 p.m.
Jan. 10	vs. Harrisburg/Mitchell	5 p.m.
Jan. 11	Dan Pansch Inv. (Brandon)	9 a.m.
Jan. 17	Aberdeen Central/Brandon Valley	5 p.m.
Jan. 18	Harrisburg Inv.	10 a.m.
Jan. 24	Chamberlain/Pierre	5 p.m.
Jan. 25	East-West Duals (Pierre)	11 a.m.
Jan. 30	Huron/Tea Area	5 p.m.
Feb. 1	Brookings Inv.	9 a.m.
Feb. 7-8	Sanford Pentagon Tour (SF)	
Feb. 15	Huron Inv.	10 a.m.

State — Feb. 28-March 1 at Rapid City



BUCKS: Coach Mike Stoll (in stocking cap) talks to the team.

Miracle Return Experienced Lineup

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the Nov. 30, 2013, edition of the Press & Dakotan.

A season after starting with nearly no returning players, the Yankton Miracle girls' hockey team returns nine regulars as it opens the 2013-14 season Sunday at Alcoa Arena.

"We're looking forward to getting started," said Yankton head coach Michael Freeman. "We're expecting more than last year but, when you get

seven new kids it takes a little time."

Of the nine returning players, Elizabeth Rueppel and Katelyn Stewart have three or more years of starting experience. Renee Cross returns for her third year as the starting goalie.

While the experienced players could fill almost two lines, Freeman plans to spread the experience across all three lines in order to help the younger players along.

"We have so many new players, we have to get some of the new with the old," he

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Veteran Bucks Look To Continue Growth

BY PETER CHAPMAN
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the Dec. 7, 2013, edition of the Press & Dakotan.

The Yankton boy's junior varsity hockey looks to be competitive again this year as they gear up for its 2013-14 season, which began Dec. 7 with a victory over Sioux Center, Iowa.

Last year the team won two games in the regular season and one game in the state tournament. This year's

team, led by coach Mike Stoll, is comprised mostly of returners from last year's season along with some new players.

"At this point right now we are excited," Stoll said. "We have some great returners and we also have some young kids coming in. It's a pretty young squad but it has some potential."

Mitchell Vavra was the lead scorer last year with 12 goals and five assists and will be a key influence on the team this year. Charles

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HOCKEY		
Bucks 2013-14 Schedule		
Dec. 7	vs. Sioux Center	
Dec. 8	vs. Brookings	
Dec. 20	vs. Oahe	7 p.m.
Dec. 21	vs. Oahe	8:30 p.m.
Dec. 22	vs. Oahe	1 p.m.
Dec. 28	at Aberdeen	2 & 8 p.m.
Dec. 29	at Aberdeen	11:30 a.m.
Jan. 4	vs. Watertown	5 p.m.
Jan. 5	vs. Watertown	10 a.m.
Jan. 18	vs. Sioux Falls	8:30 p.m.
Jan. 19	vs. Sioux Falls	1 p.m.
Jan. 24	at Rushmore	8 p.m.
Jan. 25	at Rushmore	4 p.m.
Jan. 26	at Rushmore	7:30 a.m.
Feb. 1	at Sioux Center	12:15 p.m.
Feb. 2	at Sioux Center	9:45 a.m.
Feb. 8	at Sioux Falls	1:45 p.m.
Feb. 15	at Watertown	8 p.m.
Feb. 22	at Brookings	5:45 p.m.
Feb. 23	at Brookings	11:30 a.m.

State — March 7-9 at Aberdeen

Gymnastics

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stronger as the season progresses.

"For the second half of the season we will be back full strength and have a full Varsity and JV team."

The Yankton-Bon Homme gymnastics team is excited to be back in the gym according to senior Ashtyn Haak. "We worked all summer, but it's nice to be together practicing everyday," she said.

The Yankton-Bon Homme gymnastics team opened the

season with a home triangular against Sioux Falls Washington and Mitchell, finishing second. The Gazelles followed that performance up with a third place finish at the Lolly Forseth Invitational

in Sioux Falls.

You can follow Adrienne Kusek on Twitter at twitter.com/AdrienneKusek. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

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