



TANAGERS: Cheyenne Mallory

Bork Era Begins For VHS Gymnastics

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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VERMILLION — The Vermillion gymnastics squad is bringing fresh talent to their season in the form of a young squad and a new head coach.

Head coach Skye Bork, previously an assistant coach for the Vermillion squad for the last three years, said

"I've got some really big shoes to fill, but I'm looking forward to it," she said. "The girls are doing a great job — they're working really hard. We've got a lot of heart, and I'm really excited to see what they can do."

Lone senior Anna Hammond said having Bork as an assistant coach before helped with the transition.

"(Bork) has been such a great help the whole season," Hammond said. "She really knows what she's doing, and she's just blossomed this year."

Bork said Vermillion's young team has pushed the girls to push each other and themselves.

"Our leadership isn't quite as strong as it was last year when we had four seniors," she said. "It's really interest-

2013-14 Schedule	
Dec. 3	at S.F. Lincoln noon
Dec. 14	Wagner Inv. 6:30 p.m.
Dec. 20	vs. S.F. Roosevelt/West Central 11:30 a.m.
Dec. 28	Winter Wonderland Inv. 11:30 a.m.
Jan. 11	Stanley County Inv. 6:30 p.m.
Jan. 14	vs. Madison 6:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	at Yankton-Bon Homme 6:30 p.m.
Feb. 3	vs. Wagner/West Central 6 p.m.

State — Feb. 21-22 at Aberdeen

ing watching the younger girls pick it up, and as they've gotten more comfortable they've really started to grow into a strong team."

Hammond said each member contributes as a leader on the team.

"There really isn't one leader — everyone has stepped up and helped," she said. "It's been fun to watch the younger girls gain new skills."

Looking forward, Bork said developing a younger squad can only help the future of the program.

"With the four girls who are in junior high right now already having varsity uniforms, it's really going to push them to work really hard and to get even better, and our team will get better as the years go on," she said. "I'm looking forward to see how they progress. They're really pushing the other girls as well to do much better."

With a few girls out on injury until mid-season, Bork said a transition will come when those members return, and could affect the lineup later in the season.

"The lineups will change periodically depending on the best interest of the team — who's going to perform the best, who's progressed the most," she said. "It'll be interesting to see the girls out on injury come back in and see where they land and where they fit around the other girls."

Bork's goal is to meet last year's finish of sixth place at the state meet, and said with help from assistant coach Shannon Fitzsimmons as well as three University of South Dakota juniors, the focus has been one-on-one coaching.

"Shannon was a gymnast in Yankton and ran track at USD, so she really knows what she's doing," Bork said. "What I lack at, she's very good at. We make a really great team."

"I'm really hoping this year we end up as high as we did last year — our strongest point is that we have a lot of ambition. The girls are willing to work, and if we ask them to try something new they're not afraid to go ahead and try it."

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

Vermillion Girls Set To Open Brooks Era

BY NICK ROBINSON
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the Dec. 10, 2013, edition of the Press & Dakotan.

For a team with only one senior coming back from a season ago, you might think it could be a down season for the Vermillion Tanagers girls' basketball squad.

However, head coach Jon Brooks is optimistic about

this season with a young squad.

He feels that competition amongst the team will bring out the best in them.

"We have a lot of girls fighting for spots so we should have good depth," Brooks said. "We're bringing back a good senior in Josie Huber that will provide leadership for younger players."

Huber averaged 15 points a game last season.

Brooks also feels that Syd-

ney Peters (Jr.) and Shantel French (So.), who both saw limited action on the varsity team last season, will make a deep impact.

Brooks feels that only bringing back one starter from last year is a weakness.

"We're only return one starter from last year's team," he said. "We have a lot of girls that have never played a varsity game before. We will

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Hockey

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Stephenson, who had two goals and five assists, and Jacob Hubbs, who had four goals and eight assists, will round out the front line with Vavra. Austin Barger, Colby Benson and Logan Megard will be helping the team on the second line.

Returning will be goalie Tyler Wenande who was the lead goaltender last year with 369 saves and had a .844 save

percentage for the season. Also goaltending is Brady Taggart who played two games last season with 52 saves and Christian Slate who played six games and had a .793 save average.

"I would say that our first line is going to be a big deal and ever game we'll get better and better," Stoll said.

Also on the team are returners Jameson Mitchell, Patrick Weinandt, Jacob Doyle, Landon Withrow, Timothy Cross, and Steven Tacke, and newcomers Cody List, Ethan Klimisch and Cody Perakslis.

With 18 boys on the team, Yankton hockey will look be strong in their game rotation get through the regular season near the middle of the pack to be in good position for the state tournament.

"This season hopefully we play well and have fun and hopefully succeed as we go," Stoll said. "It's the first game so I know it will be gitters on Saturday for sure and I think that we'll be okay."

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MIRACLE: Erica Westerman (9)

Miracle

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said. "Playing hockey is a learning sport — it's chaos out there. You have to have experience out there."

Returning players Samantha Strautmeyer and Anna Lyman will handle duties at center, with a number of newer players joining Stewart, Hannah Johnson and Baylee Prather at the other forward positions. Prather will also see time as a defender.

Veronica Turner, Katelyn Lyman, Taylor Weber, Abby Weber and Isabelle Plath will see time at forward, according to Freeman. Plath was on the roster

"Ronnie (Veronica) is new, but she has a wicked backhand," Freeman said. "T.J. (Taylor) and Abby are twins and, when you put them on the same line, they play fairly well together."

Veterans McKenna Van Winkle, Erica Westerman and Rueppel will lead the defense.

Miracle 2013-14 Schedule	
Dec. 1	Watertown
Dec. 7	Sioux Center
Dec. 14	at Rushmore 5 p.m.
Dec. 15	at Rushmore 9:15 a.m.
Dec. 21	Brookings 4:30 p.m.
Dec. 22	at Sioux Falls 12:45 p.m.
Dec. 29	at Watertown 2 p.m.
Jan. 4	at Brookings 1:30 p.m.
Jan. 11	Aberdeen 4:30 p.m.
Jan. 12	Aberdeen 9 a.m.
Jan. 19	Sioux Falls 9 a.m.
Jan. 25	at Sioux Center 12:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	at Mitchell 7 p.m.
Feb. 8	Oahe 7 p.m.
Feb. 9	Oahe noon
Feb. 21	Mitchell 7 p.m.

State — Feb. 28-March 2 at Sioux Falls

"We'll keep more of our experience on defense," Freeman said.

Freeman is hopeful that newcomer Catherine Perakslis can help the defense as well.

"Kate plays defense in soccer," he said. "Hopefully we'll see some of those abilities transfer over."

Another newcomer is Victoria Weiland, who is in training in goal.

"Tori came in very focused. She wants to play goalie," Freeman said. "She's

come in and has been able to push Renee."


Freeman said that he and his coaching staff have been impressed with the team's preseason workouts.

"It's been some of the best practices at the beginning of the season that we've had," he said.

The Miracle open the season Sunday at home against Watertown. Start time is 11 a.m.

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