

Tanagers play beautiful brand of basketball

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

From the middle of the first quarter to halftime Tuesday night in the District 8A semifinals, Vermillion's girls played as beautiful a brand of basketball as one could imagine, soaring to a 31-17 lead at the intermission over Elk Point-Jefferson.

An hour later they were celebrating – but only for an hour or so! – a 56-31 victory that moved the Tanagers into the district championship game against Beresford at the VHS gym last night (Thursday).

Vermillion's 16th triumph in 20 games started somewhat slowly as they fell behind EP-J 7-4 and did something the Tanagers never do – miss four straight free throws. But when Beth Szymonski's bucket put Vermillion into an 8-7 lead, it was as if somebody unlatched the door of the bird cage and all the Tanagers flew out.

Up to then all Szymonski had done was grab off three rebounds, make a steal and score all eight of her team's points – that's all. But her third and fourth field goals unleashed a torrent. Lexi Regnerus and Kelly Amundson drained unconscious three-pointers that were perhaps the game's most fatal daggers so far as EP-J was concerned. Szymonski scored again to start the second period, making it a 12-0 run.

The Tanager lead reached 17 at one point in the second period, which may have been the Tanagers' best quarter of ball all season, and that's saying something. Bailey Carlson sank a trey, Szymonski swished a pair of free tosses, Amundson drove for a layup, Regnerus hit back-to-back three-pointers, and Val Robinson cashed in a pair of free throws. It was 31-17 at halftime.

Just 3 1/2 minutes into the second half the Tanagers' advantage of 14 at the half had swelled to 22 after Regnerus and Amundson each scored twice and Robinson let fly a three. It was 45-25 after three periods. From that point on, the Tanagers were happy to match basket for basket as time expired on the Huskies.

Szymonski with 16 points, Regnerus with 13 and Amundson with 11 led Tanager scoring. Robinson had five, Carlson four, Josie Huber four and Mackenzie Huber four.

As Vermillion outboarded EP-J 30-20, Amundson had seven rebounds, Regnerus and Szymonski five apiece, Josie Huber four and Mackenzie Huber three to lead that category.

While the Tanagers strangely missed nine of 17 free throws, they were adept at getting themselves to the line. The same could not be said for EP-J, which missed its only two free shots in the entire game.

The only Husky in double-figure scoring was Keely Bertram with 11. Amy Zeller and Audrey Truhe had six each.

The first semifinal contest saw No. 2 seed Beresford demolish Dakota Valley, 56-32.

Coach Nick Mayer's Tanagers completed a glorious 15-4 regular season on Feb. 14



Vermillion's Beth Szymonski sinks a field goal during the first quarter of basketball action against the EP-J Huskies that helped unleash the Tanager offense. Before scoring this basket, Szymonski had pulled down three rebounds, made a steal and scored all eight of her team's points.

(Photo by David Lias)

with a loss at Wagner against the unbeaten, No. 1-rated Red Raiders, 58-43.

"Wagner has an incredible amount of talent on that team," Coach Nick Mayer said. "Defensively they took us out of what we wanted to do."

Wagner soared to a 12-0 advantage to open the game,

creating a huge hole for the Tanagers. They did rally to within five points at one point, but Wagner capitalized at the free-throw line down the stretch when VHS had to foul to try to keep time on the clock and made 16 of 19 from the stripe in the game.

Lexi Regnerus had 13

points, Kelly Amundson 12 and Beth Szymonski 11 along with seven boards to lead the Tanagers' effort. Devon Brecke had 26 points and eight rebounds for Wagner, which shot 59 percent from the field. LaShawn Medicine Horn pitched in 19 points and Alexa Cimpl eight rebounds.

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1101 Announcements - Events

Al-Anon meets Monday night at 7:30 p.m. in St. Paul's Church, 10 Linden Ave. Call 605-624-4166 for information.

BERGEN LUTHERAN Church: "The little white church on Timber Road." Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Pastor Ralph Egbert

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church, 995 N. Sioux Point Road, Dakota Dunes, SD. Weekend Masses: Saturday, 4:30 p.m.; Sunday, 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

BRULE Creek Lutheran Church, Elk Point, SD: Worship Service 11:00am, Sunday School 9:45am to 10:45am.

CHRIST OUR SAVIOR Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod: Worship Sunday 6:00 p.m., Bible Study Tuesday, 9:00 p.m., Neuharth Center, 624-5398 or 1-800-998-1234

CHURCH OF CHRIST, 102 Prospect: Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.; Bible Study 9:00 a.m.; Bible Study 12:00 noon; Wednesday Night Classes, 7:00 p.m.

1101 Announcements - Events

Concordia Lutheran Church (LC-MS) 7 South University Street, Vermillion. Divine Service – Sunday, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday School – Sunday, 9:20 a.m. Pastor Samuel Needham.

CORNERSTONE CHURCH: Located at the corner of Crawford & Cherry St. Celebration Service: Sunday - 9:00 & 10:30am; During school year: Impact for Kids (5-11), Wed - 6:15pm-7:30pm; FCA/Impact: College Youth & Adults, Wed - 7:30pm-8:30pm. Check us out at Cornerstonesd.org or (605)624-8809.

DALESBURG BAPTIST Church 30503 466th Ave., Beresford, Pastor Darren Regehr. 9:45am, Sunday School; 11:00am, Morning Worship; Mid-week Services Wednesdays, 7:00pm. (605)253-2622.

Dalesburg Lutheran Church: 12 miles North of Vermillion on University Road. Worship Services 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Website: www.dalesburglutheran.org

Do you have a desire to stop drinking? Join us at the Vermillion Unity AA Meetings held at Trinity Lutheran Church in the Sletwold Room (north entrance). Soaring Spirits group is Tuesdays at 7:30p.m., Happy Hour Group is Saturday at 7:30p.m., and a Steps & Traditions Study group is Sunday at 7:30p.m. All meetings are non-smoking and handicapped accessible.

ST. AGNES Church, 416 Walker St., Fr. John Fischer: St. Agnes Church and Parish Office, tele. 624-4478. St. Agnes Rectory, 505 Catalina, tele. 624-1995. Mass schedule: 5 p.m. Saturday, 8:00 a.m. and 10:30a.m. Sunday, Weekday Masses – consult weekly bulletin; Sacrament of Penance, Saturday 4-4:45p.m.

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