

Tanagers nearly give Madison stunning upset

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

The Lady Tanagers didn't deserve the fate that befell them Tuesday night.

Vermillion's girls basketball team was within four seconds of a stunning upset over a team to whom they had lost by 26 points less than a month earlier.

They had a one-point lead and possession of the ball.

But still they lost to Madison, 49-48.

When Coach Nick Mayer said last weekend, after his club had taken Class 4A Sioux City East well into the fourth quarter before sustaining a narrow loss, that "we continue to get better with each game," he wasn't just spouting "Coachspeak." His Tanagers fought Madison tooth and nail for 32 minutes Tuesday night, but still a magical win didn't happen.

Vermillion led throughout the first half, by as many as seven points twice, and Madison's first lead didn't come till 32 seconds remained in the half.

The Tanagers were getting good looks at wide-open shots in the first half. If only they had been able to shoot just one or two percentage points better, the last-second drama might never have happened, but the three layups they couldn't get to fall in the first half, a pair of last-minute free throws in the fourth quarter that were missed, one play here, one play there — it all added up to a Madison miracle instead of a Tanager triumph.

The Bulldogs had to play the entire third quarter without their 6'4" junior giant, Christa Paul, who got herself into foul trouble just seconds into the second half. After leading at halftime by 21-20, Madison led after three by 38-36.

Two three-pointers by Sophie

Nehlich-Arobba erased Vermillion's biggest deficit of the night — four points. A turn-around shot by Paul was answered by a steal and subsequent layup by Sophie for a 44-44 tie.

The teams exchanged turnovers until each club sank two free throws with 1:24 and 1:04 left — the first two by Sophie, the answering pair by Madison's Cassie Potter.

Sierra Allen made one of two with 51 seconds left, and Beth Szymonski did the same with 376 seconds to go. At the 0:22 mark Paul made one of two free throws. The Tanagers lost the ball out of bounds in going for the rebound of Paul's miss, but Madison's shot missed and Lexi Regnerus snared the game's most important rebound for Vermillion.

The Tanagers had the ball beneath the Madison basket with four seconds left and had to only inbound the ball and wait to be fouled. But the in-bounds passer tried to heave the ball over the Bull-

dog defense to a waiting teammate near midcourt. Instead, Madison's Potter intercepted the high arching pass and was fouled. She coolly sank the first shot to tie the game and the second shot to win it.

A desperation Tanager shot fell far short as the game ended.

Sophie Nehlich-Arobba had 14 points, Allen 11, Hannah Nehlich-Arobba eight, Regnerus six, Morgan Erickson four, Szymonski three and Sarah Day two for Vermillion. Paul led Madison with 13 points, but the Bulldogs also had three others in double figures as her teammates stepped up during her foul trouble.

The Tanagers had 21 first-half rebounds even though Paul was on the court and finished the game with 35 boards, led by Sophie Nehlich-Arobba and Day with six each and Erickson, Szymonski and Allen with five apiece.

Last Saturday the Tanagers lost to unbeaten, top-ranked Parkston

51-34 after trailing by only 20-12 at halftime. Erickson and Regnerus with seven points each were Vermillion's high scorers.

Earlier in the week the Tanagers led at Sioux City East 43-42 after three quarters before free throws allowed the Black Raiders to win by 66-60 with a 24-17 fourth-period advantage. Regnerus had 12 points, Hannah Nehlich-Arobba 10, Sophie Nehlich-Arobba nine, Erickson eight, Day eight and Allen seven in a well-balanced Tanager offense. Sophie also had eight assists, and Allen, Erickson and Day had four boards each.

"We played a very good game against a 4A school," Mayer said. "I thought our kids did a nice job of eliminating their transition game and forcing them to try to beat us in the half-court."

The Tanagers play at home Tuesday in a girls-boys doubleheader with Elk Point-Jefferson.

Tanager boys up season mark to 4-2

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Vermillion exploded for 26 points in the fourth quarter, and the result was a 61-41 boys' basketball win at Parkston Saturday as the Tanagers improved to 4-2 for the season.

The winless Trojans are going through what Vermillion endured last year — the first season after an all-senior team graduated. But they were competitive, trailing the Tanagers by only 24-21 at halftime and by 35-29 after three periods.

But Jay Drake's Tanagers scrapped at both ends of the court, and an overall excellent game team-wide proved to be the difference. Vermillion shot 42 percent from the field, outrebounded Parkston 37-27, forced 14 turnovers and created 11 steals.

Kylen Freidel had another do-everything game, scoring 22 points on 8-of-13 shooting from two-point range and 2-of-4 from long distance, but he also led in rebounding with 13 boards and had two assists and three steals.

Tyler Husby, the only non-senior starter for VHS, had his best offensive night of the year, hitting on 6-of-7 field goals and 4-of-6 free throws for 16 points along with four rebounds and three steals.

Aaron Steele contributed nine points, three assists and two steals; Jason Rasmussen six points, eight rebounds and two swipes, and Cole Andre four points, eight boards and two steals. Austin Krier and Jaron Sorensen had two points apiece.

The Tanagers, who literally stole a game from Lennox at home a month ago, 51-48, will try to duplicate that feat at Lennox Friday. Vermillion's game at West Central, which was postponed last Thursday, was, at the time this story was written, being rescheduled for this Saturday at Hartford.

After six straight road games, the Tanager boys will be home Tuesday for a boys-girls doubleheader with Elk Point-Jefferson and back on the road next Thursday at Sioux Falls Christian.

Tanager grapplers improve record to 9-1

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Vermillion's third-ranked wrestling team dominated two more opponents last week to improve their record in head-to-head duals to 9-1 for the season.

That sets the stage for the highlight of the dual season, a rematch against neighborhood rival Canton at the VHS gym next Thursday. The C-Hawks handed the Tanagers their only dual loss, 37-33, at the Yankton tournament in December.

Before coming home to face Canton, the Tanagers will be at the Harrisburg tournament this Saturday.

VHS won eight matches in trimming Madison, 50-28, and won nine in a 65-9 defeat of Tea Area in a home triangular Jan. 5. Late in the week, due to illness on his team and two days of practices lost due to school closures, Coach Joe Delvaux decided to pull his team out of Saturday's Brandon Valley tournament.

In the Madison dual Brett Bye, Earl Kiertzner, Bennet Johnson, Chris Mart, Will Mart and Gerrit Heine won by pins. Nick Mart scored a technical fall, and Lance Burkhart won by decision.

Winning via pins against Tea Area were Brett Bye, Brenden Raizola, Burkhart,

Chris Mart, Will Mart and Heine. Johnson won by technical fall and Kiertzner and Andrew McCann via decisions. T.J. North, the state's top-rated 112-pounder, did not wrestle in the triangular.

The Tanagers proved they have to be mentioned in any conversation about the state's best teams when they earned a strong second-place finish at Sioux Falls Lincoln's Floyd Farrand Invitational on Dec. 28-29.

After winning the title at Roosevelt's invitational in December, the Tanagers placed second in this state tourney-caliber field of Class "A" and "B" powerhouses, scoring 159.5 points. Sturgis' perennial "A" kingpins won the team crown with 213.5 points. Vermillion was followed by Canton at 152, Wagner at 133.5 and Howard at 123 points. All of the Sioux Falls schools finished farther down the ladder.

T.J. North was named the meet's most outstanding wrestler after his 112-pound title was secured. The undefeated Tanager, after a first-round bye, scored a 17-1 technical fall win over Schaefer of Brookings in the quarterfinals. He posted a major decision over Burghardt of Watertown in a 19-7 semifinal victory. In the finals in one of two head-to-head title

clashes between Vermillion and Sturgis, North proved his superiority with a 16-2 win over the Scoopers' Tanner Bothwell.

Nick Mart also took an undefeated record into the tournament and emerged unscathed. The Tanagers' 189-pounder pinned Mohamed of Brookings in 57 seconds in the first round and pinned Hayden of Canton in 4:51 in the quarters. Mart then won twice by 3-2 scores, topping Wagner's Steven Holzbauer in the semis and edging Clint Wilson of Sturgis in the title match. The latter was a battle of unbeaten which resulted in Mart's inflicting the season's first loss on Wilson.

Lance Burkhart and Chris Mart also competed in championship matches. Burkhart's run at the 135-pound title started with three dominating wins — 17-8 over Streckfuss of Watertown, 8-0 over Monger of Brandon Valley and 15-3 over Horstman of Parkston. In the finals he

lost by major decision to Garetson's Tanner Donelan, 10-2.

Chris Mart made quick work of his first two opponents — in 57 seconds over Mohamed of Brookings and in 1:46 over Langner of Brandon Valley. Then he shut out Canton's Luke Myrabo in the semis. Chris lost in the finals to Robert Kokesh of Wagner, arguably the best wrestler in the state in any class, in a 3:12 pin.

Gerrit Heine won the third-place medal at 285 pounds. Brett Bye at 103 and Earl Kiertzner at 130 both placed fourth. Will Mart was fifth at 215, and Bennet Johnson placed seventh at 145. Regan Bye at 119, Tony Henderson at 125 and Andrew McCann at 152 also competed for Vermillion at the Farrand meet.



LEAGUE BOWLING

Ladies National League January 5, 2010			Super Strikers		
Team Name	Won	Lost	Team Name	Won	Lost
Whimp's	27.5	2.5	The Lucky Strikers	21.0	15.0
Team BK	25.0	5.0	Bowling Buddies	20.0	16.0
Lamie's Cleaning	19.0	11.0	Turkey Hunters	19.0	17.0
Pace's	11.0	19.0	Bowling Queens	15.0	21.0
Market Street	5.0	25.0	Mizzou	12.0	24.0
Aramark	2.5	27.5	Team 8	6.0	23.0
High Scr. Game-Team	Score		High Scr. Game-Team	Score	
Whimp's	598		Super Strikers	424	
Aramark	575		The Lucky Strikers	350	
Team BK	543		Bowling Buddies	347	
High Scr. Game	Score		High Scr. Game Boys	Score	
Darlis Labahn	197		Logan Peterson	134	
Mary Mock	177		Bradyn Rusher	128	
Tiffany Moore	169		High Scr. Game Girls	Score	
Angela Miller	167		Zack Westergaard	114	
Dawna Andersen	164		Sharrie Stammer	111	
High Scr. Series-Team	Score		Allison Assmus	111	
Whimp's	1638		Brooke Assmus	101	
Aramark	1603		High Scr. Series-Team	Score	
Team BK	1566		Super Strikers	1234	
High Scr. Series	Score		The Lucky Strikers	1011	
Darlis Labahn	489		Team 8	979	
Traci Bartekoske	476		High Scr. Series Boys	Score	
Tiffany Moore	458		Logan Peterson	367	
Dawna Andersen	455		Bradyn Rusher	315	
Mary Mock	454		Collin Lovejoy	295	
Bantam Prep League January 3, 2010			High Scr. Series Girls	Score	
Team Name	Won	Lost	Kayla Stammer	291	
Bowling Girls	29.0	7.0	Sharrie Stammer	283	
			Kayla Andersen	254	
			Alex Carr	254	
			Brooke Assmus	254	

Madison Bulldog gymnasts defeat Tanagers

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Madison's never-ending gymnastics road show came to Vermillion Tuesday night, and the Bulldogs showed that no time soon will their stranglehold on Class "A" gymnastics in the state come to an end.

Seeking their 16th straight state championship next month, the Bulldog gymnasts defeated their Vermillion counterparts in a dual at the VHS gym, 140.25 to 115.85.

For Coach Mark Upward's Tanagers it was their first competition in two

weeks because a dual at West Central and a trip to a tournament at Stanley County were both wiped away by winter weather and school closures last week.

Two Madison gymnasts staged a personal duel for top all-around honors in Tuesday's dual. Laura Blom edged teammate Lexi Finch by a tenth of a point, 35.65 to 35.55, for the top finish.

So far as the Tanagers are concerned, junior Elly Melby represented VHS well. She tied for first place in the vault event with a 9.1 score and was fifth in floor exercise at 8.05. In the all-around standings she finished in fifth place

with a 31.45 score. The schedule calls for the Tanagers to be at home for the rest of the regular season — next Thursday against Yankton/Bon Homme and Feb. 1 against Wagner and West Central.

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