

Tourney nets funds with goal to save VHS tennis

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

It mattered not who won and who lost the various tennis matches on the USD and middle school courts Saturday and Sunday. What was important was that tennis players – winners and losers alike – were playing for the same cause.

Responding to a Vermillion School Board budget-driven decision to eliminate the boys' and girls' tennis program, the S.O.S. (Save Our Sport) organization of tennis athletes, parents and friends came into existence. The weekend's tournament was the first major fund-raising effort of S.O.S., and

it was successful beyond imagination. Nearly \$3,000 was raised from entry fees and donations as tennis enthusiasts from the community and the area responded to the call for help. The school board had granted the S.O.S. group until Aug. 1 to raise the \$8,500 necessary to keep boys' and girls' tennis alive in the Vermillion school system. A \$2,000 donation from the Vermillion Booster Club was a giant jumpstart to the effort, and the fact that because of the weekend tournament \$3,000 of the remaining \$6,500 has been placed in the bank is a giant shot in the arm for reinstating tennis at VHS.

"The tournament was a huge

success," said Dan Hanson, coach of the VHS tennis teams. "There was a lot of great tennis played this weekend, and we had a great turnout. We even had great weather up until the very last match."

Tennis players from Vermillion were joined by a large group from Brandon Valley and others from Sioux City, Sioux Falls, Yankton, Mitchell, Milbank and Luverne. There were 68 singles players alone who took advantage of a beautiful Saturday.

Hanson said the S.O.S. group continues to welcome private donations to close the gap toward the final goal of \$8,500. Tax-deductible checks can be sent to: Vermillion

Public Schools Foundation Inc. (Attn: VHS Tennis Program), P.O. Box 569, Vermillion, SD 57069.

RESULTS OF THE S.O.S. TOURNAMENT:

Singles
Girls U14: Sarah Rockne def. Hannah Mutschelknaus, 10-5.
Girls U18: Kara Bunkers def. Erin Buse, 10-3.
Boys U14: Luke Rockne def. Ethan Albers, 10-0.
Boys U18: Joey Vajgrt def. Michael Bader, 10-5.
Women's 3.5: Mollie Mize def. Kayla Munger, 10-6.
Women's open: Valerie Robinson

def. Leah Branaugh, 11-9.
Men's 4.0: Dylan Kurtz def. Brian Everson, 10-3.
Men's open: Jason Holoch def. Luke Rockne, 10-5.

Doubles
Men's 8.0: Jeff and Dylan Kurtz def. James and Stanley May, 10-4.
Men's open: Dylan and Matt Kurtz def. Jason and John Holoch, 10-6.
Mixed doubles: Jason Holoch and Whitney Pahl were leading Luke and Sarah Rockne, 2-0, when the match had to be stopped due to lightning.

PLAY

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in a show. I definitely have a newfound appreciation for communication – communicating with people who are in the community is different than communicating with people that act every day.

"When you go to school for theatre, there are certain things you learn, but if not, you have to look at things in a different way," he said. "This experience is very different than directing my peers in 'Evil Dead.' It's good because I did have the 'Oklahoma!' experience, and got to know the people who are involved with the community theatre here."

Those community actors, he knows, are faced with quite a challenge as they prepare to stage their latest production soon.

"It's 'My Fair Lady.' It's probably one of the most well known musicals ever written. So, finding, in a creative way, things to keep this very familiar musical fresh to the audience is challenging," Earlywine said. "The language is very dense, finding a way to make the show accessible to a modern audience has been a challenge, but that's why the whole crew is so important. Everyone has been working so hard, and have come up with some really creative, unique ideas."

Rehearsals began May 30 for the musical,

which will be performed at the Vermillion High School Performing Arts Center on July 8-11.

Earlywine is being assisted by Anthony Burbach as musical director, Rosy Soltero as stage manager and Kathryn Reimler as choreographer. Brian Adams is technical director, Ben Kramer is set designer, Anthony Pellecchio is lighting director and Susan Heggstad is costumer.

Stephanie Maddox will star in the female lead role of Eliza Doolittle, the English lass spied selling flowers on the street by Professor Henry Higgins, played by David Hulac, who had the much different role of Jud Fry in "Oklahoma!"

Randy LaMie has been cast as Colonel Pickering, Joshua Kolb as Freddy Eynsford-Hill and David Burrow as Alfred P. Doolittle.

The cast also includes Cindy Aden as Mrs. Eynsford-Hill and Erin Conlon as Mrs. Higgins as well as Don Pryce, Abraham Painter, Clint Johnson, Kelsey Johannsen, Lynn Lawrensen, Randy Gingiss, Derek Iverson, Hannah Ford, Gretchen Burbach, Sue Kappenman, Nancy McCahren and Danielle Dornbusch.

Jasmine Martin, Alex Card, Derek Iverson and Megan Dawley will appear as street performers. The queen's escorts are Ellen Hanson, Rosie Ahmed, Julie Renner and Holly Irwin. The cockney quartet includes Bryce Mayrose, Kurt Hackemer, Caleb Olson and Joshua Kolb.

In addition to actors already mentioned, others appearing in the various choruses are George Schlenker, Evelyn Schlenker, Carrie Prentice, Jack Fuller and Grace Kjelden.



Choreographer Kathryn Reimler gives instruction Sunday to the cast of "My Fair Lady" as they rehearse a dance scene of the popular musical.

(Photo by David Lias)

Earlywine is finding that everything he learned in directing class at USD is coming in quite handy as he and the cast take all of the steps necessary to put on a successful performance next weekend.

"This is a show you can really dig your teeth into ... taking all of the stuff I learned in directing class and applying it has been fun," Earlywine said.

The cast and crew, many who are veterans of

several Vermillion Community Theatre productions, also are a tremendous help as progress is made during each rehearsal session.

"Working with Anthony (Burbach) and working with Kathryn, the choreographer, and with the other experienced members of the cast and crew – having that support when it gets a little tough is really invaluable," Earlywine said.

FLOOD

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Dunes.

"On Memorial Day, I was in Yankton, assisting with our emergency management team all throughout the southeast," he said. "What we did when these increases came up is immediately contact the communities in the region to see if they needed more sandbagging."

"In the Vermillion area, I know they have been in contact about the intakes relative to the water, and I don't have a recent update," Michels said, "but I know there was a request from the people down in Ponderosa wanting some technical assistance. We asked for the Corps to take a look at that, as well."

He was taken by boat on the river near Dakota Dunes earlier Friday afternoon to get an up-close look at the levee system. "I'm pleased to report that it is holding up very well," he said. The emergency team and local citizens have responded thoroughly to the new challenges caused by recent rains. Water that has collected behind the levees is being pumped out, and several homes have had electric service restored, allowing their owners to pump water out of the dwellings.

"We are encountering a lot of groundwater from not only people pumping, but from the rains," he said. "But this is a situation that is being handled very well. I was very impressed."

There are no signs of the flooding letting up any time soon. There also are more and more questions being raised about what the future may hold.

Michels and Thune admitted that many of the inquiries are impossible to answer.

"The bigger issues are if there are going to be any future increases (from the dams). I've been asked that quite a few times; the Corps has said they aren't anticipating it," Michels said, "but it's really all going to be subject to what happens with the rain."

"There are lots of questions, and I know that people are frustrated," Thune said. "They want answers about the management practices. Clearly those issues are going to be addressed and dealt with at some point."

Corps officials have been keeping a close watch on the snowmelt in the higher elevations in Montana. "They've said that it is going at a relatively good pace. They are watching, obviously, the inflows, and are prepared for it," Michels said. "The only thing that's the wildcard is various rain events."

Thune recently met with officials from both the Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"My impression is that FEMA is prepared to help the local communities. All of the protective measures that have been taken, we hope, are going to be eligible for reimbursement from them on a matching basis," Thune said. "I know some of these communities are strapped already, and we've had questions about the amount of assistance. FEMA made it very clear that if they have estimates about the work progress reports, they should be submitting those."

FEMA can also loan funds to communities "to help with some of these expenses until final assessments are made and they are able to come to final

conclusions about what can be covered."

Thune is also receiving many inquiries from South Dakotans about flood insurance-related issues.

"Anybody who purchased flood insurance, irrespective of the flood in progress trigger date of June 1, needs to go through the process, submit a claim, and have an adjuster come out," he said. "FEMA made it very clear that they should do that, and there may be other flood-in-progress dates coming. Some of these flood events have more than one trigger date."

Thune believes that a thorough review must be made of the Master Manual used by the Corps to manage South Dakota's system of mainstem dams and reservoirs.

"There are going to be a lot of issues concerning that to address and perhaps modify going forward," he said. "They think that this is an event that will change the parameters they use in terms of the decisions they make on how to release and keep water levels in the reservoirs going forward."

"There's going to have to be an accounting," Thune said. "I think the Corps of Engineers is going to have to answer questions, obviously, regarding when they made their decisions and why they made their decisions. They will acknowledge today that the Master Manual that they use to govern this system sets targets and sets ranges when it comes to releases. I think they are looking forward, after this is all over and done with, to the opportunity to answer some of the questions and to work with us to modify the Master Manual so that this doesn't happen again in the future."

The presence of Michels and

Thune in Dakota Dunes Friday coincided with a shift in control of the measures still ongoing to protect the city from the high flows of the Missouri River.

"We're transitioning from the Level 3 team from the state to local control," said Steve Long, the incoming public information officer, hired by Dakota Dunes. "We will still have state teams here that will rotate in and out as they complete their missions, but I'll be more of a long term public information officer as we work through the different stages. While I'm being paid by the Dunes, I'm also representing southeastern South Dakota."

"As things have stabilized to a degree, we're going to be handling things more on a local basis, with access to and assistance from state and federal resources," he said.

The South Dakota National Guard, the office of the governor and the U.S. Border Patrol will still have a presence in Dakota Dunes.

"We're still going to have access to some of those resources," Long said. "It's just that the management of those resources is now going to be handled locally as opposed to having a state team here to do that for us."

Michels said only one thing is certain when it comes to the behavior of the Missouri River in South Dakota this year.

"What's predictable is ... this is unpredictable," he said. "We can't be complacent, and I think everyone knows that we just need to keep ourselves safe. A lot of this is in God's hands, in the sense of how much more rain may or may not come."

"We have to be vigilant," Michels said. "This is the beginning of what is going to be a long flood fight."

State to receive funds to assist homeowners

On June 20, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development announced that South Dakota will be receiving \$2,051,563 to assist homeowners through the Emergency Homeowner's Loan Program (EHLPL). EHLPL funds are part of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010.

South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) was one of fifty-two grantees from NeighborWorks' America to receive funding. EHLPL funds will help homeowners who are at least 90 days late on their mortgage payments, and unemployed or working fewer hours because of the economy or a medical condition.

If qualified for assistance under EHLPL and selected, homeowners will be able to access an interest free loan to help pay arrearages and a portion of their monthly mortgage payments up to 24

months or \$50,000, whichever comes first. Funds are limited and not all eligible applicants may receive funding.

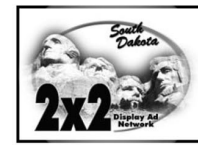
Eligible homeowners have until Friday, July 22, to complete the pre-applicant screening worksheet. After the July 22 application date, a lottery process will be used to determine which applicants will receive funding. The worksheets are available by calling or visiting one of the following participating counseling agencies:

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of the Black Hills, 111 St. Joseph Street, Rapid City, Phone: 800.568.6615

Consumer Credit Counseling Service-Lutheran Social Services, 705 E. 41st Street, Suite 101, Sioux Falls, Phone: 800.568.2401

Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership, 111 N. Van Eps, Madison, Phone: 800.896.4103

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STIP Public Meetings

S.D. Dept. of Transportation has developed a Tentative 2012-2016 Five-Year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Tentative STIP includes all the state sponsored transportation projects for this time period.

Prior to final approval of the STIP by the Transportation Commission, public meetings will be held on the following dates and locations to receive public comment on the tentative program.

July 12, 2011	Ramada Inn	Aberdeen	7:00 PM
July 21, 2011	Ramkota Hotel	Rapid City	7:00 PM
July 26, 2011	Ramkota Hotel	Sioux Falls	7:00 PM
July 27, 2011	Highland Conference Center	Mitchell	7:00 PM
July 28, 2011	Ramkota Hotel	Pierre	7:00 PM

Individuals with disabilities or special needs call 605-773-3540 or 1-800-877-1113 (TDD).

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