

Vermillion boys' season ends with 55-45 loss to EP-J

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

For nearly two quarters the Vermillion Tanagers gave top-seeded Elk Point-Jefferson all it could handle in the District 8A semifinals on the Huskies' home court last Thursday.

However, a costly 9-0 surge to close the first half brought EP-J back from a seven-point deficit and into the lead. A similar fate befell the Tanagers in the last half of the third quarter as the Huskies went from a two-point lead to a 12-point advantage at the end of the period.

The Tanagers recovered from the first EP-J explosion, but the second one was fatal as the Huskies maintained their comfortable lead through the final eight minutes and put a period at the end of the Vermillion season, 55-45.

Cole Knippling's tall, talented,

physical and, unfortunately, young Huskies advanced to the district title game against upstart Beresford, which edged No. 2-seed Dakota Valley, 64-62, in the other semifinal. In Saturday's championship contest EP-J captured the district crown.

For the Tanagers the semifinal loss left them with a 6-15 record for the year. Four of those six victories came in the first five weeks of the campaign when they won four of their first six contests. Their rugged schedule got the best of them after that, and Vermillion found itself on the short end in 13 of its last 15 games.

Next November the Tanagers won't be starting totally from scratch as they had to do beginning with last year's season after a completely senior-class squad graduated in 2008. But Coach Jay Drake will see only one starter, Tyler Husby, return-

ing for another year along with "sixth man" Austin Krier, who was the first player off the bench this winter.

Husby's fellow juniors Jaron Sorensen and Marquis Knight, sophomores Nile Morecraft and Riley Vlasman and freshman Tanner Anderson were also on the varsity roster this year. A sophomore-dominated junior varsity squad will send up the balance of Drake's roster for the 2010-11 season.

Seeing their high school careers conclude with the loss to EP-J were seniors Aaron Steele, Jason Rasmussen, Cole Andre, Kylan Freidel and Sam Ekstrom as well as Erik Ustad, who sustained a season-ending injury in the first game of the year in December.

Vermillion, thanks to a buzzer-beating basket by Rasmussen, led 14-12 at the end of the first quarter of Thursday's semifinal. Rasmussen

and Andre started the next period with field goals. After Krier scored a bucket and Andre potted a pair of three-pointers, the Tanagers were looking good with a 26-19 lead. But that's when the Huskies roared from behind and led 28-26 at the break.

Andre began the second half with one of his six treys, but five straight points from Ben Staum put EP-J back ahead permanently. Steele's basket cut the deficit to 33-31, but Vermillion would go scoreless the rest of the third quarter during which they would eventually be outscored 15-5.

Baskets by Freidel and Krier got the Tanagers back to within eight to start the final stanza, but they would never be that close again until the final minute when a pair of Rasmussen free throws and Andre's last three-pointer got them to within 53-45.

Andre finished with 20 points,

three assists, three rebounds and a steal while Freidel had eight points, eight boards, two steals and four assists. Rasmussen had nine points and Steele and Krier four apiece.

Brock Zeller with 14, Staum with 12 and Ethan Pace with 11 gave EP-J a three-pronged balanced offensive attack. The taller Huskies led in rebounding 24-14 as the Tanagers were able to get only one rebound off their own board.

Vermillion actually had one more field goal than did EP-J, the Tanagers hitting on 17 of 41 tries for 42 percent and the Huskies connecting on 16 of 33 for 48 percent. But while the foul differential wasn't all that drastic - 17 fouls on Vermillion and 12 on EP-J - the number of free throws those fouls produced was dramatic. The Huskies went to the stripe 28 times, making 18, while the Tanagers had only nine free throws, sinking five.

Vermillion Special Olympians bring home silver medal

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Competing in the team competition of Special Olympics basketball for the first time, Vermillion's team brought home the silver medal from the state Special Olympics tournament in Mitchell last weekend.

Coaches Jen Law and Lori Jerred said they are very proud of their athletes. "To bring home the silver was a great accomplishment for our athletes," they said.

Vermillion lost a 15-13 first-round game to Northern Hills Training Center with Dylan Rasmussen leading the team with six points. But the Vermillion club rebounded strongly with two straight wins.

Vermillion dealt the Yankton Rebels a 24-18 defeat in the second game with Cody Knutson scoring 16 of the team's 24 points. In their third game Vermillion was victorious by 22-10 over the Sioux Falls All-Stars. Jonathan Manning, Knutson and Robbie Johnson Cheeseman had four points apiece.

Other members of the team are Kathie Herrera, Shaylene Davis, Sharie Stammer, Tiffany Conrad, Dylan Huddelson, Raya O'Neil and James Solberg. Herrera won the spirit/sportsmanship award for her divi-



Pictured are members of the Vermillion Special Olympics basketball team. These athletes brought home the silver medal after competing in the state Special Olympics tournament in Mitchell.

sion. Vermillion Special Olympics athletes will now start practicing for their last two events of the year, swimming and track and field. Meanwhile, the

Polar Plunge is coming up on April 11 and will be held north of Pro's. Anyone wishing to be part of that event can contact Jen Law at Vermillion Middle School (670-7025).

Tanager JV ends season with win over Wagner

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Vermillion's junior varsity girls ended an impressive 14-3 season with a come-from-behind trouncing of Wagner, 44-28.

The Tanagers trailed 15-10 at halftime but came out after the break with a deadly full-court pressure defense that caused 20 Wagner turnovers in the second half.

"We had a great defensive effort to finish the season," Coach Lori Jerred noted. "I was pleased with the success of the team this year. We have really come together as a team, and that allowed us to win games."

Sami Girard led the defensive assault with five of the Tanagers' 23 steals and had three assists on offense. Morgan Erickson and Kelly Amundson picked off three steals apiece.

Bailey Carlson and Claire Jones with eight points each and Kelly Amundson with seven led the Vermillion scoring, followed by Erickson with six and Lizzie Bye with five. Amundson, Erickson and Beth Szymanski had four rebounds apiece.

USD finishes Great West in style

Coyotes rout New Jersey Tech 83-49, record seventh straight 20-Win season

By Jeremy Hoek
jeremy.hoek@yankton.net

All that was left was just to play.

Yet, the University of South Dakota men didn't just play, they continued the momentum from the previous night's emotional win and picked up a few milestones along the way.

Having already clinched the Great West Conference title and the No. 1 seed for this week's postseason tournament, the Coyotes easily handled New Jersey Tech 83-49 on Sunday night in the Dakotadome.

In the 11th straight win for the Coyotes (20-9, 11-1), senior center Steve Smith reached 1,000 career points - that coming with 3.7 seconds left. USD also eclipsed 20 wins for the seventh straight season.

Not bad for a regular season finale.

"I've been through a lot here," said Smith, a senior center in his fifth year with the Coyotes. "I didn't get a chance to score 1,000 points in high school, so that was a goal I had for college. Getting there really means a lot to me."

The Sioux Falls native, who got an injury waiver from the NCAA for a sixth year of college eligibility, scored 21 points to lead the Coyotes past a New Jersey Tech squad that arrived in Vermillion on Sunday morning.

In a game that was never really close, USD shot 50.9 percent from the field and drained nine three-pointers, after hitting 16 in Saturday night's win over Houston Baptist.

"I was pretty sure we wouldn't have a letdown or anything like that," USD coach Dave Boots said. "We still had

a game against a really good New Jersey team, and we told our guys we just needed to come out strong again."

The Coyotes opened the game like they finished on Saturday.

USD got three-pointers from Gentry, Krogman and Smith in a span of just under three minutes to lead 13-8 at the 14:22 mark. The lead reached double digits, 27-16, on another trey from Krogman six minutes later.

At two points in the first half, the USD cushion reached 16 points, and at halftime, the Coyotes led 40-27.

"We knew Saturday would be huge, but we also knew there was a tough game (Sunday)," Smith said. "We just wanted to come out and play hard, and we definitely got it done."

Just under four minutes in the second half, the USD cushion ballooned to 50-29 after sophomore reserve Louie Krogman drained a three-pointer. The Highlanders (9-20, 4-8) would get no closer than 16 points the rest of the way.

New Jersey Tech had no answer for USD's defensive pressure and transition game down the stretch, as the visitors were just 8-of-37 from the field in the second half.

"We had another solid defensive effort tonight, I thought, especially holding them to 28 percent," Boots said. "To their (NJIT) credit, they missed some shots and were in a tough situation after traveling to get here in a hurry."

The only thing to be determined late was if Smith would reach 1,000 points.

Needing 20 points for the

milestone coming into the game, the 6-foot-11 center scored on a transition layup with 3.7 seconds left - eliciting a nice ovation from the Dome crowd and his teammates.

"Steven played really well and has been playing with more confidence lately," Boots said. "If we get him going, it takes more pressure off everybody else. That's a great honor for him; he's worked his tail off for this program."

"We couldn't be happier for him."

In a game highlighted by USD's offense, Smith wasn't the only threat for the Coyotes.

Senior Roman Gentry scored 16 points, while Krogman added 14, and senior Tyler Cain recorded 11 points and 14 rebounds. Junior point guard Kendall Cutler chipped

in with 10 points.

Leading the way for the Highlanders, who had won once in five games coming in, freshman guard Chris Flores scored a game-high 26 points. Jheryl Wilson added 10 points and eight rebounds.

USD will next compete in the Great West Conference postseason tournament, starting Wednesday in Orem, Utah. The Coyotes, as the No. 1 seed, receive a first round bye and will play the winner of the No. 4/5 contest.

The winner of the tournament receives an invitation to the CollegeInsiders.com Tournament.

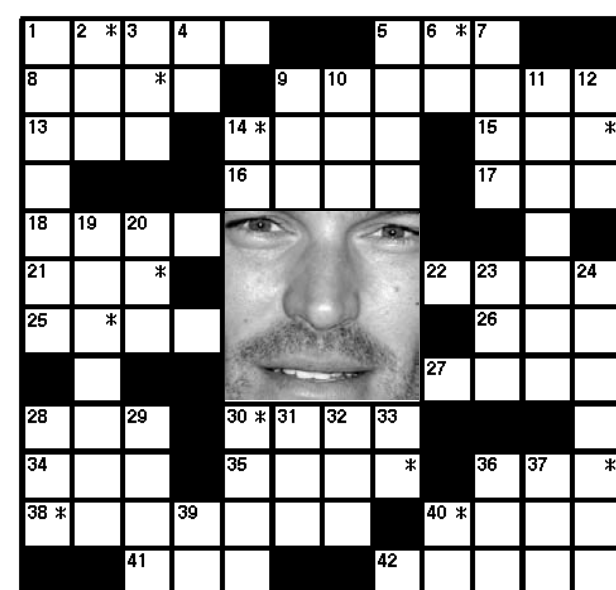
"We definitely want to win that tournament and see how we can do out there," Smith said. "That's a goal we've had all season and we're just anxious to get out there."

**Basement Walls Bowed?
Foundation Settling?
Wet Basement?**

• Multiple Solutions & Financing Available • Free Estimates

800-392-3389
BLACKBURN BASEMENT SYSTEMS
www.blackburnbasementrepair.com

TV CROSSWORD



The identity of the featured celebrity is found within the answers in the puzzle. In order to take the TV Challenge, unscramble the letters noted with asterisks within the puzzle.

- ACROSS**
- "Good ___" (1974-79)
 - "Sha Na ___" (1977-81)
 - Ortiz of "Ugly Betty"
 - "The ___"; 2006-09 Regina Taylor series
 - Dave of "Brothers & Sisters"
 - Word with income or property
 - Garrett; for one
 - eBay offer
 - Ellenor Frutt or Jimmy Berlutti of "The Practice"; abbr.
 - Junior nav. rank
 - "All ___"; 1984 Steve Martin movie
 - Denis Leary's age
 - "From ___ Till Dawn"; 1996 George Clooney film
 - Prefix for space or dynamics
 - Agy; that controls U.S. aviation
 - Four-time Indy 500 winner
 - "Life to Live"
 - Actor John
 - Nicholas ___
 - Indecent
 - "A Bridge Too ___"; 1977 Sean Connery film
 - Getty
 - "___ in the House" (2007-08)
 - Stallone, to friends
 - Moir Kelly's role on "One Tree Hill"
 - Rooney, for one
 - "Sha Na ___" (1977-81)
 - Singer/actress Lane
 - "House Party" host
 - ___ King Cole
 - Anna Belknap's role on "CSI: NY"
 - O'Neill and Sullivan
 - Initials for a star of "The Golden Girls"
 - "FlashForward" actor
 - Russian space station
 - Roswell sight, for short
 - Newton of "Gary Unmarried"
 - Vaudevillian Olsen
 - Consumes
 - Role on "Everybody Loves Raymond"
 - Boss on "Alice"
 - Be in the red
 - Cheryl Ladd's state of birth; abbr.
 - "Spenser" - Hire (1985-88)
 - "The Boys ___ Back"; 1994 sitcom
 - "___ Dorado"; 1966 John Wayne movie
 - Setting for "Dharma & Greg"; abbr.
- DOWN**
- Ice-T's role
 - "Incident ___ Small Town"; 1994 Walter Matthau TV movie
 - Old Western actor Tom
 - 1982 Spielberg creation

Get a new kitchen, Get **Cash Back.**

Top-quality Showplace Cabinetry, with manufacturer direct cash rebates. You better get started - your new kitchen will last for years, but this offer won't!

SHOWPLACE Wood Products

Yankton Showroom
309 W. 11th St., Yankton, SD 57078
605-668-2138 • 1-800-249-3837
www.tkplaceyankton.com

the Kitchen Place