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VHS athletes are crowned champs



Members of the VHS Tanager gymnastics team are (back row) Coach Skye Bork, Hope Knedler, Alexis Reich, Rory Tucker, Morgan Hower, Cheyenne Mallory, Sophia Taggart, Morgan Graham and Coach Mark Upward, and, (kneeling) Anneliese Taggart, Anna Hammond, Shayla Kiertzner and Brisee Schnack. In front is Kathryn Farrell.

(Photo courtesy of Val Hower)

Tanager gymnasts place 6th of 12 at State 'A'

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

The gymnastics careers of four Vermillion High seniors concluded at the state tournament in Rapid City Feb. 15-16, and the Tanagers as a team placed sixth among 12 schools in Friday's Class "A" team competition.

Morgan Hower, Alexis Reich, Rory Tucker and Jade Fostvedt were the seniors on the roster this season for Coach Mark Upward and assistant Skye Bork.

Vermillion's team score was 121.775. Deuel High School repeated as state "A" team champion.

The vault was the Tanagers' best event that day with a 32.800 being recorded. Vermillion had a 30.925 mark in

floor exercise, 29.375 on the balance beam and 28.675 on the uneven parallel bars.

On Saturday, the day for individual competitions in all four events, Tucker had Vermillion's only top-10 finish with a ninth-place on the beam at a score of 8.1250. Hower placed 11th on the bars at 8.3250 and Anneliese Taggart 11th on the beam at 7.9500 for the Tanagers' other best scores.

Here are the VHS scores for both days:
Team Championships
Bars: Hower tie-14th, 7.750; Anna Hammond 22nd, 7.350; Cheyenne Mallory 26th, 7.050; Taggart tie-39th, 6.525; Shayla Kiertzner 50th, 5.250.

Beam: Taggart tie-17th, 7.725; Tucker tie-22nd, 7.500; Mallory tie-35th, 7.100; Reich tie-37th, 7.050; Hower 51st,

6.4250; Kiertzner 54th, 6.2250. Floor exercise: Tucker tie-19th, 8.150; Mallory tie-26th, 7.900; Taggart tie-48th, 7.450; Hower 49th, 7.425; Kathryn Farrell 64th, 6.800; Reich 68th, 6.300.

Vault: Hower tie-27th, 8.500; Taggart and Kiertzner tie-45th, 8.150; Mallory tie-54th, 8.000; Tucker tie-56th, 7.950; Reich tie-61st, 7.700.

All-around: Hower 25th, 30.100; Mallory 26th, 30.050; Tucker tie-27th, 32.000; Taggart 29th, 29.850; Kiertzner 51st, 19.625.

Individual Championships
Bars: Hower 11th, 8.325; Hammond 27th, 7.500; Mallory 29th, 7.350.

Beam: Tucker 9th, 8.125; Taggart 11th, 7.950; Reich 30th,

■ STATE, Page 09

Regan Bye tops 145-pound class at state tourney

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

The Bye family wrestling legacy in Vermillion has gained a new chapter.

With his dad and coach, three-time state champion Hazen Bye, watching from matside, Vermillion High sophomore Regan Bye won the state Class "A" 145-pound championship Saturday night at Watertown. Cousin Brett Bye, who with Regan has provided Tanager opponents with successive nightmares in back-to-back weight classes all season long, captured third place at 152 pounds.

Hazen Bye won state titles as a Tanager himself in 1982, 1983 and 1984.

The younger Byes provided the majority of Vermillion's 44 team points as the Tanagers tied for 15th place, finishing ahead of 18 schools, including the likes of Sioux Falls Lincoln, Sioux Falls O'Gorman, Yankton and Mitchell. Pierre won its second straight "A" crown, outdistancing challengers Rapid City Central and Huron for the top spot.

Regan Bye was a points producer in his first two matches at the state tournament. He decided Till Olson, Sturgis, 11-2, in the first round and later Friday won over Huron's Arthur Hines, 11-6. In Saturday morning's semifinal round, he had to face Rapid City Central's Blake Stone, who had been ranked No. 1 in the 145-pound division in the final statewide coaches' rankings. Bye prevailed by 3-2 in overtime.

To earn his championship Bye would then have to face Mitch Johnson, Aberdeen Central, who was the No. 2 man in the final rankings. Despite falling behind on an early escape, Bye prevailed. It was another cliffhanger, a 4-3



Vermillion's Regan Bye had good reason to smile Saturday. He defeated Aberdeen Central's Mitch Johnson to claim the 145-pound championship in the State "A" Wrestling Tournament held Feb. 22-23 in Watertown.

(Photo courtesy of South Dakota Public Broadcasting)

decision, but he had his championship. He finished his year with a 41-4 record.

Brett Bye pinned Kyler Schmidt of Spearfish/Lead-Deadwood in the first round in 1:32 of the first period, then decided Madison's Matt Goth in the quarterfinals, 8-2. Brett sustained only his second loss of the season by 3-2 in the semifinals against eventual champion Hartman Katz of Huron.

Bye responded with a 7-1 victory over Brandon Valley's Wyatt Winter in the fourth wrestleback round to earn a crack at third place. The opponent there was Goth again, and Bye won by injury default in the first period when Goth was injured and could not continue.

Brett Bye capped off a 41-2 campaign. Besides Katz, the only other wrestler to whom Bye lost all year, Zach Schuman of Tri-Valley, won the state championship in Class "B" in the same weight class.

With two more seasons remaining for each of the Byes, the sky seems to be the limit to

what they might achieve on the mats.

Four other Tanager state meet qualifiers were eliminated by the end of the first day although one of them did win a match.

Eighth-grader Carter Kratz, who won twice as many matches as he lost this season in the 138-pound class, lost his opening-round match 8-2 to Pierre senior Caleb Stoltenburg, a state champion in 2012 and a runner-up this year.

But Kratz came back strong in the first round of the wrestlebacks to outpoint Justin Krebs of Rapid City Stevens, 8-1, staying alive into the second round.

There, however, Kratz lost to Watertown's Taylor McLaughlin on a pin at 4:38 and saw his chance of placing at state fall one win short.

Kratz ended his first varsity season with a 35-17 record.

At 106 pounds another eighth-grade wrestler, Kyle Seibel, lost by pin in 50 seconds

■ BYE, Page 08

2013 Shakespeare Festival performance cancelled

By Travis Gulbrandson
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Last summer, approximately 1,200 people attended the inaugural South Dakota Shakespeare Festival.

The same opportunity will not be available this year, because while the educational aspect of the festival will remain, the play itself has been put on hold until 2014 at least.

"We are definitely moving forward with planning for the project itself, coming up with a long-term perspective for what we would like to do with the organization and with the festival," said Ted Cherry, CEO of Coyoteopolis, which oversees the festival along with the USD Beacom School of Business and the College of Fine Arts.

The festival is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Vermillion.

Dr. Mark Yockey, interim executive director of the business school, said one of the

main reasons the play had to be cancelled involved student staffing.

"The (Coyoteopolis) project in the past has been part of a mandatory course that all the students took, and so all the students were involved," Yockey said. "This year, we have moved to a different model, in which the course is a standalone course, and so students enroll in the course as an elective. That's impacted the number of students we had involved considerably this year."

The financial model has been impacted, as well.

"Those students in the past have been responsible for helping raise the funding for the project," Yockey said. "With fewer students involved, that certainly had a tremendous impact on our financial model."

The decision to cancel the play was made on Feb. 14 after

■ FEST, Page 02

New fire chief's focus is community

By Travis Gulbrandson
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Working with community members is one of the main goals of Vermillion's new fire chief, and he spent Monday afternoon meeting many of them face-to-face.

An open house was held for Richard Shannon Draper in the city council chambers from 2-3:30 p.m., during which time he and his family got acquainted with as many local residents as they could.

"I really look forward to working with the community," Draper said. "I strongly believe in a community-focused organization. We're providing a service to the community, and the community is our customer."

"In my tenure, you're going to see a lot more engaging and getting feedback from the community through inspections, fire prevention, being in the schools, things like that, but then also, whatever programs we can. Whenever the community says, 'Hey, can you help us with this?' If we can, we're going to," he said.

Draper comes to Vermillion with 28 years of service in the fire service. He grew up in Detroit and moved to Pennsylvania, where he first served as a volunteer.

"I think all kids kind of look at fire



Richard Draper (right), Vermillion's new fire chief, chats with Benno Wymar during an open house held at city hall Monday afternoon.

(Photo by Travis Gulbrandson)

trucks and think, 'I would like to do that,' and I was one of those," Draper said. "I think that when I was out east, I thought about volunteering, and I knew immediately it was something I enjoyed

doing. Helping the community, working with the community in a volunteer organization. ...

■ CHIEF, Page 06



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