

Bye, Bye Champions

By Alan Dale
For the Plain Talk

Tanager wrestling cousins wrap high school careers with individual titles; VHS takes 7th Place.

SIoux FALLS - A scene can be new or different, but winning never stops because of a change of venue.

Just ask Vermillion High School's Brett and Regan Bye.

The senior Tanager wrestling duo showed everyone this weekend they could get on a mat in Rapid City, Vermillion, Sioux Falls or a truck stop in Aberdeen and one thing would never change: Bye wrestling dominance.

Saturday at the Denny Sanford Premier Center both Byes concluded their careers with two more individual titles and five total over their Tanager careers to spark the Vermillion High team to a seventh-place finish (79.5 points) at the Class A state wrestling finals.

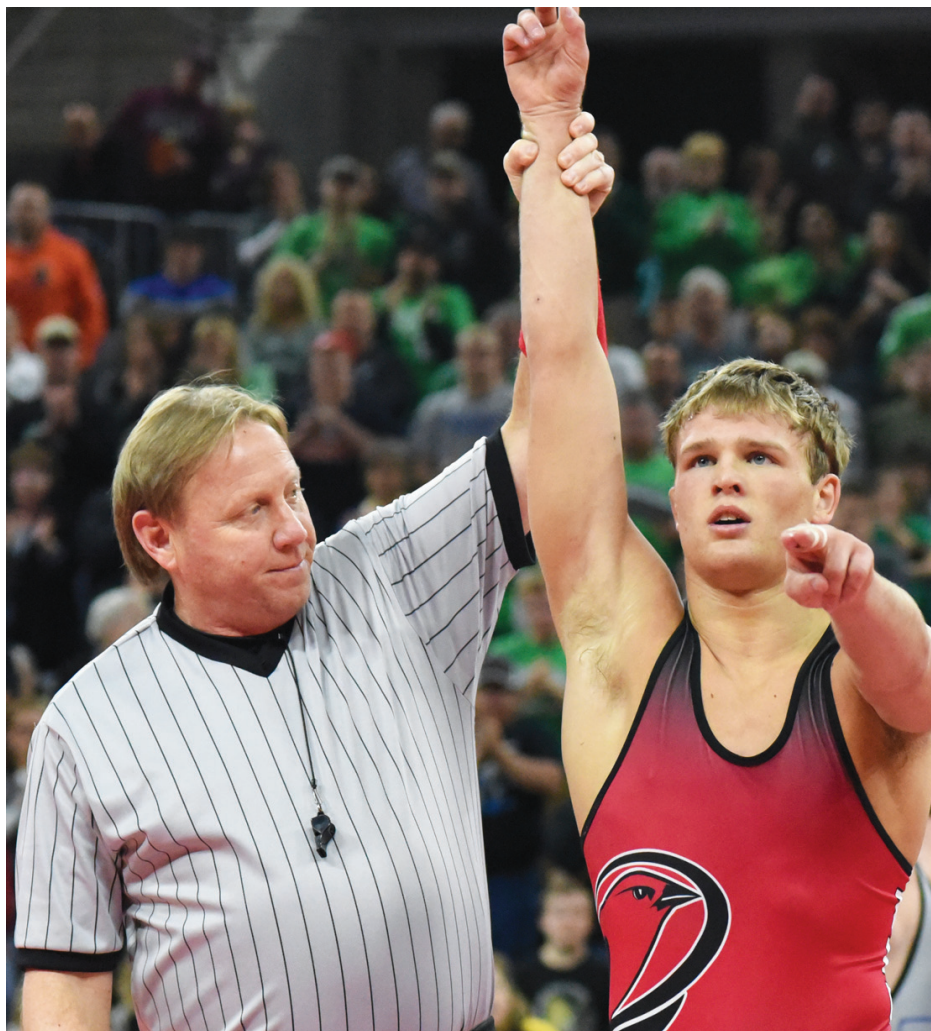
Pierre won the state team title with 161.5 points.

Vermillion's Trey Hage (third place, 120-pounds), Carter Kratz (fourth-place, 145-pounds), and Jacob Husby (seventh-place, 113-pounds) made it five Tanagers to place at state.

"One of our goals all year long was to get on the podium so seventh is good enough for me," Vermillion head coach Hazen Bye said. "We have been ranked around there all year long so I am happy with that."

"We had nine qualify this year and eight last year (when they finished 11th). It's been an amazing season. The guys who filled in (the lineup) that weren't here all did something to help win a dual. Something worked out almost every time (during the season) and it helped make it always a team effort."

Regan Bye, won his third consecutive state title with an injury default victory over Kasey Klapprodt (Rapid City Stevens)



Regan Bye of the Vermillion Tanager wrestling team, captured the 160 pound individual title last weekend at the Class A state finals in Sioux Falls.

ALL PHOTOS BY JAMES CIMBUREK / PRESS & DAKOTAN

at 3:06.

Prior to that, Regan dominated the match to such a level that he literally drug Klapprodt around the mat to completely boss the action.

Regan had won consecutive titles at 145-pounds entering this season prior to earning his third crown.

"The only reason i was at 145, was for the team, and for the team that's where I felt comfortable

and it was a natural place for me," Regan Bye said. "Weight-wise I probably would have been fine at 170, but it didn't work out because of the seniors we had and (Brett). I definitely got a lot stronger and as (this season) went on I felt stronger every time I wrestled. I put myself in positions that helped me feel great every time I wrestled."

Brett Bye won a second straight individual title as he added to his

152-pound title he earned last winter.

He won 3-0 over Pierre's Dawson Monfore.

"I tried to go out there and wrestle my match and do what I am good at I guess," Brett said. "His front right leg was up there a bit and his arm was up and I saw an opening (for an early takedown)."

The two wrestlers knocked heads and Monfore seemed to take the

brunt of it. From there, Brett Bye dominated as the Pierre wrestler seemed to just let the Tanager ride out the win and not allow Vermillion to earn the pin.

Brett saw that the momentum was completely his after the two had collided.

"That was kind of where he broke and realized I was little bit more physical then," Brett Bye said.

"That's when he shut down."

Brett also became the first ever Tanager to claim a state final placing in all six years of varsity action dating back to his seventh grade year.

The Tanagers' team finish was the program's best under head coach Hazen Bye, a mighty fine grappler in his day and Regan's father.

"I won three titles too," coach Bye said. "Regan is the better wrestler though. He's much more technically sound it's not even funny. They eat better now, are better educated, and have all the tools. Not that I didn't, but they took advantage of those tools. (A match against Regan) Would be close. Did you ask him about it? I have more men strength so he better get it done fast," Hazen smiled.

The Bye wrestlers are not only champions but also a rarity: two Division I recruited athletes from the same team from a high school of such a small enrollment.

Regan is set to wrestle for the University of Nebraska while Brett is set to participate for the South Dakota State squad. Brandon Hertz (182-pounds) and Kyle Siebel (126-pounds) went 1-2 on Friday and were eliminated short of the medal rounds.

Noah Westergaard (195-pounds) and Noah Walker (138-pounds) were eliminated on day one after being defeated in their only two matches each.

Here is a look at how Saturday went for the five Tanager finalists. REGAN BYE (champion, 160-pounds) Three straight titles like his father

- Vermillion coach Hazen Bye - Regan Bye was made more than just a great wrestler by his family's patriarch and others close to him.

"They will still always be my family and at the next level they will be there for everything that's how my family is," Regan said. "We will probably call each other every day to be honest."

"It kind of stinks knowing my dad won't be my coach anymore, but at least I had the opportunity for him to be my coach. Once he was my coach we started seeing results, and started winning," Regan may have been a heck of a wrestler, but he gives plenty of credit to his father for making him an even better man.

"I grew up a lot with him being around and pushing us so hard," Regan said. "He and my sisters - they taught me how to be a gentleman and how to treat people with respect. On the mat it's a different story, because I want to win. Off the mat you can be the nicest guy in the world."

The 'different story' showed itself on the mat as Regan toyed with Klapprodt - who seemed to have more than just his leg hurt - from start to finish.

Bye earned his place in the semifinal with a massive pin of Matt Larson (Mitchell) at 3:52 when leading 3-0.

This was his final weekend as a Tanager wrestler battling with his dad, Brett, and the program.

"I am definitely going to remember my dad being such a great coach and the assistants helping me become so successful," Regan said. "What I am also going to miss the most is competing against Brett. Now maybe one day in our future we will compete against each other (in college)."

"We have a really close relationship. It's close because when we wrestle in the room we

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(art.) OF VERMILLION.

See the Talents of Aaron Packard

By Sonia Hernandez
For the Plain Talk

Art of Vermillion: Aaron Packard
By Sonia Hernandez
For the Plain Talk
Local photographer and business owner Aaron Packard has lived in Vermillion for most of his life.

Born in 1971 at Dakota Hospital, his roots undeniably run deep in the community.

Packard has been immersed in creativity for his entire life.

At the University of South Dakota, his mother Phyllis

taught fiber art, while his father, Dan, taught sculpture and drawing. "I got into photography at a young age - around twelve. I did processing and printing as a hobby with John Banasiak," Packard says. He was able to work alongside the talents of Banasiak, Professor of Art at the University of South Dakota. During Banasiak's thirty-five years at USD, he has seen many promising artists come and go. "Aaron was always going to be involved in the arts because of upbringing. His work is well-thought

out and beautiful on an aesthetic level," Banasiak fondly recalls.

Jeff Freeman has been a Professor of Art at USD for thirty-one years, and is also very familiar with the Packard family.

"His Dad always said that everyone should be made to take time off before college and have life experiences - and that's what Aaron did."

"In 1989, I joined the Navy out of rebellion," Packard jokes. His particular brand of defiance was unexpected led him back to photography. "While I was in the Navy, I met a photojournalist for the New York Times who

was doing a piece on a windjammer cruise ship. I thought that was something I could do," says Packard. He bounced around a bit before settling back in Vermillion. "I spent ten years in San Francisco working under a photographer, but I went out on my own in 2003 and started doing commercial work for CDW Corporation and other web companies. I decided it was time to move back here." Packard did portraits for



Local business owner and photography Aaron Packard has brought his talents to Vermillion and he wouldn't have it any other way.

SONIA HERNANDEZ / FOR THE PLAIN TALK

some time, but was not particularly fond of it and began to build up his work slowly. He considers himself a professional corporate industrial lifestyle photography.

"I do mainly corporate type of photography and

advertising, but lately I've been working with traditional processes." His biggest commercial client is Black Hills Ammunition, located in

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