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Legends Nomination Process Ends Tuesday

By Alan Dale
The Plain Talk

The nomination process for the first edition of the Legends Series: The Athletes is just about to wrap up and things are looking good.

So far *The Plain Talk* has received a solid number of nominations that would give fans of Vermillion's sports scene to banter about who the top five individual athletes of all time are.

On Tuesday at 11:59 p.m. the nomination process will come to an end and if any of the readers have missed out on it there is still

time to get involved.

Here is how to nominate.

1. Nominations should come from athletes who played at Vermillion High School or the University of South Dakota. They can also be local athletes who participated in adult rec that did something of extraordinary levels. A famous runner? Bicyclist? Bowler? They can be considered too.

2. You may nominate up to three different people.

3. To nominate you need to include:

a. Their school or affiliation

b. Years known competed
c. What sport/s they are being nominated for

d. A short reason for why they are being nominated

e. Also, if you wish to help, provide some background information so we know where to begin our research, especially if the athletes are from a much later time.

4. Nominations can be sent to news@plaintalk.net.

5. Nomination can be submitted online at https://plaintalk.net.bloxcms.com/site/forms/online_services/submit_news/

legends/legends/

6. Nominations can be submitted via Postal Mail by sending it to: 201 West Cherry Street, Vermillion, SD 57609

7. And nominations can be submitted by calling Alan Dale at 605-624-4429.

8. Also please leave contact information so we can potentially follow up on more information on some of these great legends.

The nomination list will be announced in the April 17 edition of *The Plain Talk* and the voting process will begin that date and last through May 31.

Once the voting ends, we will tabulate those results and throughout the months of July and August we will write stories on at minimum, those who were selected the Top 5 Legends of Vermillion, on a weekly basis, leading up to the first day of the college sports season at the University of South Dakota.

Thus *The Plain Talk* will write the stories that you ultimately voted for.

A total team effort.

Stay tuned for more and keep those nominations coming over these last few days.

Tanager Tennis Aims for More This Season; Returns Full Lineup

By Alan Dale
The Plain Talk

Tennis in Vermillion isn't an activity that rises to the front of line for peoples' attention.

Yet there is proud group of just under two dozen young men who are hoping to represent Vermillion High School's tennis program this spring with a bit more edge and earn a lot more positive results.

Fourth-year Head Coach Betsy Hughes hopes to see her squad improve from last year where they won one dual match and saw a little progress at the state level.

"The kids have to have an ability to keep playing when they are frustrated and these kids really do and I am proud of them for that," Hughes said. "They are playing so hard and are totally self-motivated and dedicated. They want to play so much better than they were and they are. They are playing so much better now than they were at the end of last season. That's definitely what we want."

The season starts for the Tanagers on Tuesday (March 31) at 4 p.m. when they host Luverne (Minnesota).

Everyone is back from last year and Hughes said a lot of her players spent a lot of time studying the game and playing when they



Vermillion High School's Jacob Ford and the rest of the Tanager boys' tennis team wants to shake things up in 2015.
FILE PHOTO

could during the offseason.

With hoped for improvements at the high school's tennis courts, the team practices behind Vermillion Middle School and plays its home matches at the University of South Dakota.

"The numbers are good and the kids that come out are great," Hughes said. "What we need and what we are hoping for is more organization at the com-

munity level. Right now most of tennis comes from the high school and from families who support the kids who play. If we could spread out our base instead of having such a small number of people who come through (the influence will grow).

"We need the broader base of support and more kids playing at a younger

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Jacob Odens is set to be the Vermillion Tanagers' ace this season as the squad opens up play on Monday at Dakota Valley.
FILE PHOTO

Tanager Hustle, Expectation of Success Could lead VHS Baseball

By Alan Dale
The Plain Talk

Is Vermillion a baseball town?

Maybe, but it would most likely depend on who someone asks.

Yet, there is no disputing that the sport has taken front stage as arguably the one that has brought out the most consistent success over recent years.

In 2011, Jason Gault led the Tanagers of Vermillion High School to the South Dakota High School Baseball Association (SDHSBA) title and the 16th year head coach enters 2015 with hopes of making things interesting once again.

The Tanagers open their season Monday (March 30) at Dakota Valley with a 5

p.m. first pitch planned.

Vermillion (13-5 in 2014) comes off a Region 1B title game loss to Parkston and will hope to overcome some key losses if they hope to win the 1B-East and make a move toward a state berth.

"We have to be a team that hustles and gets after it every day because we don't have a lot of power hitters and we're playing in a wood bat league," Gault said. "We have always really preached, no matter what kind of team we had, that we were going to hustle, play good defense, and throw strikes. We are going to pitch to bats instead of throwing strikeouts."

The players believe it's more of a matter of just re-injecting the program

with that winning Tanager DNA.

"We've never approached anything like it's a rebuilding year but more that we just reload every year," senior Jack Brown said. "We have some young guys coming up that are pretty good and we have sophomores that will play varsity and play well."

"A lot of guys play hard, fly around, hustle. We don't have the biggest guys - ever - but we have athletes across the board, class guys, and good pitchers."

The Tanagers will aim to replace departed players Jayce Huska, Ty Iverson, Ethan James, and Regan Bye.

Gault will need to in

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Vermillion Girls' Golf Fired Up for New Season

By Alan Dale
The Plain Talk

Last year they were young and just getting after it.

Now they are older with something to prove.

Without a senior on the team, the 2014 Vermillion High School girls' golf team finished tied for fifth-place at the Class A State Finals and yet they don't feel as if they did as well as they could have.

"We choked," junior Kayla Stammer said.

On that note, the Tanagers have entered a new campaign with renewed confidence, a lot more strength and a chip on their shoulder for long-time head coach Kirk Hogen.

The newest edition of these Tanagers opens its season on Tuesday in Madison.

"We have the opportunity to compete for some type of medal at the state tournament," Hogen said. "That's our goal any year. We hope to compete and we should be able to."

"There's more confidence as much as anything. We went into some bigger matches last year where we fared well. I am seeing a lot more physical strength and a little more distance."

Last year the team shot a 350 at state and also added a second-place finish



Tanager sophomore Kyleigh Moran returns along with a loaded varsity girls' golf lineup for Vermillion High's program. The team has high expectations after finishing tied for 5th at state in 2014.
FILE PHOTO

at the regional tournament.

The result came after a few years where the younger version of the current roster took some doses of humility to the chin.

"We went through a couple of years where they paid the price of playing

really young," Hogen said. "We lost some older kids and we had a little void in there. I can put that on me a little bit where I might not have promoted it enough. At a school our

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USD Women Bounced From WNIT

GREELEY, Colo. - South Dakota's Nicole Seekamp hit a desperation shot with less than a second remaining but was ruled to be inside the 3-point arc, leading Northern Colorado to a 59-58 win over the South Dakota women's basketball team in the second round of the Women's National Invitation Tournament (WNIT) on Sunday night in Bank of Colorado Arena. The loss concludes South Dakota's season with a 26-8 record.

After Northern Colorado's D'Shara Strange hit a pair of free throws with two seconds remaining, Seekamp caught a long in-bounds pass from Margaret McCloud and hit the shot while running away from the basket. The officials

ruled Seekamp was inside the arc when she shot the ball and upheld it following a review.

Seekamp's basket was the only field goal for the Coyotes in the last 7:37 of the game and the only shot USD had in the final 4:18. Prior to that basket, USD turned the ball over in each of their previous six possessions.

Seekamp, who played her final game in a Coyote uniform, scored 19 points on 8-for-12 shooting to lead the Coyotes. Raeshel Contreras, who also played in her final game at South Dakota, added eight points and McCloud finished with seven points and 10 rebounds.

Northern Colorado (22-12) trailed 56-52 with

5:08 remaining, but got a 3-pointer from Savannah Scott and a jumper from Rebecca Howell on back-to-back possessions to take a 57-56 lead with 3:43 left. The Bears later drew a charge on a drive to the basket by Seekamp with seven seconds remaining, which forced USD to foul Strange with two seconds left in the game.

Strange led a trio of Bears to double-digit point totals, finishing the game with 14. Stephanie Lee added 11 points while Kyleigh Hiser finished with 10. Northern Colorado will move on to play at UCLA on Thursday.

- Courtesy of USD Sports Information