

Tanagers win 14-13 in overtime

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

With an even tougher second-half schedule lying ahead of them, the Tanagers desperately needed a win at Canton Friday, Sept. 18 to go into last week's bye with a head of steam, to even their record at 2-2, and to strengthen their regional seeding status.

But as the minutes wasted away in the 7-7 deadlock, defeat seemed almost certain. When the minutes dwindled down to seconds, defeat became inevitable. But a life's lesson was re-learned on the grass near the Canton end zone — you must keep playing, battling, fighting down to the very last play.

When the C-Hawks reached the Vermillion 1-yard line and had a first-down situation with a minute to play, how could anyone expect anything but Canton's plunging over for the winning score? But the Tanager defense refused to let the expected happen.

On first down Canton's ball carrier lost the handle. Though the C-Hawks recovered the fumble, they were backed up three yards.

On second-and-goal from the four with 40 seconds left, Canton tried Jeremiah Peterson, but the Tanager line smothered him after a gain of only a yard.

Still Canton had two more downs. After a timeout to plan their strategy, the C-Hawks had 19 seconds left when they snapped the ball on third down. Vermillion's defense knocked the ball loose again, and this time the bouncing ball went into the end zone where it was recovered by Kylan Freidel.

The Tanagers had somehow snatched another chance from the jaws of defeat. They took one hand-off from the 20, and time expired in the fourth quarter.

Losing the coin flip, Canton had to go on offense first in overtime. On third down the C-Hawks scored on a five-yard TD pass from Jake Roskam to Ben Sharon though the Tanagers pressured the quarterback before he threw. However, the extra-point kick was missed. Seven points would win it for Vermillion!

The Tanagers, on their first down play in O.T. from the 10, moved the ball eight yards in the arms of Tanner Mart, setting up second-and-goal at the 2.

Freidel got the Tanagers back into a tie, skipping and leaping off left tackle and into the end zone for a 13-13 score. Jordan Robinson completed the rather miraculous win with an extra-point kick that was true.

Vermillion had prevailed in one of the most scintillating wins in the long VHS-Canton rivalry that dates back to 1931 and which VHS now leads 41-17-1.

"Defensively we played pretty solid football throughout the contest, other than the breakdown in containment on their touchdown run in the second quarter," Coach Gary Culver observed. "They had only three other plays over 10 yards throughout the game."

Culver also credit his offensive line for playing well all night. "I was also especially pleased how well we rushed the football so effectively. Kylan Freidel seemed to get stronger with each carry in the game."

Freidel gained 148 yards in 17 carries. Bennett Johnson contributed 26 yards in six attempts. Peterson was Canton's top carrier with 67 yards in 17 carries. In total yardage the C-Hawks had 216 to Vermillion's 248.

Culver also described his specialty team play as very solid. "Obviously that was the deciding factor in the game," he said.

A big improvement over some earlier games was the trimming of the Tanagers' penalty total. They were flagged only three times for 25 yards. Besides that, they committed zero turnovers.

VHS had taken a 7-0 lead on its one successful possession in the first half, their touchdown coming on a two-yard plunge by Johnson.

Canton came up with a 65-yard drive that culminated in a 16-yard TD run by Peterson for a 7-7 tie.

The Tanagers threatened to take a halftime lead when Freidel scampered for 52 yards down to the 4-yard line with two seconds left, but a field-goal attempt was ruled not good although Tanager players on the field complained that Robinson had nailed it.

A holding penalty stymied the Tanagers in their first third-quarter opportunity. Canton returned the favor when a C-Hawk committed a personal foul away from the ball on a play which had gained his team 37 yards into VHS territory.

Tanagers face Dell Rapids in homecoming encounter

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

After a bye week off to savor an exhilarating overtime win at Canton on Sept. 18, Vermillion's gridders look forward to two straight home games in the DakotaDome, starting with Friday night's 7 p.m. homecoming encounter with defending state champion Dell Rapids.

The Tanagers stand 2-2 after wins over Lennox and Canton and losses to South Sioux City and St. Thomas More, and they are third in the regional power-points standings. Dakota Valley currently ranks first with Harrisburg second. The top two teams are assured home games in the first round of the playoffs Oct. 27.

Dell Rapids comes to town with a 3-1 record, the only blemish being a forgivable one — a 27-0 loss to the unbeaten top-ranked Class 11B team, Tri-Valley. Dells has wins over Canton, Madison and Lennox.

"This will be a great challenge for our team, but we will have extra motivation with homecoming,"

Coach Gary Culver said. "We just have to continue to improve and focus on a very good Dell Rapids team."

The game at Canton two weeks ago appeared to be a certain defeat as the C-Hawks drove the field and chewed the clock in the closing minutes of a 7-7 deadlock. They reached a first-and-goal situation at the 1-yard line with a minute to play, but the VHS defense stood tall and denied two punches at the goalline. On a third play Kylan Freidel recovered a fumble to save the game.

In overtime Canton scored a touchdown but missed its extra point. Freidel, who gained 148 yards in 17 carries, plunged over from the 2 for the tying TD for Vermillion, and Jordan Robinson's extra-point kick won it, 14-13.

Bennett Johnson, who had scored the Tanagers' earlier touchdown from the 3-yard line, gained 26 yards. Earl Kiertzner passed for 41 yards. Chris Mart had 10 tackles, Nick Mart eight, and Tyler Husby and Tanner Mart six apiece.

The C-Hawks had to punt, and the Tanagers started to march from their own 17.

A 14-yard pass from Earl Kiertzner to Bennett Johnson got Vermillion to near midfield. As the clock moved into the fourth period, Freidel ran for 17 yards, and on the next play Johnson carried for 14. The drive stalled at the 16, and a fourth-down field-goal try was blocked into the end zone by Ethan Trube with 8:52 left.

Canton appeared to have been stopped without a first down when Nick Mart and Dexter Mehlhaf held the C-Hawk ball carrier short of first-down yardage on third down from the 24. Canton was prepared to punt on fourth-and-two, but the Tanager defense jumped offside, giving Canton a first down, and the C-Hawks march was alive.

On the next 11 plays the C-Hawks gained positive yardage, moving relentlessly toward the goal line and the winning score. They had a first down at the 11 with 2:21 left. Two plays later, they reached the 1 with 1:00 left and awaited

their first-down opportunity to get the victory that seemed to be in the bag, or at least just waiting to happen.

After taking last Friday off, the Tanagers are observing homecoming this week with a Friday night game against defending state champ Dell Rapids in the DakotaDome, beginning a second half that later will include Harrisburg, Madison and West Central.

VHS 7 0 0 0 7 -- 14?
Canton 0 7 0 0 6 -- 13

First quarter?:
VHS: Bennett Johnson 3-yd. run (Jordan Robinson kick), 4:35.

Second quarter?:
CHS: Jeremiah Peterson 16-yd. run (Jared Tweedt kick), 1:10.

Overtime:
CHS: Ben Sharon 5-yd. pass from Jake Roskam (kick blocked).
VHS: Kylan Freidel 2-yd. run (Robinson kick).

	VHS	Canton
First downs	10	13
Rushes-yards	33-207	48-189
Passing yards	41	27

Total yards	248	216
Passes	3-6-0	4-8-0
Punts-avg.	4-31.8	5-39.0
Fumbles-lost	0-0	2-1
Penalties-yards	3-25	5-36

Individual rushing: VHS, Freidel 17-148, Johnson 6-26, Tanner Mart 3-14, Robinson 4-14, Earl Kiertzner 3-5. Canton, Peterson 17-67, Seth Kroger 11-56, Ethan Trube 12-52, Tweedt 4-14, Jake Kloster 1-3, Roskam 3-(-3).

Individual passing: VHS, Kiertzner, 3-6-41. Canton, Roskam 4-8-27.

Receiving: VHS, Johnson 1-17, Freidel 1-14, Ben Kozak 1-10. Canton, Sharon 2-17, Tweedt 1-9, Tom Henke 1-1.

Individual defense: Tackles (solo-asst-total): VHS, Chris Mart 10-0-10, Nick Mart 6-2-8, Tyler Husby 5-1-6, Tanner Mart 5-1-6, Johnson 5-0-5, Freidel 2-2-4, Chase Allen 2-1-3, Will Mart 3-0-3, Dexter Mehlhaf 2-1-3, Robinson 2-0-2, Brian Hansen 2-0-2, Kozak 1-0-1, Carson Sullivan 1-0-1, Blaine Hubert 0-1-1, Clint Hubert 1-0-1.

Tackles for loss: Chris Mart 1, Tanner Mart 1.

Pass knockdowns: Freidel 1.

Tanager softball heads to state tourney Saturday

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Kicking aside their frustrations at a doubleheader sweep at the hands of West Central, 2-1 and 11-9, the previous Sunday, the Vermillion High softball team lowered the hammer on Elk Point-Jefferson this week, trimming the Huskies to the tune of 14-1 and 14-0.

The Tanagers finished the regular season with a record of 6-4 and play this weekend in the state tournament at the Dunham Fields complex in Sioux Falls.

Lizzy Bye struck out eight and allowed only two hits in her four innings of pitching work in Sunday's opener.

Lindsay Robinet led the VHS offense with three singles in four at-bats. Kayla Munger, Ashley Ouellette and

VHS volleyball will host Madison

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

After being road warriors for the past month, Vermillion's volleyball team will finally have the chance to stay in their own gym this month.

The Tanagers will be home against Madison next Thursday for the first of five October home matches. Vermillion began this week with a dual record of 9-8.

Last week VHS fave the reigning state champs at Wagner and found out why the Red Raiders are the class of South Dakota volleyball. Nevertheless, "we did some really good things that the 3-0 score does not show," said Coach Leni Billberg. "We dug a lot of tough balls and had some great saves, but the free balls we gave them they pounded back at us."

Michelle Blythe had a career-high 14 kills for Vermillion's offense. Jenny Bye led in digs with 18. Molly LeCates set the tone with some great setting.

The very next night VHS was on the road again, this time to

Megan Chickering each had a pair of singles.

EPJ had even fewer hits in the nightcap. In fact, they had none at all as Jenny Bye hurled her third no-hitter of the season. Bye struck out six among the nine outs in the three innings she pitched.

On offense Munger had two singles and Molly LeCates and Lizzy Bye a double apiece.

While the varsity was playing at home, the junior varsity was finishing its season at their state tournament in Sioux Falls. Vermillion finished in fourth place with Tri-Valley their only stumbling block. The Tanagers lost to Tri-Valley in their first game but fought back with consecutive victories over Dell Rapids, Madison, West Central and Brandon Valley to enter the third-place contest where they again lost to Tri-Valley.

Tea where the Tanagers had to rally in each of three games against the Titans before winning by a 3-0 score.

"They started very strong against us until our block shut down their middle and outside hitters," Billberg said. "Our quick attack and much improved passing were too much for them."

Sierra Allen had a great passing night along with 12 kills and four blocks. Ashley Ouellette was credited with four blocks, six kills, two service aces and six digs. Blythe had nine kills, two aces and eight digs. Jenny Bye had 17 digs, LeCates 17 assists and five digs, Lizzy Bye five kills and Elise Hughes-Berheim eight digs.

The game scores were 25-23, 25-18 and 25-17.

On Saturday in the Southeast Classic tournament at Tea Area High School, the Tanagers took it on the chin in all three games of pool play. They lost to Dakota Valley, the eventual sixth-place team, 20-25, 13-25; lost to eventual champion Milbank 19-25, 15-25, and lost to fourth-place Tea Area 16-25, 20-25.

Tanager tennis ends season Friday

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Vermillion's varsity tennis girls will finish their regular season Friday with a dual at Sioux Falls Lincoln and await next week's state tournament at Sioux Falls.

The Tanagers lost an 8-1 dual to Sioux Falls O'Gorman last week. The No. 1 doubles team of Claire Jones and Kayla Munger earned Vermillion's point with a 10-8 victory over their Knight opponents.

Vermillion's last home dual on Monday saw the Tanagers lose to Mitchell, 7-2. Nos. 1 and 2 singles players Jones and Munger both won their matches by a 10-6 score for Vermillion's two points.

O'Gorman 8, VHS 1

- Singles
- Claire Jones lost to Mary Prouse, 11-9.
 - Kayla Munger lost to Mary Billon, 10-6.
 - Lindsay Robinet lost to Jenna Carnorki, 10-1.
 - Kasey Nielsen lost to Alexis Kosiak, 10-3.
 - Dylan Daniels lost to Izzy Townsend, 10-0.
 - Kelly Nielsen lost to Abi Kosiak, 10-4.

Doubles

- Jones/Munger defeated Billon/Townsend, 10-8.
- Robinet/Kasey Nielsen lost to Prouse/Czarnorki, 10-1.
- Daniels/Kelly Nielsen lost to Kosiak/Kosiak 10-3.

Mitchell 7, VHS 2

- Singles
- Jones defeated Angie Lorenzon, 10-6.
 - Munger defeated Kayla White, 10-6.
 - Robinet lost to Megan Solberg, 10-2.
 - Kasey Nielsen lost to Courtney Wells, 10-8.
 - Dylan Daniels lost to Marissa Tubbs, 10-7.
 - Kelly Nielsen lost to Chelsea Kracht, 10-4.

Doubles

- Jones/Munger lost to Lorenzon/Kendra Cersosimo, 10-5.
- Robinet/Daniels lost to Solberg/Kracht, 10-4.
- Nielsen/Nielsen lost to Wells/Tubbs, 10-4.



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