

Tanagers defeated in first round

By Royal McGregor
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VERMILLION — The Dakota Valley Panthers' offense didn't see much of the ball in the first quarter, but that didn't slow down their offense after the first quarter.

The Panthers took on the Vermillion Tanagers in the first round of the South Dakota 11A playoffs at the Dakota Dome on Tuesday night, with the Panthers defeating the Tanagers 21-11.

Junior Matt Lupkes powered the Panthers offense with 21 carries for 118 yards, with two touchdowns and had seven passes for 60 yards, throwing for one touchdown. He also had seven tackles.

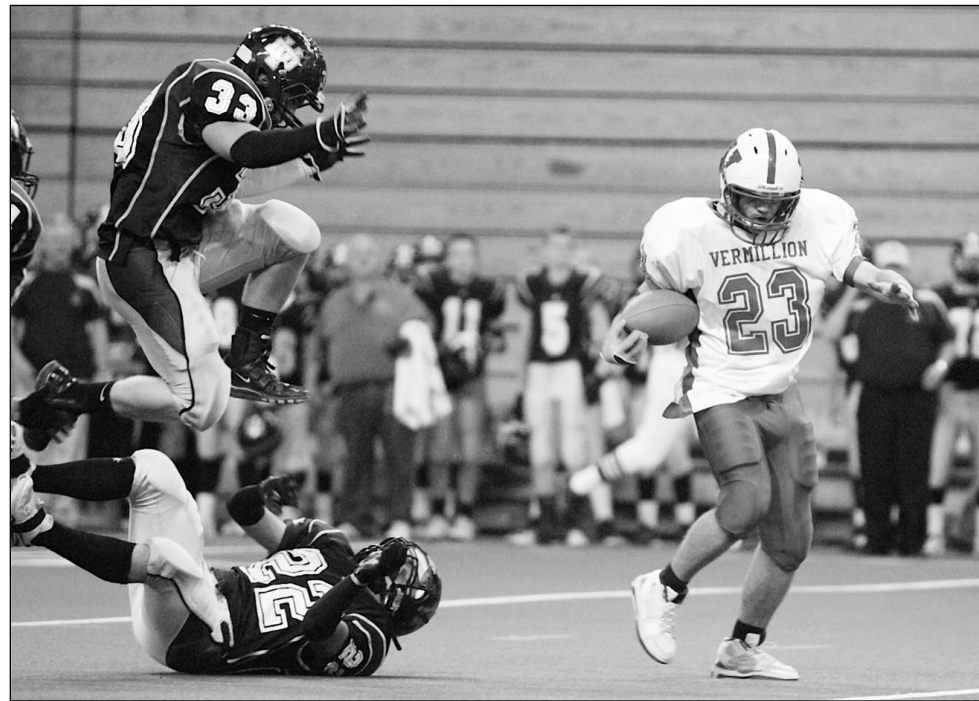
For the Tanagers, senior Jordan Robinson had five carries for 76 yards and had the biggest rush of the night which was a 67 yard touchdown run. The defensive leaders of the game were the Mart brothers; Nick Mart had nine tackles, while Will Mart had eight tackles.

The first quarter the possession was held mostly by the Tanagers, only allowing the Panthers three plays on offense for the first quarter. There were multiple penalties that kept the Tanagers out of the end zone and running down most the first quarter clock.

"That was vintage Vermillion football back when they won all those state championships in the 90's, they sucked the clock down by running the ball," said Dakota Valley head coach Jason Jund. "It was a great drive by Vermillion, it is good that we only kept them to three points."

In the second quarter, the Tanagers finally scored, but they were only able to put three points on the board. The Panthers were able to march down the field scoring in only eight plays and was finished off by a 14 yard touchdown run by Matt Lupkes.

The Tanagers couldn't score on their next drive, but they were able to hold off the Panthers. The Tanagers started at their own 30 yard line and were able to get



Vermillion's Jordan Robinson (23) carries the ball ahead of Dakota Valley defender Cameron Carter (33) during their first round Class 11A playoff game Tuesday night in Vermillion. (Photo by David Lias)

one first down, but Earl Kiertzner threw the only interception of the night. Matt Lupkes took the Panthers offense down the field, they were able to run out the clock and score their second touchdown, with a pass from Lupkes to Senior Ryan Cook.

"Penalties ended up keeping us out of the end zone," said Vermillion head coach Gary Culver. "The biggest key of the night was when Dakota Valley scored right before the half."

After halftime, the third quarter started off with a drive from the Tanagers.

The Panthers ended up getting a couple of first downs, but had to punt the ball away. It only took three plays for the Tanagers to score their second touchdown of the night, which was a 67 yard run by Jordan Robinson.

The Tanagers needed to get the two point conversion, but with two false start penalties, they were pushed back to the 17

yard line. They still attempted the two point conversion and Robinson ended up running the ball in from 17 yards out, which narrowed the Panthers lead to only three points.

The last quarter of the game was taken care of by Dakota Valley, as it took them 13 plays to go down the field and score on a six yard touchdown run by Lupkes.

The Tanagers took the ball down the field, but they ended up fumbling the ball and it was recovered by the Panthers. That didn't do any damage because the Tanagers were able to hold the Panthers to only three plays.

The Tanagers weren't able to put their offense together and ended up turning the ball over on downs. Matt Lupkes kneed the ball to end the game.

Dakota Valley advances to second round of the playoffs, where they will travel to Harrisburg on Monday.



Vermillion's Ashley Ouellette (7) watches as teammate Jenny Bye (11) goes skyward to get the ball back into Harrisburg's court during volleyball action in the VHS gym Monday. Vermillion's regular season ended Thursday at Elk Point-Jefferson. (Photo by David Lias)

VHS volleyball is #3 seed in District 8A

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

The volleyball season reaches tournament time next week, and the Vermillion Tanagers will enter District 8A play as the No. 3 seed.

The Tanagers, who had a perfect month of October going, ran into a pair of district opponents last week and lost to both by 3-1 margins. The two defeats solidified Vermillion's hold on the No. 3 slot in the district.

VHS will play a semifinal match Thursday at the No. 2 seed. That will likely be Dakota Valley, but it could be Elk Point-Jefferson. EPJ was the top seed heading into this week's final regular-season matches.

Beresford, the bottom seed, will play in the semifinals at the home court of the top seed. Thursday's losers are done for the year, but the winners play Friday night at the higher remaining seed's home court for the district championship.

It was Beresford which put an end to Vermillion's four-game win skein last Tuesday. The Watchdogs won 25-20 in the first game, but the Tanagers evened it up with a 25-23 win. Beresford then won 25-20 and 26-24 to eke out the match win.

Vermillion was led on the court in digs by Michelle Blythe with 15, followed by Kylie Fischbach and Elyse Hughes-Berheim with 12 each, Jenny Bye with 11, Sierra Allen and Lizzie Bye with 10 each and Ashley Ouellette with nine. Allen had seven kills, Lizzy Bye six and Blythe five. Molly LeCates and Fischbach had 13 and 12 assists, respectively.

On Friday the Tanagers had a chance to close the gap between them and No. 2 Dakota Valley, but the panthers prevailed with three straight game wins - 25-14, 25-19 and 25-17 - after Vermillion had won a dominating 25-12 game to start the evening.

Allen had 12 kills and 13 digs, Jenny Bye six kills and 16 digs, Blythe eight kills and six digs, LeCates 14 assists and six digs, Fischbach 18 assists and Hughes-Berheim 12 digs.

Vermillion's dual record stood at 13-10 heading into this week's last regular-season duals against Harrisburg and Elk Point-Jefferson.

Trojans provide reality check to Tanagers

By Parker Knox
Sportswriter

Vermillion's last regular-season football game frequently provides a harsh reality check because the opponent is usually West Central, and West Central is usually unbeaten and ranked No. 1 in the state in Class 11A.

That was the case this year, too, when the Tanagers went to Hartford last Thursday. The Trojans prevailed, 22-0, to finish another unbeaten regular season, and Vermillion finished at 3-5.

It was a slow, steady, dominating performance that West Central laid on the Tanagers, and the game statistics reveal that fact, but it wasn't a case of Vermillion playing badly. "We just could not make enough big plays to swing the game, and we paid dearly for any errors we made, mental and physical," said Coach Gary Culver. "That is how West Central wins football games - by capitalizing on the other team's errors and converting them into scores."

The game was only 12-0 at halftime, but the stats sheets showed West Central had ground out 192 yards and 13 first downs by that time, compared to the Tanagers' 37

yards in 17 carries and three first downs.

By game's end West Central had 279 rushing yards to Vermillion's 68. The Tanagers gained another 54 through the air.

"I was extremely proud of the effort our kids gave in this loss to an outstanding team," Culver added. "We played with great enthusiasm and emotion throughout the entire game. Our defensive unit did a good job against their offense, but we were not able to move the ball on the ground, and we couldn't grind out enough first downs to gain an edge in field position."

The Tanagers were to open the playoffs at Dakota Valley Tuesday night, but the game was moved to the Dakota Dome because of field conditions in North Sioux City. The winner will play the Harrisburg-Tea Area winner in the second round Monday.

Vermillion moved to one first down in its opening possession at West Central before punting. The Trojans went on a long, time-consuming drive, but Nick Mart's tackle forced a fumble, which Kylan Freidel recovered at the 5-yard line.

The Tanagers on their sec-

ond possession faced a third-and-seven play, and an Earl Kiertzner pass to Freidel covered all but the last few inches. They took a chance on fourth down, and Kiertzner's keeper earned a new set of downs. Eventually Jordan Robinson had to punt VHS out of danger.

This time West Central moved from its own 48, earning three first downs en route to its first touchdown with 7:50 left in the half. The Trojans had to go 74 yards the next time they had the ball, but they did, picking up five first downs along the way, and scored with 1:12 left till half-time.

The stalwart Tanager defense stopped West Central to open the second half and forced the Trojans to punt. The offense reached into Trojan territory before having to punt.

The score remained 12-0 until a field goal with 10:41 left in the game. A Tanager fumble gave West Central the ball with only a 17-yard field to cover, and from there they got their third TD with 7:01 remaining.

Late in the game with the Tanagers' offense on the Trojan 25, West Central called a timeout to get its starters back into the game to preserve a

shutout. Kiertzner converted a fourth-and-three situation with a five-yard pass, but another pass on first down from the 25 was intercepted to end the threat.

VHS	0	0	0	0	--	0
W.C.	0	12	0	10	--	22

2nd quarter:
WC: Pat Leary 1-yd. run (kick failed), 7:50.
WC: Leary 2-yd. run (run failed), 1:12.

4th quarter:
WC: Mike Wenk 32-yd. field goal, 10:41.
WC: leary 5-yd. run (Wenk kick), 7:01.

	VHS	WC
First downs	8	19
Rushes-yds.	32-68	55-279
Passing yds.	54	5
Total yds.	122	284
Passes	5-13-1	1-4-0
Punts-avg.	5-30.6	3-32.7
Fumbles-lost	2-2	1-1
Penalties-yds.	3-25	1-5

Rushing: VHS, Bennett Johnson 7-23, Jordan Robinson 8-20, Kylan Freidel 9-19, Earl Kiertzner 5-4, Ben Kozak, 1-2, Tyler Husby 2-0. WC, Zach Mettler, 13-92, Justin Bergeson 23-91, Seth Wolles 7-54, Leary 7-31, Casey Lowe 2-8, Andrew Idecker 1-2, Michael Becker 1-1, Dalton Kuehl 1-0. Passing: VHS, Kiertzner 5-13-54. WC, Wolles 1-4-5-0. Receiving: VHS, Johnson 3-23, Chris Mart 1-26, Freidel 1-5. WC, Aaron Johnson 1-8.

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Seniors still out in the cold

On Oct. 20, 15 seniors showed up to mild temperatures. The play was two-man scramble and one team of three-man scramble with a float. A "float" is someone who plays for the losing team or the team behind in the competition.

The victorious players in two-man competition were

Rich Morse and Ray Lynn, plus Ross King and Dave Zimmer. The three-man event was won by Rex Huska, Dick Burbach and Allan Clem. The float was Dick Kellogg, who kept the play close enough for a tie to be won by the tie breaker.

The long birdie puts of the day went to Cleland Cook making a 21 footer on #3, Rex Huska made a 15 footer on #4 and finally Bob Lund made a 10 footer on #8.

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Coyote volleyball outlasts NJIT in five sets in Great West thriller

The University of South Dakota volleyball team won its third straight match Sunday, defeating the New Jersey Institute of Technology in a five-set thriller, 18-25, 25-21, 25-16, 23-25, 15-12 in action in Vermillion.

The win was huge for USD in the Great West Conference race, as the Coyotes (11-12, 5-3 Great West) stayed with in striking distance of Utah Valley (6-1 Great West) and North Dakota (6-1 Great West). NJIT (14-7), which entered the weekend 4-0 in the Great West, is now 4-2 after losing to the Coyotes and North Dakota on its road trip.

Kristen Kritenbrink (Jr., Gretna, NE) paced USD with 20 kills, while Tahnee Reed (So., Pierce, NE) had a career-high 17 and Bailey Reshel (Fr., Hortonville, WI). Jenna Hatfield (Sr., Norfolk, NE) had eight kills and a career-high 10 block assists, while Gina Baldwin (Sr., Mitchell) had 49 set assists for USD. Mallory Mork (Fr., Sac City, IA) tied a career-high with 31 digs.

The Coyotes lost the first set, 25-18, but rebounded quickly in the second set.

USD held a 10-8 lead before going on a 7-1 run to build a 17-9 advantage. Reed and Kritenbrink each had three kills during that stretch for USD.

NJIT cut the lead to 22-20, but USD fought off the Highlander rally as Reshel finished off a 25-21 set win with a kill to help even the match at a set apiece.

The Coyotes took control early in the third set, storming out to a 12-4 lead as Hatfield and Reed each had two kills. NJIT never got closer than six the rest of the way as USD rolled to a 25-16 win, as Reshel and Reed finished off the set with back-to-back kills.

USD led early in the fourth set before NJIT went on a run to take an 18-13 lead. The Coyotes didn't go down without a fight in the set, however, as they tied the score at 23-23 when Hatfield and Kritenbrink teamed up on a block.

However, NJIT scored the final two points of the set to record a 25-23 win and tie the match at 2-2.

That set up a decisive fifth set, where USD started quickly. The Coyotes opened on a 5-0 run, with Reed, Kritenbrink and Hatfield recording kills. Also included in that run was a block by Baldwin and Hatfield and service ace by Reed.

NJIT got to within two points on seven different occasions in the final set, but each time, USD had a response. The Coyotes held a 14-12 lead after the Highlanders cut the gap once again. USD called a timeout and on the ensuing play, Kritenbrink slammed home her 20th kill of the match to conclude the five-set victory for the Coyotes.

Reed led USD with five service aces, while Baldwin and Jill Fields (Fr., Naperville, IL) had 18 digs each. Reshel also had six block assists. USD hit .151 for the match, compared to .125 for NJIT.

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