

## USD soccer remains in Summit playoff hunt

By Alan Dale  
The Plain Talk

Riding a six-game unbeaten streak may be something special for a University of South Dakota women's soccer program that has made great strides in 2014, but if you ask them they still have expected more.

Following Sunday's 2-2 tie at home against North Dakota State the Coyotes stand 8-4-2 overall and 1-0-2 in Summit League play as they seek a top four spot in conference play and a chance for an NCAA Tournament bid.

"I am disappointed that we couldn't finish in the two games that we tied, but both games showed the progress that we have made on both sides of the ball," USD head coach Mandy Green said. "We would have lost those two games a year ago. Even though we tied, those games were confidence builders for us. We learned from the mistakes that were made, and I think have played better and better with each game."

The tie came after a tough trip to Tulsa to play Oral Roberts ended up being for naught when the match was cancelled due to inclement weather. A rescheduled date had not been announced as of press time.

"It was a really long trip and the girls were not happy about not playing," Green said. "There were gallons of water on the field though and it would not have been a safe environment to play in. I thought we did a decent job of not letting it affect how we played on Sunday. This is an experienced group that knows how to manage their energy better."

The wasted trip also took away from what might have been a better Dakota Days experience for the Coyote players.

"I think it was harder to have the team here when D-days stuff was going on," Green said. "Being around while those things are going on campus I think was harder on them physically because they were out and about more than they would have normally have been."

Despite it all the team has five matches left including Sunday's 1 p.m. tilt at Denver and playing some solid soccer.

"We are possessing the ball pretty well, defending together and not giving up so many easy chances for the most part, and we are cre-

ating a lot of scoring chances," Green said. "We just need to find a way to keep doing what we have been doing better and actually finish the chances we are creating."

Taking on preseason Summit League favorites Denver (6-7-1, 2-2) will arguably be the biggest challenge to date for the USD women.

"They are athletic, skilled, and very well coached," Green said of Denver. "They have been a top 20 team in the country the last few years. They are younger this year so they have been making mistakes but they will be tough on their home field."

This match begins a big stretch of matches where the USD team can still find a way to earn a top four spot before the Summit playoff field is set. Currently the Coyotes sit in fourth place.

"We need to win and finish our chances," Green said. "We need to keep doing things better and better. Hope that some of the teams at the bottom of the standing right now can get a few wins to help us out."

**A look back at draw vs. NDSU**  
As the University of South Dakota women's soccer team has put together its best Division I season, the Coyotes had yet to face anyone projected to finish in the top half of the Summit League.

They got that opportunity Sunday. On a windy afternoon in Vermillion, the Coyotes and North Dakota State played to a 2-2 double overtime draw in conference action.

Despite the tie, USD (8-4-2, 1-0-2) did better than its preseason last-place selection against the Bison (5-6-2, 1-1-2) who were picked to finish third.

"Doing this against that team is a good result," Coyote coach Mandy Green said. "We could've won this one, and that's the most disappointing part."

All of the scoring came in the first half, and the game eventually settled into a defensive battle — which has been USD's strength this season. The Coyotes hadn't allowed a goal in four games prior to Sunday.

"We just didn't come out as solid as we normally do," said junior goalkeeper Mackenzie Viktor. "It took us a little bit longer to get into our groove and figure things out."

- Jeremy Hoeck, Press & Dakotan

## Vermillion tennis team wraps up season at state tournament

By Mark Upward  
For The Plain Talk

The VHS tennis team traveled to Rapid City last week to compete in the South Dakota High School Activities Association state tennis tournament.

The Tanagers finished the two-day tournament in 20th place.

Sioux Falls O'Gorman was the best of the field scoring 712 points.

St. Thomas Moore was a distant second with 599 team points. Rounding out the top five teams were Rapid City Stevens in third (464), Sioux Falls Lincoln fourth (393) and Sioux Falls Washington in 5th (326).

The Tanagers were unable to advance any players into the championship bracket in the tournament. Abby Weiss, the lone senior on the team, played hard, but fell to Jolee Smith (Pierre) in the first round and then was defeated by Anna Kurtz from Milbank in the second round.

"It will be hard to lose Abby next year, but I am really looking forward to next season," said Vermillion High School head coach Betsy Hughes. "The girls learned so much this year and I'm looking forward to working with them next season."

The Tanagers gained valuable experience this

year and with losing only senior Weiss and with no juniors on the team, the underclassmen will move up and use this year of experience to improve their performance in the 2015 season.

Those competing at the State Tournament for the Tanagers and returning for the 2015 season are Libby Sykes, Alex Rosdail, Brandi Styles, Shinaayne Whipple, and Jane Ni Struckman-Johnson.

"This season was great when you look at the bunch of girls on the team," said Hughes. "They were always positive, worked well together and never gave up working on their game."

## Tanager XC squads gear up for state finals

By Scott Bormann  
For the Plain Talk

All the high-school distance runners in South Dakota must have good races at a series of regional meets to qualify for the State Meet.

In southeast South Dakota, the ten schools of the 3A Region have to come through Vermillion for Thursday's 3 p.m. races. Results were not available at press time so read [www.plaintalk.net](http://www.plaintalk.net) for updates.

The 4,000-meter girls' course, and the 5,000-meter boys' course, determine

which harriers get to travel to Huron for the State A Cross Country Meet next Saturday.

Vermillion freshman Maddie Lavin looked to defend her Region 3A title, but expects some strong competition.

Recent race results indicate that Lexy Leischner (eighth grader) from Ethan/Parkston, Marisa Schulz (sophomore) from Dakota Valley, and Ashleyann Atwood (sophomore) from Dakota Valley should give Lavin a run for her money.

Lavin placed fourth in the Dakota XII Conference meet in Lennox last Thursday be-

hind a trio of Madison runners.

In the boys' race, the Tanagers are hoping for great races from eight-graders Parson Covington and Justin Sorensen. They both have a chance of finishing in the top 20 places, thus qualifying for the State Meet.

Covington placed 25th in the Dakota XII Conference meet, while Sorensen placed 30th.

It would require incredible performances by the Tanager runners to finish in the top three team places, qualifying the team for State, but some great competition is expected.

## CITY BOWLING UPDATES

**LEAGUE STANDING SHEET**  
Results for Week No. 4 of 26  
10/07/2014

**Ladies National - HOWLERS**  
Team Standings

1. ARAMARK (78-42, .650), 2. FLANNERY'S (65-55, .54.2), 3. TEAM BK (56-64, .467), 4. WHIMPS (41-79, .34.2)

**Last Week's High Scores**  
(Week of 10/07/2014)

ARAMARK 646/1,610; TEAM BK 534/1,413; FLANNERY'S 516/1,541.

**Women: High Score Game**

Mary Mock 169, Tiffany Moore 169, Judy Barta 170, Angela Miller 176

**Women: High Score Series**

Darlis Labahn 455, Judy Barta 465, Angela Miller 465.

**Women: High Handicap-Game**

Mindy Baylor 228, Tiffany Moore 229, Angela Miller 239.

**Women: High Handicap-Series**

Judy Barta 606, Angela Miller 654.

With what is probably their toughest two-game stretch beginning next weekend the Vermillion Tanager football team ensured itself at least a .500 regular season record Friday night.

The Tanagers (4-2) came away with a 33-7 win at Flandreau behind a punishing ground game that accumulated 209 yards with 69 coming from Tyler Madsen and 62 more from Regan Bye.

Madsen ran for two touchdowns and Bye one as the Tanagers won four games for the first time since 2008 when they had their last .500 or better season finishing 5-5.

Vermillion won after trailing 7-6 at halftime. "This was very important with adversity and being down at halftime and coming back," Homan said. "Our kids stuck together and picked each other up and kept each other going. That's a big momentum swing going into that Madison game, so who knows what could happen."

"It's big and gives our guys confidence. They are making improvements and getting better each week. It's huge for the guys to see that what you are preaching is working."

Brown suffered an undetermined injury and his status was unavailable Friday night. Kratz stepped in behind center and threw for 25 yards while adding a 17-yard touchdown run.

"For being in there as a sophomore and limited reps in practice and a few backup times he did pretty well," Homan said of Kratz. "As nervous as he was he did a pretty good job."

Not a bad way to prepare for their final two games against arguably the two best teams in Class A - Madison next weekend and Dell Rapids on Oct. 24. A .500 regular season record in just the second year of Homan's tenure is a boost to a program aiming to keep on moving forward.

"It's a great achievement for our staff what we've been able to do for two years," Homan said. "I'm blessed to have a great coaching staff."

"To see it working is great for our community and our players."

They travel to Beresford Tuesday night for a 7:30 p.m. encounter, hoping to build off a potentially posi-

tive result against Canton. "Beresford is another team we can match up well with," Billberg said.

## STRETCH

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Defensively they fly to the ball. They are a good team."

The Tanagers enter the contest on a second two-game winning streak of the season and on the heels of a 33-7 win at Flandreau where they scored 27 unanswered points after halftime to earn the victory.

"It showed a lot of guys that needed to step up and play and they did," Homan said. "Coming out after halftime our guys showed they had the confidence to turn it up a notch when they weren't playing to their ability or potential. We had to face a lot of diversity and we ended up getting it done."

Regardless of how the next two weeks play out, the Tanagers have done plenty to improve in Homan's second year in charge of the Vermillion program.

That doesn't mean they just want to show up against two top ball clubs.

They expect to compete. "There really isn't a negative and it doesn't let us lapse at all," Homan said. "We are going to play two great teams and they are going to make us better each week."

**NOTE:** Last weekend Tea Area routed Dakota Valley 63-12 to move to 2-0 in Region 2A. That means that their game against Lennox on the season's final weekend will determine Vermillion's chances at hosting a first-round playoff game. The Tanagers (2-1) are currently in second-place and would host Lennox (1-1) if Tea were to win that finale. A Tea defeat would create a 3-way tie and the Tanagers' fate would be determined by tiebreakers....Vermillion starting quarterback Jack Brown who was injured in last week's win at Flandreau will not play against Madison. He was seen sporting a sling at Tuesday's practice to protect against a still undisclosed injury. Sophomore Carter Kratz will make his first official start against Madison...

**A look back at the Flandreau win**

## PUSH

From Page 1A

been wonderful for the team," Tanager head coach Lenni Billberg said. "We have been able to work on some of our weaknesses, but also to simply play together."

The team has struggled with its passing for most of the season after a strong start in that department. But a squad that hasn't won since the first match of the campaign has more than passing to concern itself with.

"While we have worked on all aspects of the game, we have spent most of our time with team work, proactive court movement, and transition," Billberg said. "We have the tools it is just putting them all together at the same time. To be successful we have to have everyone on the same page of the volleyball book at the same time."

Billberg believes the team can still make a run as the regular season winds down.

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## LOCAL ATTRACTIONS (OCT. 17-23)

**Friday, October 17**  
High School Football - Madison at VERMILLION, 7 p.m.  
College Volleyball - USD at South Dakota State, 7 p.m.

**Saturday, October 18**  
College Football - USD at Missouri State, 2 p.m.  
**Tuesday, October 21**  
High School Volleyball - VERMILLION at Beresford, 7:30 p.m.

**Thursday, October 23**  
High School Football - VERMILLION at Dell Rapids, 7 p.m.

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