

# Tanager football falls to Canton

## Vermillion set to face Lennox tonight

By Parker Knox  
Sportswriter

A year ago on Vermillion High's homecoming night, Canton rallied with two fourth-quarter touchdowns, the winning score coming with a minute left in the game, to spoil the Tanagers' big night.

Determined to focus primarily on football during this week of distractions and not allow a repeat of last year's result, the Tanagers take on long-time rival Lennox at 7 p.m. tonight in the DakotaDome, trying to put an exclamation point of only good memories on their 2011 homecoming observance.

Vermillion is 1-3 after a disappointing 27-7 loss at Canton last Friday, but the Tanagers could find it tempting to take Lennox lightly, considering what the Orioles haven't done so far this fall. Lennox lost to Tea Area 45-0, to Harrisburg 63-13 and to Dakota Valley 40-0.

The game is crucial because of its playoff implications. Vermillion currently stands as the fourth and last

team that would qualify for the Class 11A playoffs as an at-large team. Considering that at least playoff-bound teams still lie ahead on the Tanagers' schedule, a loss to a winless team could leave VHS on the sidelines when the playoffs begin a month from now.

Homecoming would also be an ideal time for the Tanagers to present Coach Gary Culver with his 200th career victory. It is also a Big 8 Conference game, and a win would even Vermillion's league record at 1-1.

Last Friday Canton was ready from the opening whistle for its homecoming game, and the C-Hawks led the Tanagers 13-0 before Vermillion ever touched the ball.

Canton took only 3:20 to go 60 yards without being challenged for its opening score, Logan Dolen plunging over from the 1. After recovering the ensuing sides kick, the C-Hawks took eight plays to score again, this time quarterback Cody Majeres doing the honors from the 1.

To the Tanagers' credit they had an immediate answer, once they had a chance on offense. Putting together an

excellent drive of 15 plays covering 67 yards, they used 8:26 to get their only score of the game.

D'Andre Fore carried 11 times on this march and Mitch Brown three, and the other play was an incomplete pass. Fore had runs of 13 and 12 for his longest during the possession, and he scored from the 1 at the 9:15 mark of the half. Michael Sand's kick made it a 13-7 deficit.

Canton's offense continued to blow through the Tanager defense. The next possession reached the 3-yard line before Chayse Meierkort recovered a fumble caused by a strip by Brett Bye. But Vermillion went three-and-out, and Canton finished out the half by scoring on its next chance. Kase Jacobs went in from the 5 for a 20-7 halftime lead.

"Defensively we did not do a good job shutting down their rushing attack, and we had a number of miscues on our specialty teams throughout the game," Culver said. "It seemed that Canton started every offensive drive at midfield or on our side of the 50, which put a lot of pressure on our

defense."

There was no second-half scoring until only 1:23 remained in the game when Canton tacked on an extra touchdown after a 90-yard march covering five minutes. Jacobs scored from the 11.

The Tanagers had had a good chance to get back into the game in the third quarter following a Meierkort interception. The offense reached the Canton 10-yard line until Dolen intercepted a Kyle Weiss pass and returned it the length of the field for a score. It was nullified by a personal foul call, however, and the C-Hawks eventually punted, the only time in the game they had to do so.

A 22-yard Weiss pass to Nate Garrett and a 15-yard spurt by Fore were highlights of the next Tanager possession, but once they reached C-Hawk territory, they were stopped by a pair of quarterback sacks and an incompletion. VHS never had the ball again until the final minute when it didn't matter.

"It was a disappointing loss for our kids," Culver said. "We played well enough offensively to win the game, but we did not close out a number of drives once we reached the red zone."

Fore carried 27 times for 119 rushing yards for VHS. Dolen gained

79 yards in 16 attempts for Canton. Defensively Fore and Will Mart with 10 tackles each, Avery Garcia with nine and Alex Osborne with seven led the Tanagers.

VHS ..... 0 7 0 0 --- 7  
CANTON 13 6 0 7 -- 27

1st quarter: CHS: Logan Dolen 1-yd. run (kick failed), 8:40. CHS: Cody Majeres 1-yd. run (Brywn Ratcliffe kick), 5:41.

2nd quarter: VHS: D'Andre Fore 1-yd. run (Michael Sand kick), 9:15. CHS: Kase Jacobs 5-yd. run (Ratcliffe kick), 0:41.

4th quarter: CHS: Jacobs 9-yd. run (Ratcliffe kick), 1:03.

	VHS	Canton
First downs	12	17
Rushes-yds.	37-137	44-276
Passing yds.	49	16
Total yds	186	292
Passes	4-12-1	1-4-1
Punts-avg.	3-28.0	1-44.0
Fumbles-lost	1-0	1-1
Penalties-yds.	6-40	7-55

Rushing: VHS, Fore 27-119, Mitch Brown 8-29, Kyle Weiss 2-(-11). CHS, Dolen 16-79, Tyler Halverson 5-66, Jacobs 11-54, Majeres 8-48, Jesse Peterson 3-20, Travis Bergren 1-9. Passing: VHS, Weiss 4-12-49-1.

## VHS runners continue to improve Eight solid hours of soccer here Saturday

By Parker Knox  
Sportswriter

Nathan Ford ran with the lead pack the entire race and finished fifth, his highest individual finish to date, as the Tanagers competed at Alcester-Hudson's cross country invitational meet Monday.

Ford's 17:26.10 in the 5K race marked his first time under 18:00 in his career. Will Card placed 17th in 18:28.29. Colin Olson, Jacob Ford and Joe Swanson, having all cut two minutes off their times in the past week, were next in line for the Tanagers - Olson at 20th in 18:41.08, Jacob Ford 22nd in 19:34.27 and Swanson 46th in 20:39.00. Alex Osborne placed 52nd in 22:33.95 in his first-ever varsity race.

The Tanagers were third among 10 teams with 36 points. Irene-Wakonda was team champ with 11, two points better than Parker. In the girls' varsity 4K at

Alcester, Morgan Hower placed 23rd in 18:39.05 and Britney Sweeney 41st in 23:03.19. In girls JV action Caitlin Britten was 17th in 17:01.31 and Heidi Osterberg 35th in 20:40.58.

Vermillion's Logan Peterson finished a strong second in 16:37.59 in the boys JV 3K contest. Owen Swallow and Matt Moore, in their best performances to date, placed 15th and 18th, respectively, in 18:04.17 and 19:08.44.

Coach Kelly Fischbach said her varsity girls ran very well at last Friday's Vermillion Invitational. Alyssa Soesbe, ninth in 17:23, was the Tanagers' best placing. Hower, 14th in 18:23 had her best performance in a couple of years, and Sophia Taggart and Britney Sweeney had great races in their first varsity competitions. Taggart was 19th in 18:54 and Sweeney 20th in 19:22. Jade Fostvedt improved her season's time to 20:28, good for 22nd place.

Nathan Ford took more than 30 seconds off his previous time on the same Don Baker course to place ninth in the boys varsity event in 18:25. Will Card improved his time to 19:16 for 13th place. Colin Olson and Jacob Ford both trimmed more than 1:15 off their times on that course to place 18th and 20th, respectively, in 19:44 and 20:00. Regan Bye was 23rd in 22:14, almost 1:30 better than his time in the previous meet. Nate Svendsen was 24th in 22:21 and Joe Swanson 26th in 22:49 in their first varsity races.

Jon Rosales and Logan Peterson took home medals in the JV boys race, Rosales running in 16:20 for sixth and Peterson 16:32 for ninth. Owen Swallow improved to 17:16 for 14th, and Matt Moore was 22nd in 18:02.

With the season at the halfway point, the Tanagers run next at the Lennox Invitational next Friday.

By Parker Knox  
Sportswriter

Fans who are up for it have the chance to watch eight solid hours of high school soccer at Cotton Park Saturday as Tanager teams observe Parents Day.

For the boys teams it will be the final games of the regular season when the varsity hosts Sturgis at 5 p.m. and the JVs play Douglas at 1 p.m.

The JV girls get the day started against Mitchell at 11 a.m., and the varsity girls play the Kernels at 3 p.m.

The boys varsity stands fifth in the state standings with a record of five wins, two losses and one tie. The Tanagers are assured of hosting their state tournament play-in game. In Class "A"

boys soccer No. 16 plays at No. 1, No. 15 at No. 2, etc., and the winners of those eight play-in games advance to the state tournament in Mitchell Oct. 6-8. The Sturgis team coming to town Saturday is currently eighth with a 2-3-2 record.

The Tanager girls varsity, with a record of one win, five losses and a tie, will have to play a state tournament play-in game to get there. In Class "A" girls soccer the top six teams automatically advance directly to the state tournament, but No. 9 has to play at No. 8 and No. 10 at No. 7 in a pair of play-in games. Right now Vermillion is tied for eighth and will face a Mitchell team that has a record of 2-6-0.

The girls teams will play again Tuesday at home against

West Central with the JVs at 4:30 p.m. and the varsity at 6 p.m. The West Central varsity is the state's No. 1 team with a perfect 7-0-0 record.

The Tanager girls tied Sioux Falls Christian, 1-1, last week. Down 1-0 early in the second half, Vermillion got the equalizer on a goal by Mackenzie Gale off a pass from Shelby Gregoire.

Coach Dave LaCombe's team was still in rough shape physically with four starters either not in action at all or playing hurt.

The boys varsity took its West River trip and found goals to be as numerous as prairie dogs and pine trees. Vermillion won at Chamberlain, 12-0, Friday, then went on to Lead-Deadwood and won there by an 8-2 count.

## VHS golfers prepare for post-season action at home

By Parker Knox  
Sportswriter

Vermillion High's young golfers can hopefully squeeze some home-course advantage from the fairways and greens at The Bluffs in the next two weeks because all of their post-season play takes place at home.

The Bluffs will host the Region 2A tournament on Monday, followed by the state "A" boys tournament Oct. 3-4. The top three teams in the regional qualify their full teams for the state tournament, and at least half of the golfers at the regional will also qualify for state as individuals.

The varsity Tanagers finished in the middle of the five-team pack at the Big 8 Conference meet in Lennox Tuesday with a 364 score. Harrisburg won the conference title at 322 with

West Central at 349, Madison 376 and Lennox 381. Harrisburg's Nick Skajewski was individual champion with a 77.

Mitch Ellison led Vermillion with an 85. Carter Andre carded an 88, Peter Haught a 94, Jake Odens a 97 and Paul Schwasinger a 110.

Vermillion was fourth in the JV standings with a team score of 413. Harrisburg was champion at 390. Tanager scores were Jay Munger's 99, Andrew Heine's 101, Tristan Meadows' 105, Sam Craig' 2 108 and John Benson's 118.

In a home dual against Elk Point-Jefferson last Tuesday, the Tanagers trailed the Huskies by 12 strokes, 168-180, in the final tally. EP-J's Connor Penfield was the medalist for the day with a 39. Vermillion's scores were Pete Haught's 41, Carter Andre's 43, Mitch Ellison's 44,

Andrew Heine's 52, and Paul Schwasinger's and Jay Munger's 53s.

The Tanagers had a team score of 352 for seventh place among eight teams at Elk Point-Jefferson's invitational meet Thursday. Sioux Falls Christian won the team title with a 317 score, paced by their Jon Van't

Hul with a 77. Tea Area's Matt Drake also had a 77, but they both trailed medalist Dylan From, West Central, by two strokes.

Ellison led VHS with an 82, followed by Andre at 88, Jacob Odens at 91, Haught at 92, Schwasinger at 99 and Heine at 118.

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