



KICK OFF



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK
Vermillion High School's Josh Prescott dribbles towards the goal in the Tangers 3-3 draw with Groton Saturday afternoon.

VHS Boys Soccer Ties Defending State Champs

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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The Vermillion High School boys' soccer team played defending state champions Groton Tigers to a 3-3 draw Saturday afternoon at Cotton Park.

"Groton won state last year. They graduated a lot of seniors, so they only had one returning starter," said Vermillion head coach Curt Nelson. "They are kind of a young team like us."

The Tangers struck first eight minutes into the game when Joe Miller dribbled inside towards the goal from the right and took a shot from the corner of the six-yard box that went along the ground, past goalkeeper Hunter Lerew and into the far post.

Vermillion's second goal came when Andrew Callahan drew a foul inside the 18-yard box for a penalty kick. Callahan stepped up to take the kick and buried it into the bottom left corner of the net.

Groton's defense began to scramble and broke down when a Tigers defender passed the ball in front of the net that was collected by Vermillion. The Tangers managed a shot during the play that resulted in a goal, but was called back due to off sides.

Groton got on the board with seven minutes left to play in the first half and Vermillion went into halftime with a 2-1 lead.

"I thought the first half we could have possessed the ball a little better and maybe been in a better spot going into halftime," Nelson said. "I felt like we left a little on the table there, but I am happy that we got some goals in and hopefully they start to follow a little more frequently here in the future."

Groton then took a 3-2 lead with

two goals in the second half, but Vermillion kept fighting and tied the game with just three minutes left to play.

Junior Seth Druin scored the final goal when the ball was bouncing around in front of the net and popped out to the middle of goal. Druin ran on to the ball for a one-time shot and goal for the tie.

Three goals in one game is a step forward for the Tanager soccer team after falling in the season opener 1-0 to Freeman Academy, but Nelson knows his team is capable of more on the offensive side of the ball.

"We have a lot of things to work on still," he said. "I thought defensively we played pretty solid, but we did have a few lapses that cost us. Offensively, I wasn't very happy with our performance. I'm happy with the effort and intensity, but we have a lot of work to do offensively."

Even after going down a goal late in the game, Vermillion didn't allow Groton to get away with a win, but Nelson thinks the team is capable of producing more and is proud of the fact they didn't give up.

"I thought we played until the final whistle and put a lot of effort into the closing minutes of the game there to equalize," he said. "I thought this was a good home start. It'll be one we look back on that maybe we could have won, but I'm glad we got out of here with a tie."

The Tanager boys' soccer team looks for the first win of the season when they take on Hot Springs Friday evening at 5 p.m. and again on Tuesday against Sioux Falls Christian. Both games begin at 5 p.m. at Cotton Park.

Yotes Freshmen Making An Impact

BY JEREMY HOECK
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When Joe Glenn took over the University of South Dakota football program in 2011, he inherited a roster that had 12 players from the state of Florida.

By the 2014 season, that number was down to four.

And following a 2-win season (none coming in the Missouri Valley Football Conference) in 2015, there was a sense that the Coyotes could use some speed – as Glenn puts it, guys that have "another gear."

So far, it appears that USD has exactly that among the six recruits it brought in from the Sunshine State.

"They're all fast guys," Glenn said after Monday's practice in Vermillion, as he jotted down notes on a roster about three freshmen in particular.

Of the freshmen on the roster, two from Florida have emerged as candidates to play this season: Michael Fredrick (RB, Miami) and Shamar Jackson (RB/WR, Pahokee).

"Not that I'd call it a surprise, because we knew they were good recruits, but we hadn't

recruited in Florida for quite a while," Glenn said.

The Coyotes realized, though, that in order to take a step forward, the regional recruiting base might need to be expanded for some quickness – especially considering USD's longest play from scrimmage last year was 43 yards.

And so, six new Florida players are in Vermillion, giving USD a total of eight on the roster from that state. The other incoming freshmen include Jovane Parkinson (DB), Luis Peguero (DL), Eric Sainil (WR) and Samy JeanClaude (DL).

"They recruited a lot of speed," the 5-foot-8, 160-pound Jackson said, smiling. "That's what they wanted the most, so that's what we wanted to bring to the table."

Even if it meant for those players to travel halfway across the nation to a town of 10,000 residents.

"When I first committed, I didn't think anyone from Florida was up here. Now it's

five of us," the 5-foot-10, 165-pound Fredrick said.

"We can relate to each other and we know what we can all do."

Those five freshmen have been able to learn from the Florida natives already on the Coyote roster: Tyson Graham (DB, Pompano Beach) and Paul Anderson (WR, West Park).

"I feel like we bring a lot of speed and work ethic," Fredrick said. "The guys coming in, we knew the history at South Dakota, so we came in determined and ready to change things."

Even though the Coyotes are nearing the end of fall camp (the season opener is Sept. 5 at Kansas State), the newcomers are still adjusting to life in Vermillion, Jackson said.

"My first couple days, I was lost," he said. "I had to really study the playbook to get everything down. Now, I'm coming along just fine."

Although nothing was guaranteed to those freshman (it was likely most were going to redshirt), they've worked hard in pre-season practices with the goal of seeing the field on Sept. 5, Fredrick said.

"I come from the city, so moving twenty-four hours away from home is quite different," he said. "I came here for football, so that's my main focus."

Fredrick and Jackson aren't the only two freshmen who could impact the Coyotes this season. Glenn pointed out a third option, Danny Rambo, a wide receiver from Georgia who went to high school in Colorado.

Rambo, a 5-foot-10 and 160 pounds, could help the Coyote offense stretch the field for junior quarterback Ryan Saeger – who takes the reins this season.

The three freshmen have impressed the coaches with their knowledge of the game and their attention to detail, Glenn said.

"They've been really sharp and focused," he said. "They ask questions in meetings that are good questions."

If that means they see the field right away, fine. But Fredrick and Jackson both maintained that their goal is simply help the team.

"It's just an honor," Jackson said. "Most players don't get the opportunity to play two positions like I do."

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Tangers Fall In Season Opener

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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CANTON – The VHS Tangers knew they were in for a tough battle their season opener last Friday. However, even coming up short on the scoreboard, the team and coaches took away positives from the game.

Vermillion High School opened the 2015 football season against top five ranked Canton.

"Canton, we knew coming in they'd be a good team," said Vermillion head coach Andy Homan. "They have a lot of big kids and there's a reason why they are the top five in the state."

While Tanager scoring was limited – a 62-yard touchdown pass was the only scoring play VHS managed in the 33-6 loss in Canton – in the second half Vermillion's defense buckled down and held Canton to just one touchdown.

With just under seven minutes to play in the first quarter, Canton marched down the field to the Vermillion 14-yard line. Canton threw a touchdown pass that was called back on a C-Hawks holding to the Vermillion 22-yard line for first and 22.

The next play, Canton threw for a 21-yard gain to the Vermillion 1-yard line.

Vermillion's defense held back Canton's rushing attempts at the



SHAUNA MARLETTE/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK
Vermillion's Rylan Pratt turns the corner in a first quarter drive at Canton.

one yard line until the third down when the C-Hawks scored from a one-yard pass with just under four minutes remaining in the quarter.

The Tangers quickly answered when quarterback Carter Kratz found wide receiver Matt Ouellette on the first throw of the next drive for the 62-yard touchdown pass.

"Kratz and Ouellette picked up right where they ended last year with the passing game, we just got to get a running game going here," Homan said.

Canton kept the 7-6 lead after

the Tangers couldn't find the end zone in an attempted two-point conversion.

It was all Canton from then on as the C-Hawks scored with just under nine minutes to go in the second quarter then again four minutes later. The extra point was blocked by Vermillion on the third Canton touchdown of the game to keep the score 20-6.

Canton scored again with 40 seconds left in the half and Vermillion went into half time down 26-6 after a failed two-point

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VHS Girls Soccer Off To Great Start On Season

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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The Vermillion High School girls' soccer team played for three wins in as many games last week to improve to 4-1 on the season.

Last Thursday, the Tangers faced off against Garretson after suffering the only loss of the season to Tea just two days before.

"We, unfortunately, lost to Tea at the beginning of the week, but we used it as a lesson and we learned from it and I think in the long run that will pay off," said head coach Shannon Fitzsimmons.

That lesson was paid off as Vermillion cruised to a 10-0 win over Garretson at Cotton Park on a raining, thundering night.

"We came out strong and we continued to keep our pressure and momentum up and that's what I like to see," Fitzsimmons said.

The game ended 20 minutes early due to weather conditions and the large margin in goals.

"It was a fun game for the girls because it was kind of raining and the girls always like to play in wet conditions because the ball is going everywhere and sliding, so that kind of got them excited and we had a lot of enthusiasm for that game," Fitzsimmons said.

On Saturday, the Groton Tigers scored just two minutes into the game, but it was all Tangers after that as Vermillion rolled to a 5-1 win in front of a packed house at Cotton Park.

With 19 minutes to play in the first half, Kasey Herbst beat a Groton defender and put the ball over the goalie's header into the back of the net to even the game at one.

Vermillion took the 2-1 lead just before half off an own-goal by Groton from a Tanager corner kick.

"I thought our girls were able to

recover from an early goal, they stayed focused and they didn't let it get to them," Fitzsimmons said.

In the second half, senior Katie Kost scored on a header with 23 minutes left to play off a cross by Makenna Koble to make the score 3-1.

A few minutes later, Natasha Samudzi collected a rebound just outside the 18-yard box and dribbled in for a shot and a goal. Samudzi then followed that up with another goal about four minutes later off a one-time shot from about 10 yards out during a scuffle in front of the net.

"We worked on communicating and controlling and that exactly what won the game for us today," Fitzsimmons said.

On Tuesday, the Tangers traveled to Sioux Falls for a matchup against Sioux Falls Christian. The forward momentum continued and Vermillion walked away with a 3-1 win.

VMS FOOTBALL



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK
The Vermillion 7th and 8th grade football teams opened the season at home against Canton Tuesday afternoon. The Tanager's 7th grade team won 15-8, while the 8th grade team fell 48-0.