



BUCKS: Mitch Schlingman

Young Bucks Look To Move Up In ‘AA’

YHS Returns 5 Of 6 For ‘11

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BY **CASSIE BARTLETT**
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Although the Bucks are young, the Yankton boys’ golf team is hoping to build on last year’s 12th place finish at state with returning freshmen and sophomores.

Yankton — which opened its season Aug. 15 with a third place finish at the Brandon Valley Invitational — lost Ryan Shindler to graduation, but head coach Brett Sime believes the younger players will be able to make up for the loss.

“I think the experience that Ryan had will maybe hurt a little bit, but we do have some younger kids coming up,” Sime said. “We’ve got a good chance at doing as good or better than we did last year. I’m hoping we can do better.”

With the majority of the players being underclassmen, it’s surprising that many of them already have varsity experience. Returning from last year’s roster are freshmen Jace Guthmiller, who was Yankton’s leading player, and Mitch Schlingman and sophomores Ben Jensen and Brandon Frick.

“I look for Jace to be our best player again this year,” Sime said. “As you can tell, we’ve got a pretty good young team coming back.”

Just a few practices into the season, there are many signs pointing to success for the Bucks, but with the just a few years of experience on the team, there are still things they

need to work on before being a top team in the state.

“I think we’ve got a good young team but I do think we have a lot to work on,” Sime said. “I don’t think we’re going to be competitive right now at the conference or state level, but I think if we keep improving, we’ll be able to have a chance to be in the top half of the conference, top half of the state when everything is all said and done.”

Looking at the top teams in the state, Sime said Sioux Falls O’Gorman will be a dominating force again this year, after their state championship win last season.

“O’Gorman was the best team last year and they had a pretty young team,” he said. “A lot of the teams are rebuilding and it’ll be interesting in these first couple meets to see where everybody stands.”

With a lot of conference opponents present at the Brandon Valley Invitational, Sime said it will be a good tournament to rank the teams early in the season.

“It’ll be a good tournament to see who’s doing what,” he said. “It’s just too early to know who has what players back, it’s hard to tell right now who will be the top teams in the conference and state.”

After the Brandon Invite, the Bucks will have a better understanding of what they need to do to be a state champ contender, but Sime already sees areas players need to work on.

“We’ve got to work on the parts of the game that maybe we’re not as good at, whether it just be simple, physical aspects of the game like driving the ball straighter and keeping it in play, working on short game — chipping, pitching and putting. It’s an individual thing for each person.”

Because team golf relies on personal scores, Sime said it’s important to pinpoint what each player needs to improve their game.

“Golf is a little different than all the other team sports — it’s an individual sport first, with a team aspect. We like to do as well as we can as a team, but to do that we have to have individuals play well,” Sime said. “To be able to do that, we have to work on things individually. Right now, I can’t say that there’s one thing the team needs to work on, but I know there are things individually to work on as the year progresses.”

Being able to work well together and feed off of each other is an important part when it comes to combining scores for the overall team. To help develop player synergy, many of the teammates shot rounds of golf together throughout the summer. Sime said their commitment in the offseason really paid off.

“We’ve got a lot of kids that played a lot of summer golf and it’s starting to show,” Sime said. “We have a young team, but we’re starting to shoot some scores that we can start being competitive, if we get a little better.”

While all teams dream of post-season glory, Sime’s goal for the season is to just progress in skill level so the Bucks will be a top-tier team in upcoming years.

“I’m really looking at just trying to improve throughout the year,” he said. “When we get down to conference and state tournament time, if we can be in the top half of each of those, it’ll be a great year for us. Hopefully it’ll be a good springboard into next season as well.”

Gazelles Look To Build Bucks Optimistic After Rough 2010 Campaign On Fifth Place Finish

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BY **CLAY STODDARD**
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Coming off a fifth-place finish at the State Class AA Tournament, the Yankton Gazelles’ softball squad is looking to build on the experience and come out strong in the 2011 season.

The Gazelles fought through a 5-15 regular season in 2010 to end the season in the top five in the state.



GAZELLES: Katie Koletzky

“We were a younger team last year, we only graduated one senior, so it gave a lot of the girls a lot of experience,” said assistant coach Bob Cabalka. “We have four seniors this year. We hope that the seniors will show some leadership and teach themselves to become team leaders so that they can get the other girls in the right direction so that they can step up to the plate and play better.”

The Gazelles lost only one senior from the 2010 season and are returning a strong squad.

“I think they are coming in with a good mental attitude,” Cabalka added.

The Gazelles will be led by their head coach Bernie Goeden, as well as Cabalka and the help of many of the parents.

“Bernie Goeden brings perhaps some of the best coaching skills to the team and he pays attention to a lot of details,” Cabalka said.

The Gazelles will be led this year by four seniors. Katie Koletzky, who was voted onto both the All-State team and the All-Tournament team in 2010. Tiffany Townsend, who was voted onto the All-Tournament team, Haley Hinseth was voted as an All-State honorable mention, and Janessa Ekeren, who suffered an injury last season, round out the seniors.

“I think all of the seniors will come together. Koletzky will be our senior pitcher, Townsend will be in the infield, Ekeren will play both infield and outfield, and Hinseth will be in the outfield,” Cabalka said. “I think if they come together as the four seniors, I think there is nothing that can really stop these girls. They want to do better and they are hungry to win.”

The Gazelles are looking to improve on their 2010 season with the strength of their seniors as well as the experience gained from being a young team last year. Strong underclassmen will assist the seniors in their drive to improve.

“As long as the seniors can come together as leaders and bring the rest of the team with them I don’t think there is anything stopping them from placing anywhere from fifth to higher,” said Cabalka.

“I think they have a goal in mind, they definitely want to finish higher, it just depends on how hard they want to work and how much effort they put in,” he added.

Leading the junior class for the Gazelles will be Jessica Wirth, who was voted to the All-State team, and Karlee Kozak, an honorable mention All-State selection.

“Juniors, Kozak and Wirth, we expect them to provide good defense in the infield, and they will also be at the top of our batting lineup as well,” said Cabalka, adding, “Hannah Horn and Taylor Huchison bring some good speed to the team both defensively and offensively, so we expect that out of them.”

The depth of this still young team will add to their strength this season with underclassmen fighting for spots on the varsity squad. The 2010 JV team earned second place in the JV State B Tournament.

“The key will be to get the least amount of mistakes and

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BY **CODY BALL**
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After a year that produced only one win for the Yankton Bucks soccer team, the attitude coming into opening practices remains optimistic, and for good reason. The Bucks lose only three players from last year’s team and return a field full of pivotal players that gained valuable experience.

These returning players will provide a tough defensive core that includes fullbacks John Morrow, Justin Lillie, T.J. Larson and Tytus Ivanich, all of which are seniors. Ivanich is new to the Bucks as he came to Yankton from Chamberlain after soccer season had ended last year. Also playing on the defensive end is returning goalkeeper Landon Breen who, at only a sophomore, should provide a skilled presence in the Bucks’ net for the next three years.

Head coach Nancy Saunders believes that the defense may be the strongest part of this team, but does not believe the offense should be overlooked.

The offense is led by explosively fast strikers Zach Benjamin, Tully Taggart and Trevor Ruhurek. Also playing on the offensive side are experienced wings Jak Steinberg, Alexander Savage and Derek Gravholt.

Along with the solid defense and exciting offense are the midfielders who do it all. The players expected to play at midfield are: Alex Opsahl, Chance Sorenson, Casey Skillingstad, Cameron Luken and Derek Brenner. Of all the positions on the field it has

appeared that the midfielders have shown the most improvement over their performance from last year.

The captains for Bucks’ soccer are Steinberg and Lillie. Although these players are listed as a wing and a fullback, respectively, Saunders felt that each of these individuals are both capable of playing any position on the field and playing it well.

Altogether, these Bucks are looking to become one cohesive unit, which was a problem last year.

“Last year was tough,” Saunders said, “we were three different teams trying to become one.”

The three teams that Saunders refers to are three separate Yankton area traveling soccer teams that Yankton High School soccer consisted of. These players tried to come together and gel as one last year, but their lack of experience playing together caused them to fail to unite. This season appears to be different.

“There is no place to go but up,” Saunders said. “Last year we never really became one, but this year it seems as though we have come together so far.”

An important contributor to the Bucks coming together as a solid herd has not come without plenty of work together.

“Playing together in the spring and summer has helped our team and they are up and ready to go,” Saunders said. “I am excited about the season and what our potential is.”

Coaching along with Saunders are Jim Sorenson and Marty Steinberg.

The Bucks opened their season with a loss to Aberdeen Central.



BUCKS: Zach Benjamin

SOFTBALL | PAGE 5

Wynot Blue Devil Football					
9/2	Hartington	H	9/30	Chambers	H
9/9	Stuart	A	10/7	St. Mary's	A
9/16	Humphrey St. Francis	A	10/14	Newcastle	H
9/23	Wausa	H	10/20	Bloomfield	A
Wynot Lady Blue Devil Volleyball					
9/1	Hartington/Newcastle	H	10/4	Newcastle	H
		A	10/6	Winside	A
9/6	Allen	A	10/8	Wisner-Pilger Inv.	
9/8	Viborg-Hurley	A	10/13	Wausa	H
9/13	Hartington	H	10/15	Hartington Inv.	
9/15	Lynch	A	10/18	Osmond	A
9/22	West Boyd	H	10/20	Niobrara-Verdigre	A
9/26-27	Newcastle Invitational		10/24-28	Lewis & Clark Conf.	
9/29	Bloomfield	A			TBD

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9/2	Bloomfield	H	9/30	West Boyd	A
9/9	Newcastle	H	10/7	Clearwater-Orchard	A
9/16	Wausa	A	10/14	Elgin Public/Pope John	H
9/23	North Central	H	10/21	Burwell	A
Niobrara/Verdigre Cougars Volleyball					
9/1	Creighton/Osmond	H	10/6	St. Mary's	H
9/13	Santee/St. Mary's	H	10/11	Stuart/Clearwater-Orchard	H
		O'Neill		Elgin Public/Pope John	H
9/16	Wausa	A	10/14	Knox County Tourn.	
9/22	Ewing	A	10/17	Bloomfield	
9/26	Santee	H		Wynot	H
9/27	West Boyd/Clearwater-Orchard	H	10/20	Niobrara Valley Tourn.	
9/29	Wausa/Clearwater-Orchard	H	10/24-28	TBA/Orchard & O'Neill	