

Bucks Have Solid Depth Under First-Year Coach Schlingen

BY JUSTIN RUST
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The new coaching staff for the Yankton baseball team may have walked into a perfect situation.

Three new coaches take over the club baseball team with a deep and experienced roster.

"Yankton baseball has done a good job getting players, and I think one of our biggest strengths will be our depth," said first-year head coach Todd Schlingen. "You can really tell these kids have played a lot of baseball and need very little teaching. They do a lot of things fundamentally, and that goes back to the prior coaching. Hopefully we can reap the benefits of that."

Schlingen will be joined on the staff by two former Mount Marty players — Scott Morrison and Isaac Gerdes.

Morrison is the junior varsity coach and Gerdes is the freshman coach, but Schlingen said all three will work with players from the freshman level to the varsity level.

"It's probably been three weeks since we have been working on things with the players," he said. "We all take time to work on doing different things with each team."

Schlingen added both assistants have been great additions to the staff.

"The two assistants have been great. I wasn't a college player, and they know about the



YANKTON: Derrik Nelson

game," he said. "They have been great working with the kids and working with me."

One of the first things Schlingen has gotten used to is getting to know the kids more than anything.

"It's a little different not knowing the kids since I am not in the school system," said Schlingen, who is also an assis-

tant coach for the Mount Marty women's basketball team. "The first thing you learn about any team is the personality and how they handle certain situations. They have the experience and know when the right times are to goof around and have fun, and know when it's time to get to work."

A deep roster will take some

of the stress away from coaching the club for Schlingen.

Schlingen said the deepest part of the roster is the team's pitchers.

"I think we have a lot of options there with many pitchers who can go out and throw strikes," he said.

The staff is led by Mount Marty recruit Derrik Nelson and will be joined by Steven Stange. Senior Mitch Svanda will also see quality innings for Yankton.

The pitching staff will be handled all-state catcher Zach Johnson.

Johnson has been working with Morrison, who was a former pitcher for the Lancers, about what pitches will be called.

"That's one thing I am going to hand over to Scott (Morrison)," Schlingen said. "He was a pitcher, but if I see something, we can talk about it on the bench."

Nelson was also an all-state selection last year at short-stop and Schlingen is excited to have him back.

"You can tell he is a very good baseball player," he said. "He's smooth in the field, and if you can be good up the middle, you have a chance to be a good team."

Nelson will be joined in the infield by Svanda, who will get some at bats at third base when he isn't pitching. Cameron Schiltz will also get some at bats at the hot corner.

Senior first baseman Devin Gullickson will play a key role at first base, Schlingen said.

In the outfield, Cody Ulmer will be the centerfielder and Eric Spencer will get playing time in the outfield as well, with the third spot still open.

Schlingen said he thinks the outfielders the team has are going to be pretty balanced and can cover some ground in the field.

"Any park it's important to cover ground and have a good arm, but Riverside Field, it might be more important," he said. "It can really help a pitcher out if they can turn what could be a base hit into an out or keep the extra base away from the runner."

The staff is still deciding what brand of ball to play, and Schlingen said it will be dictated with how the team hits this year.

"It's tough because we haven't seen a lot of live pitching yet, but as a staff, we would like to play small ball," he said.

"Maybe bunt around and steal bases, but if we get some kids who are hitting well, we will be a power team."

"One of our strengths is putting the ball in play and putting pressure on the defense," Schlingen added.

But heading into the season, Schlingen knows in every game, the team's depth will be key.

"It's a good senior and junior class, with a couple of sophomores that can help, so we have a lot of players at different positions," he said. "The kids have worked hard and we are excited to get the season going."

South Dakota Softball Looks To Continue Progress

BY ROYAL MCGREGOR
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The University of South Dakota women's softball team are looking to continue where they left off last season with another strong season.



Amy Klyse is continuing as the Coyotes head coach, this will be her third year. Klyse has a record of 52-43 as the head coach of the Coyotes.

The Coyotes take a tough loss, losing Tagny Jones, who won the All-Independent Player of Year just a year ago.

"It means a lot to me," Jones said. "It's definitely different coming back as a coach instead of a player."

Jones might be lost as a player, but is back helping out the program as an assistant coach. Ally Rutherford is also taking on assistant coach responsibilities; this is her first year in the USD program.

"All three of us, work very well together," Jones said. "We have our disagreements sometimes, but we strive for hard work."

The Coyotes made their mark last year with a 33-18 overall record this marked a 65 winning percentage, which is the second-best season winning percentage in program history. USD went 19-14 record against Division I opponents including an 11 game win streak.

USD finished second at the Independent Tournament including a pair of comeback eight inning wins over Seattle and Northern Colorado.

"It just goes to show that we never lose hope," Jones said. "We are going to fight until the end of the seventh inning."

The Coyotes also lost Courtney Heim taking home All-Independent Second Team last year.

The Coyotes only have three players coming in as freshman, so USD isn't lacking in experience, but their second season playing Division I opponents will be important.

A player that will play a key part in success this season are junior Mel Johnson, who was named to the All-Independent Second Team last year.

"Mel is taking on a big role as the only starter returning to the team," Jones said. "The freshman will have to step up and perform."

The Coyotes are looking to get back to get back to their winning ways, but unfortunately most of those wins will have to come on the road. USD only has six home games season, three double headers, which include Dakota State University, University of Sioux Falls and University North Dakota.

"It is a definitely a challenge not playing at home," Jones said. "That is something that we expect going from Division II to Division I. It's nice though traveling south, because of the weather."

Lancers Aim To Keep Moving Forward

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story originally ran in the Feb. 12 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect statistics through March 29.



BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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When the Mount Marty College baseball team finished second in the Great Plains Athletic Conference Tournament in 2007, the Lancers took a step backwards in 2008. Head coach Andy Bernatow will look to use the lessons from that setback to propel the Lancers forward as they come off their second runner-up finish in

Experienced Lancers Look To Improve Rank

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story originally ran in the March 6 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect statistics through March 29.

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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A year ago, the Mount Marty College softball team was young and looked the part on the field. The team had just one senior and a number of freshmen as the team went 2-34 on the season.



This season, with five seniors, two juniors and a ton of sophomores with experience, the Lancers look to make gains in the Great Plains Athletic Conference. Unlike last season, when several Lancers made their debuts down south, the majority of the



LANCERS: Lexi Cihak

team has seen varsity action.

"We have a lot of experience in the upper classes, and some of our sophomores logged a lot of innings their freshman year," said Mount Marty head coach Albert Fernandez. "This year, we look forward to a lot of things being old hat for them."

The Lancers boast five seniors, two of which have previously earned honorable mention all-GPAC — catcher Lexi Cihak (.282), a three-time honoree, and second baseman Katrina (Kirby) Romero (.265). First baseman Lauren Donlin (.225), a two-year starter, pitcher Amanda Kneiff and infielder Abby Dicks (.222) round out the senior class.

Kneiff, who anchored the pitching staff and was voted a team captain, will miss the early part of the season due to injury. Junior Erica Loutsch (7.68, 0-3) and sophomore Brittany Bruns (2.93, 4-3, 28 K's) will pick up the slack in the circle. Romero, also a team captain, and freshman Kassie Loe (Sioux Falls, 2.00, 1-1, 9 IP) will also pick up some innings.

"Erica's a lefty, likes a lot of off-speed stuff," Fernandez noted. "Brun's also threw a lot last year."

Sophomore Atlanta Sechser and freshman Brittney Mikkelsen (Lennox) will help Cihak behind the plate. Dicks, Bruns and sophomore Jen Jerdee (Sioux City, Iowa), who joins the team after playing only volleyball in previous years, will anchor third base.

Sophomore Caitlin Benson and Loe (.292, 10 RBI's) will share time at shortstop. Romero, sophomore Paige Rechtenbaugh (.267) and Mikkelsen will split time at second. Donlin, sophomore Courtney Mallingier and Loutsch will share duties at first.

Six different players are expected to spend time in the outfield. Sophomore Emily Girard (.256) and Sechser will split duties in left. Junior Amanda Soehl (.217) and Mallingier will patrol center field. Sophomore Andrea Hansen and Cihak will share duties in right.

Bethany Schmidt will also see

time in a utility role.

"Actually we're pretty deep," Fernandez said. "We feel we are at least two deep at every spot."

Mount Marty was picked last in the 13-team GPAC, something Fernandez has reminded his team of as they prepared for the season.

"We've used the preseason ratings as motivation," he said. "We know how good this team is. Now we have to prove it on the field."

Parker Track Schedule

Date	Meet	Place
3/30/10	Dan Lennon @ USD	Vermillion
4/6/10	West Central	West Central
4/10/10	Vince Relays	Flandreau
4/13/10	Chester Invite	Chester
4/15/10	Menno	Menno
4/17/10	Jesse James	Garretson
4/20/10	Aloester/Hud.-Peresford	Beresford
4/22/10	Freeman	Freeman
4/24/10	Chester	Chester
4/30/10	Howard Wood	Sioux Falls
5/1/10	Howard Wood	Sioux Falls
5/1/10	Parker	Parker
5/4/10	Lennox	Lennox
5/14/10	Big East Conference	Garretson
5/20/10	Region 4B	Centerville
5/28/10	State "B" Prelims	Sioux Falls
5/29/10	State "B" Finals	Sioux Falls

Golf Schedule

Date	Meet	Place
4/8/10	McCook Central/Montrose	Salem
4/15/10	Parker Tri.	Parker
4/16/10	Flandreau	Flandreau
4/23/10	Jesse James	Garretson
4/30/10	Big East - 18 holes	Dell Rapids
5/3/10	Irene	Irene
5/5/10	McCook Central/Montrose	Salem
5/10/10	Freeman	Freeman
5/17/10	Region 3B	Elmwood (SF)
5/24-25/10	State "B" Boys @ Moccasin Creek, Girls @ Lee Park	Aberdeen

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Wagner Track & Field Schedule

Date	Name	Location
4/6/10	Parkston Meet	Parkston
4/13/10	Wagner Relays	Wagner
4/17/10	Avon Meet	Avon
4/20/10	SD/Nebraska Challenge	Tyndall
4/24/10	Bon Homme Meet	Tyndall
4/24/10	Chester Meet	Chester
4/30/10	Howard Wood Relays	Sioux Falls
5/1/10	Howard Wood Relays	Sioux Falls
5/1/10	Andes Central Meet	Lake Andes
5/4/10	LMVC Meet	Parkston
5/8/10	Parkston Meet	Parkston
5/11/10	SESP Meet	Wagner
5/20/10	Region Meet	Chester
5/28/10	State Meet	Sioux Falls
5/29/10	State Meet	Sioux Falls