

# Great West Softball Championships Come To Vermillion In Coyotes' Final Season In League

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VERMILLION — The final year in the Great West Conference brings the Great West championship to the USD campus.

The Coyotes boast a new lineup this season as the roster includes two seniors, three juniors, four sophomores and four freshmen. The starting lineup is a little different from last season where it had five senior starters, but head coach Amy Klyse said she has been impressed with the team so far.

"Our big thing right now is putting a new team on the field and its going to be a process," she said. "It is a process in peaking at the right time of the year."

USD has already played nearly 30 games and currently has a record of 9-18 (as of March 30), which is already a step in the right direction after starting last year out with a record of 4-16.

One of the most notable players in her senior season is pitcher/designated hitter Mel Johnson. The senior currently sits with a record of 3-4 and leads the team in hitting with a .327 average including two homeruns and 15 RBIs.

"Mel (Johnson) has been out for awhile in the middle of our season, Klyse said. "She has been keeping herself mentally focused even though she can't practice as much as everyone else."

Jessica Lussman, the other senior on the team, splits her time at catcher, third base and outfield. Lussman ranks fourth in batting average with .265 average and has three doubles and three RBIs.

The junior first baseman Alexa Rudeen not only has a perfect fielding percentage in 127 chances, but also has the hitting to back up her defense. Rudeen

USD Softball (9-18) 2011 Season Schedule		
Feb. 11	Northern Iowa (UNI Tourn.)	Cedar Falls, Iowa.....L 0-11 (5)
Feb. 12	Drake (UNI Tourn.)	Cedar Falls, Iowa.....L 0-6
Feb. 12	Texas-El Paso (UNI Tourn.)	Cedar Falls, Iowa.....W 10-2 (6)
Feb. 13	Wis.-Green Bay (UNI Tourn.)	Cedar Falls, Iowa.....L 0-3
Feb. 13	Northern Iowa (UNI Tourn.)	Cedar Falls, Iowa.....L 0-8
March 5	Eastern Kentucky (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 8-6, L 2-6
March 6	Lehigh (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....L 3-6
March 6	Holy Cross (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 8-3
March 8	Valparaiso (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 2-0
March 8	Detroit-Mercy (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....L 9-10
March 9	Robert Morris (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....L 0-3
March 9	LaSalle (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 6-2
March 10	Florida A&M (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....canceled
March 10	Lehigh (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....canceled
March 12	Columbia (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 3-1
March 12	Manhattan (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 4-1
March 13	Youngstown State (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 11-9
March 13	St. Peter's (Rebel Games)	Kissimmee, Fla.....W 5-2
March 16	Nebraska	Lincoln, Neb.....L 0-14 (5), L 5-6
March 20	Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa.....L 1-9 (6)
March 23	South Dakota State	Brookings.....postponed (TBD)
March 25	North Dakota (GWC Games)	Farmers Branch, Texas.....L 3-4, L 2-3
March 26	Utah Valley (GWC Games)	Farmers Branch, Texas.....L 0-4, L 1-2
March 27	Houston Baptist (GWC Games)	Farmers Branch, Texas.....L 0-10 (5), L 3-7
March 30	Jamestown	Nygaard Field.....DH, 3 p.m.
April 2	Cal State-Bakersfield	Bakersfield, Calif.....DH, 2 p.m.
April 3	Cal State-Bakersfield	Bakersfield, Calif.....DH, 2 p.m.
April 4	UC-Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara, Calif.....DH, 3 p.m.
April 9	Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minn.....DH, 1 p.m.
April 12	Dakota State	Vermillion.....DH, 4 p.m.
April 16	North Dakota	Kansas City, Mo.....noon
April 16	Missouri-Kansas City	Kansas City, Mo.....2:30 p.m.
April 17	North Dakota	Kansas City, Mo.....11 a.m.
April 17	Missouri-Kansas City	Kansas City, Mo.....4:30 p.m.
April 21	Hartford	West Hartford, Conn.....DH, 2 p.m.
April 23	Sacred Heart	Fairfield, Conn.....DH, 10 a.m.
April 27	Sioux Falls	Nygaard Field.....DH, 4 p.m.
April 29	College of St. Mary	Nygaard Field.....DH, 4 p.m.
May 16-18	Great West Conf. Championships	Nygaard Field.....TBD

sits third with a .273 average, she leads in the team in doubles with seven and has driven in 10 runs.

One of the most interesting freshman for the Coyotes is infielder Lindsey Boyd, who ranks first on the team in homeruns (3), on base percentage (.382), runs scored (20), total bases (30) and hits (18). She also sits second in batting average (.281) and RBIs (12).

"Two of those home runs have been clutch," Klyse said. "Both have given us the lead in two separate games."

"She has a ton of potential."

Bre Zmolek has been the mainstay in the catcher duties, but can also handle herself well at the plate. Zmolek has gunned down seven of the 19 base runners trying to steal for an average of 37 percent, she has also picked off one base runner. Zmolek is batting a .213 average and has knocked out three homeruns and taken nine walks.

Christine Broders, a Yankton native, is also having a fine start to her freshman campaign. She boasts a .208 batting average to go along with two homers and five runs batted in.



COYOTES: Senior Mel Johnson is one of the team leaders both on the rubber and at the plate.

## LANCERS

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leading triple jumper and freshman April Winne will be a beneficial new addition to the team. Winne is a previous state champion and Fischer said the team is excited to see what she will contribute. The two freshmen will have a strong supporting cast, including freshman Samantha Rus who finished fifth at state in throwing.

For the time being, the team will be working off rust, Fischer said.

"At the beginning of the season, we're not in top-shape for competing," he said. "We'll be doing a lot of conditioning and working on fundamentals. It's a short season, but we're hoping that during the late-season we'll be improved and have good enough times to qualify for certain meets."

The meets the teams are most looking forward to will be the Sioux City Relays, Drake Relays and the conference meet at the end of the season. Fischer said the goal for everyone is to get good marks so that everyone can qualify for the conference meet.

"We'll be an improved team this year," Fischer said. "We have some really good things to look forward to not only this season, but in the seasons to come."

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