

# Coyotes Look To Build Toward Great West Title

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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VERMILLION — A close look at the 2009 season for the University of South Dakota football program reveals one crucial element: The Coyotes were mere plays away from contending for a Great West Conference title.



And that's all the motivation USD needs for this fall. The Coyotes, coming off a 5-5 campaign that included a second-place tie (2-2) in the GWC, open their third season at the Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) level Sept. 4 at Central Florida.

Picked to finish fourth in the five-team league this season, USD returns 14 starters to a squad that faces a significantly more challenging schedule in 2010.

"I think everyone in this league can lay claim to think they can win it," seventh-year head coach Ed Meierkort said. "Why not? It's very open; there's no dominant team."

Last fall, USD rebounded from a road loss at North Dakota and a



COYOTES: Chris Ganioux (20)

one-point overtime loss to eventual champion UC Davis at home to win its final two league games.

In the end, it was the setback to UC Davis that was the difference

for the Coyotes. But now, in 2010, USD is out to take that next step.

"This conference is always up for grabs. Last year, we were one

play from winning it," junior linebacker Shea Williams said. "That's our main goal this year, to come out and get that ring. That's what everyone has been talking about

from the first day."

USD's season begins with two consecutive guarantee games, at Central Florida and at Minnesota on Sept. 11.

Though the games against Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) opponents is a new wrinkle for the Coyotes, playing in what could be one-sided affairs is nothing new.

"It's very hard to prepare for these games. We've been on the other side and I know how we've prepared for teams," Meierkort said. "We've got to come out of those games a better team than when we went in."

"You can get run out of those buildings in a hurry, but I think our guys are mature enough to handle it."

In all, USD plays nine of its 10 games against D-I foes, including home contests against North Dakota (Oct. 2), Northern Iowa (Oct. 16), Northern Colorado (Oct. 30) and Cal Poly (Nov. 6).

USD's home opener is Sept. 18 against Northwestern Oklahoma State, an NAIA school.

On the road, the Coyotes will face North Dakota State (Sept. 25), UC Davis (Oct. 9), Southern Utah (Oct. 23) and Lamar (Nov. 13).

"On paper, it looks very overwhelming, but we're playing these teams one time on one day; that's the way we have to look at it," soph-

omore receiver Tom Flanagan said. "If not, we'd go crazy looking at all those big-time games."

USD returns seven starters on offense, but the biggest transition will be at quarterback, where junior Dante Warren takes over the reins from Noah Shepard.

The receiving core figures to be one of the team's biggest strengths, as the Coyotes return 73 percent of its receptions from last season. Tom Flanagan (So.), Dusty Nowotny (Jr.) and Will Powell (So.), along with tight ends London Landry (Sr.) and Mitch Mohr (Sr.) will lead the way.

On defense, USD returns inside linebackers Williams (Jr.) and Adam Broders (Jr.), as well as safeties Jim Thompson (Jr.) and Shane Potter (Jr.). The Coyotes graduated the entire line and both outside linebackers, and will also have two new starting cornerbacks.

Still, through all the changes, the focus for 2010 is on winning a conference title.

"Sometimes we didn't finish well last year; it's those one or two plays we need to improve on," said Flanagan, the team's leading receiver a year ago. "We need to know when to step up and do something to help us win."

"We can't have anymore 'what if' games."

## New Mentor Green Looks To Spark USD Soccer Program

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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VERMILLION — For a program coming off a four-win season and a coaching change, it might be the small steps that marks progress.



That's where new coach Mandy Green comes in.

With an eye on improving the mentality and work ethic, Green takes over a University of South Dakota women's soccer team that returns 11 upperclassmen to a squad that went 4-12-1 last fall.

The Coyotes, who opened their third season at the Division I level on Aug. 20, have won a total of nine games over the past two years.

"We're just a team that's trying to build a winning culture around here, but that takes time, and we realize that," said Green, who came to USD from Xavier University.

"Every practice we're getting better with something," she added. "We won't be the most talented team out there, but we'll try to out-work everyone."

In addition to a reconfigured workout regime, USD has gone through what Green referred to as "team-building exercises," including team dinners and a camping trip following an Aug. 15 scrimmage in Woodbury, Minn.

Those few instances really opened the team's eyes, according to the top returning scorer, Katie Quinones.

"There's just a different philosophy with her. You can already tell the atmosphere of the team is



COYOTES: Katie Quinones

more positive," said Quinones, a mid-fielder from Rochester, Minn. "I think that's the biggest difference; we've worked harder for this season because she expected more out of us."

"That'll definitely help throughout the season."

As will USD's returning core of Quinones, Emily Maas (Sr., DF), Savanna Lokkesmoe (Sr., MF), Ima Reyes (Sr., DF/MF), Jen Ogren (Sr., GK), Sarah Wheeler (Sr., FW), Michelle Marshall (Sr., MF), Erika Menning (Sr., DF), Hallie Meyer (Sr., FW), Sami Spokas (Jr., MF) and Erin Bello (Jr., MF).

Quinones led the Coyotes with eight goals last season, while Bello had three, and Maas, Wheeler and Lokkesmoe each scored one goal.

While USD had its struggles on offense in 2009, scoring just 15 goals in 17 games, Green said the team has been focusing more on its

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## Hovden Takes South Dakota Golf Helm

BY ROYAL MCGREGOR  
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VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota begin a new men's and women's golf with a new coach, Nick Hovden.

Hovden replaces Danny Sinkens, who resigned this summer.

Coach Hovden is in familiar territory at USD being part of the men's golf team from 2001-02. Hovden has only been the coach for a couple of weeks but he is



excited to see what this year will bring for him and his host of golfers.

"The university means so much to me and it means a lot to me that I'm able to give back," Hovden said. "I was on the team for a couple of years met some great people and coaches and I want to give the kids that in the golf program now every

opportunity that I had."

The men's and women's team finished last season with a third place in the Dakota Cup Championship. The Coyotes took a first round loss to in-state rival SDSU, but they were able to quickly turn things around playing well against UND.

"There isn't going to be a Dakota Cup this season for scheduling purposes," Hovden said. "But SDSU is going to be at a few tournaments that we will be attending, so it is going to be nice to try to com-

pete with a successful golf program."

"We are striving to have the same success that SDSU has had and in a couple of years give them a run for their money."

On the men's side, the Coyotes are going to see some familiar faces back in their line-up that competed in the Dakota Cup are Yankton native Marc Gubbels (So.), Zach Huth (Jr.), Gavin Fawbush (Sr.), Ty Munneke (So.), Kyle Scanlon (Sr.)

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### FREEMAN ACADEMY

COACH: Nathan Epp (7th year)  
ASSISTANT: Paul Ortman  
VITALS: Class A, I-90 Soccer Conference

LAST YEAR: The Freeman Academy Bobcats had an quality season last year with a 5-8-1 record. They did take a couple hits as they lost four seniors from last season. Richard Friesen was named to second team all-state and I-90 all-conference.

RETURNING LETTERWINNERS: Clint Bageselman (Sr., GK), Caleb Epp (Sr., D), Caleb Glader (Jr., M), Andre Eisenbeis (Sr., M), Jeff Preheim (Sr., D), Chris Miller (So., F), Ben Carlison (So., D), Tristan Ashwell (Fr., MF), Will Chao (Sr., MF), Josh Stahl (Fr., M), Gabriel Eisenbeis (Fr., MF), Matthew Graber (So., D), Adam Unruh (Jr., MF)

ASSESSMENT: The Bobcats have a good mix of upper and lower classmen and they are hoping that the experience helps out both parties enroute to a better finish that last year.

"Overall, we should be a more mature team with the ability to control the ball more," Epp said. "We also need some of the younger players to step up and aggressive out on the field."

### S.D. XC

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"We have to continue to work hard after a good summer," Bjorneberg said.

#### PLATTE-GEDES

COACH: Shawn Wynia (2nd year)  
VITALS: Class A

LAST YEAR: Platte-Geddes had one runner make it to the state meet as Rochelle Wynia took home 21st place.

RETURNING LETTERWINNERS: Rochelle Wynia (Jr.), Lauren Millar (Jr.)

NEWCOMERS: Kami Meyerink (Jr.), Jill Olsen (Jr.), Aubrey Rabenberg (7th), Regan Engebretson (7th).

ASSESSMENT: Platte-Geddes is coming into the year very top heavy with only two returning and the rest newcomers to cross country. The letterwinners are going to have to take on leadership roles if they are going to make a good run at a conference title.

#### SCOTLAND

COACH: Gary Pepper (30th year)  
VITALS: Class B, Region 3

LAST YEAR: The Scotland Lady Highlanders had an outstanding season last year finishing third in their region and taking home third place at the state meet. The team graduated one runner, April Winne, who will be competing at Mount Marty College.

RETURNING LETTERWINNERS: Haley Brunke (Jr.), Amber Alvey (Fr.), Sasha Roth (Fr.)

NEWCOMERS: Katie Cossman (So.), Alex Conrad (7th), Sydney Gall (7th), Abbey Hagge (7th), Allie Pravecek (7th), Cheyanne Roth (7th)

ASSESSMENT: The Lady Highlanders are coming in with a very young team, so the upper classmen will have to show the seventh graders the ropes to make it a successful season.

"We are going to have to expect that our new runners and returning letterwinners are going to have to step up if we are going to have another good season," Pepper said.

#### VIBORG-HURLEY

COACH: Tania Peterson (1st year)

VITALS: Class A, Region 3  
LAST YEAR: This is the first year of the co-op, but both schools contribute runners with experience.

RETURNERS: Dana Mach (Jr.), Layne Meyers (8th)

NEWCOMER: Kirsten Stevens (7th)  
ASSESSMENT: Viborg-Hurley have a good mix of youth and experienced players to lead their team this season and are hoping to make a good showing at their region meet.

#### WAGNER

COACH: Brittany Schoenfelder (1st year)

VITALS: Class A, Region 4  
LAST YEAR: The Wagner Red Raiders sent one girl to the state meet, Alaina Cuka, who finished in 43rd place and is looking improve on that mark coming into this season.

RETURNING LETTERWINNERS: Alaina Cuka (Sr.), Katie Barnett (So.)  
ALSO RETURNING: Jaime Sully (Jr.)  
NEWCOMERS: Jade Bouza (Sr.), Christina Hamblenton, Tristen Scherr (So.)

ASSESSMENT: The Red Raiders are lacking in the numbers this season, but if Cuka can raise the bar to set the standard for the other girls they will be looking at a quality season.

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