



The University of South Dakota men's basketball program includes five individuals who were born outside the United States: (left) Allen Saint-Gelais (Guadeloupe, France), Nick Mabbutt (England), Brandon Bos (Canada), Ricardo Andreotti (Brazil) and Juevol Myles (Canada). The only player who was with USD last season was Andreotti, who has been a kind of "grandfather" for the four newcomers.

International Presence Adds To USD Men's Basketball Program

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — It wasn't that long ago when the foreign presence on the University of South Dakota men's basketball team was a player from Dubuque, Iowa.

Not exactly a passport-necessary kind of a trek.

One look at this season's roster, however, shows a completely different story.

Of the 15 players on the 2011-12 squad, five were born outside the United States — Brandon Bos (Fr.) and Juevol Myles (Jr.) from Canada, Ricardo Andreotti (Sr., Brazil), Nick Mabbutt (Jr., England) and Allen Saint-Gelais (Jr., Guadeloupe, a

French island in the Caribbean).

In other words, five-on-five scrimmages can take on the feel of the Pan American Games.

"It actually works out where we can have an international team and an American team," said Mabbutt, a native of Milton Kynes, England, who came to USD via Northeast Community College in Norfolk, Neb.

"And we can actually get a full team. We try to just have fun and enjoy basketball."

Of the five, four are junior college transfers new to the Coyotes this season. The elder of the group is Andreotti, who came to Vermillion from Northwest College in Wyoming.

Bos came to USD from Kiski Prep School in Pennsylvania, while Saint-Gelais is a transfer from Laramie (Wyo.) County Community College, where he spent one season.

Myles played one season at Kansas City, then transferred to Tallahassee (Fla.) Community College before coming to USD — where he is redshirting this season.

"Other than Brandon, they're all junior college guys, and for whatever reason, it fell into our laps that way. Trust me, we didn't plan to load up on foreign guys," joked USD assistant coach Joey James, in his ninth year on staff with Dave Boots.

"A few of them are what we call 'no-maintenance.' A few we have are low-

maintenance, but we just wanted guys who fit our system."

That system still includes four South Dakotans and one Minnesotan, but there is certainly a new look to the Division I program.

Yes, all five foreign-born players speak English, and yes, there is good-natured ribbing by their United States-born teammates.

"The guys give me a lot of crap about the way I say certain words, or if I don't know a certain question or something, they'll say, 'Oh, it's just because you're Canadian,'" Bos said.

"It's all just fun and games."

That bond extends past the court, as well.

Andreotti, Mabbutt, Saint-Gelais and junior Jordan Boots are all living in the same on-campus dorm room, in the same village as Bos, Trevor Gruis, Jared Bartling and Steve Tecker.

And yes, that has been the root of many jokes.

"We call our room the 'International Room,'" Saint-Gelais said. "We always make jokes that the American guys need a visa to visit our room."

Joking aside, there was a serious reason why Andreotti — who appeared in all 33 games and averaged 5.1 points and 6.3 rebounds per game last season

New Faces, Outlook Have Things Looking Up For MMC Men



LANCERS | SPENCER YACKLEY

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the Nov. xx edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated with statistics current as of Dec. 5, 2011.

Though he tries to remain cautiously optimistic, Jim Thorson's enthusiasm is evident.

With his program coming off its first Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) post-season win, the Mount Marty College men's basketball coach was asked if the Lancers are ready to take the next step in their progression.

"At this point, I would say yes," he said prior to the season. "I think we're capable of doing that."

Doing so will be a relatively new-look Lancers squad, which is 4-3 overall and 2-2 in the GPAC through Dec. 5. Mount Marty returns just one starter, but brings back a key player

who was limited by injuries and two other senior transfers.

Another significant change for the 2011-12 squad, Thorson said, is attitude.

"Our attitude's been really good and the guys have worked hard so far," said the 17th-year coach, who guided the Lancers to a 10-20 overall record last season.

"We've got people who can score and defend the ball, and we're just a little tougher all around," he added. "I'm encouraged by what I've seen so far."

Forward Spencer Yackley (Sr., 10.7 ppg, 7.1 rpg this season) is the only starter back for Mount Marty, which graduated two, lost one to transfer and had another move back to a reserve role for this season.

Yackley will be joined in the frontcourt by sophomore forward Jeff Viereck (4 ppg), who played in only 13 games a year ago after getting injured. Junior guard Joe Hieb (10.0 ppg) moves into a starting role this season after what Thorson

called a "very strong finish" to last season.

"We felt like those guys back from last year should know the system and should give us some nice leadership," Thorson said. "That was a pretty good nucleus to build around. Then we set out, recruiting wise, to fill in the gaps."

Enter Will Eddie and Mitch Ackelson.

Though not a transfer this year, Eddie — a 6-foot-2 senior guard — played in only 11 games for the Lancers last season after venturing to Yankton from the junior college ranks. After playing in limited duty last season, Eddie is averaging 5.0 points this season.

Eddie will start this season as an off-guard in the backcourt with senior transfer Mitch Ackelson, who comes to MMC from NCAA Division II Missouri-St. Louis — where he played in 26 games a year ago.



LANCERS | MITCH ACKELSON

Put your *faith* in us.

Mount Marty has become a family away from home. I have had a wonderful time at Mount Marty, and I have learned many things as a sportsman, a leader and a spiritual being.

- Titus Kosgei
Eldoret, Kenya
Nursing Class of 2012

MOUNT MARTY COLLEGE

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