

Mount Marty's Taylor Forsch, left, drives against the defense of Dakota State's Yui Onodera during their non-conference women's basketball game Wednesday night in Madison. The Lancers rallied for a 66-60 victory.

LARRY LEADS/
MADISON DAILY
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Lancer Women Rally Past Trojans 66-60

MADISON — A resurgent second half and a significant edge at the free throw helped the Mount Marty College women's basketball team pick up a hard-fought non-conference win Wednesday night.

Despite a record-breaking performance by Dakota State forward Alyson Drooger, the Lancers were able to rally past the Trojans 66-60 in Madison.

Thanks to a 54-percent shooting effort, DSU led 37-28 at halftime. An April Winne basket with 8:02 left pushed the Lancers ahead 48-47, and a Taylor Forsch three-pointer with 3:48 remaining put MMC ahead for good.

The Lancers (5-4) converted 16-of-23 free throws in the second half and were 19-of-28 at the line on the night. Dakota State (3-6), meanwhile, was 5-of-10.

Winne led four Lancers in double figures with 17 points to go along with seven assists, while Allison De Kam

added 16 points. Brittany Little had a double-double of 14 points and 10 rebounds, while Forsch had 11 points.

Drooger nearly had a triple-double for the Trojans, finishing with 16 points, nine rebounds and a school-record 11 blocks. Julie Monson recorded 14 points and 11 rebounds.

Dakota State visits the University of South Dakota tonight (Thursday) in exhibition action for the Trojans, while Mount Marty is at Midland in Great Plains Athletic Conference action Saturday.

MOUNT MARTY COLLEGE (5-4)

Alexa Berg 1-5 1-2 4; April Winne 3-11 10-13 17; Taylor Forsch 4-13 0-1 11; Allison De Kam 8-17 0-0 16; Brittany Little 5-7 4-8 14; Holly Hegge 0-4 4-4 4; Alyssa Whetham 0-4 0-0 0. TOTALS 21-61 19-28 66.

DAKOTA STATE (3-6)

Courtney Hulstein 3-10 0-0 6; Kylie Westover 4-12 1-1 9; Julie Monson 4-11 3-5 14; Jayda Swenson 0-1 0-0 0; Courtney Hamblin 1-2 0-2 2; Haley Stover 0-1 0-0 0; Yui Onodera 2-8 0-0 5; Cassie Jacobsen 4-7 0-0 8; Alyson Drooger 7-9 1-2 16; Rachel Novak 0-0 0-0 0; Katy Pillar 0-0 0-0 0; Brittany Rosberg 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS 25-61 5-10 60.

Halftime: DSU 37, MMC 28. Three-Pointers: DSU 5-20 (Monson 3-7, Drooger 1-1, Onodera 1-4, Westover 0-2, Hulstein 0-4), MMC 5-22 (Forsch 3-8, Winne 1-4, Berg 1-5, De Kam 0-1, Whetham 0-4). Total Rebounds: MMC 43 (Little 10), DSU 40 (Monson 11). Assists: MMC 16 (Winne 7), DSU 15 (Hulstein 3).

Munson 3, Onodera 3; Turnovers: DSU 21, MMC 15. Personal Fouls: DSU 22, MMC 10. Fouled Out: None.

CONCORDIA 72, BRIAR CLIFF 65: SIOUX CITY, Iowa — In a battle between top-five teams in NAIA, it was No. 1 Concordia that came out on top of No. 4 Briar Cliff 72-65 in GPAC women's basketball action Wednesday.

A jumper by Bailey Morris put Concordia ahead for good, 64-63, with 4:19 to play. The Chargers got within one with 1:55 left, but would get no closer.

Concordia (11-0, 5-0) had four players in double figures, led by Beth Kohmetscher with 14 points. Morris added 12 points, while Lori Laboda had 11 points and nine rebounds. In the loss for Briar Cliff (10-1, 4-1), Kelsey Evans scored 16 points, Summer Gordon had a double-double of 13 points and 10 rebounds, and Kela Cihak added 12 points.

MORNINGSIDE 74, DAKOTA WESLEYAN 59: MITCHELL — Ashlynn Muhl scored 22 points and grabbed 12 rebounds as fourth-ranked Morningside beat Dakota Wesleyan 74-59 in GPAC women's action Wednesday night at the Corn Palace.

Chelsie Trask added 16 points and Shelby Beaudette had 10 points for Morningside (7-1, 3-1), which led 39-33 at halftime.

HOOPS | PAGE 8

High School Basketball

It's Back To Basics For Gazelles

YHS Hosts Lynx In Season Opener Tonight At Summit

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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This season the Gazelles basketball team is focusing on the basics. After losing a class of talented seniors, players are looking to gain as much experience as possible.

Head coach Doug Pesicka said early in the season he will concentrate on getting the younger players acclimated to varsity level basketball.

"This year's team is probably a little short of overall varsity experience," said Pesicka, whose team opens its season tonight (Thursday) at home against Brandon Valley.

"It will be something we'll have to overcome, but the only way to get experience is to get experience. It's as simple as it sounds."

The coaches made the decision to simplify everything this year, and Pesicka said that will help them to focus on fundamentals.

"We're very much back to the basics and fundamentals, trying to keep all of our offensive and defensive schemes really simple especially early in the year," he said. "As our kids get more experience, we'll get more complicated. Right now, we think simple is best. We're going to try to do a few things really well."

Although the season will be a challenge, senior Kelsey Fitzgerald is ready for the challenge.

"Last year was last year. It may not have ended the way we wanted it to, but this year we're just going to focus on getting better," she said. "As a team leader you can't get frustrated. It was really intense last year, but I'm up for the challenge."

Senior Mikala Hora knows this year will be different from past seasons, but is optimistic.

"I think we can surprise a lot of people," she said. "We lost a lot of seniors last year, but we have a lot of girls coming up this year who are ready to play. Our game plan will be a little different, but we'll get it done."

In addition to Hora and Fitzgerald, the Gazelles will have four other seniors on varsity — Brianna Newman, Jessica Wirth, Kelsey Butler and Abbie Mitchell.

The junior class includes Whitlee Larson, Anna Gulick, Molly King, Brooke Loecker, Morgan Tessier, Taylor Rothenberger, Abby Schulte, Katie Rodig, Carson Smith and Allie Murphy.

A sophomore (Andi Sprakel) and a freshman (Becky Frick) complete the varsity roster.

Pesicka said having younger players step into prominent roles on the team will be important to keep improving.

"We're a team that's just going to have to continually get better and better, which we've already done in three practices," he said. "We've seen improvements already."

Pesicka knows the Eastern South Dakota Conference (ESD), as well as the district will be full of tough competition, but said he feels the Gazelles will be able to be compete.

"Our conference, the ESD, is always good," he said. "And our district has always been good, too. But everybody in Class AA A can compete with or beat any other team. We certainly have that mentality as we enter the season. We feel like we can be competitive and also win. That's the mindset this group has to have."

For the first game against Brandon Valley, Hora said she and her teammates know it will be a tough, but they are ready to play.

"Brandon Valley is a really good team," she said. "We have a lot that we can bring to the table this year. We're definitely going to be one of the faster teams in the state with what we have, and probably one of the smaller teams in the state. That doesn't really matter though because we're going to focus on ourselves and get better each day."

You can follow Emily Niebrugge on Twitter at twitter.com/ENiebrugge



Yankton's Mikala Hora slices through the Brandon Valley defense to put up a shot during their Eastern South Dakota Conference girls' basketball game last season at the Summit Center. The Gazelles open their season tonight (Thursday) against the Lynx, starting at 7:30 p.m.

Nebraska Will Get Best Test Vs. No. 16 Creighton

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska's back-to-back, double-digit wins over opponents from BCS conferences have piqued the interest of what has been a generally apathetic fan base when it comes to men's basketball.

A win at Wake Forest last week and one at home over Southern California on Monday improved the Cornhuskers to 6-1, their best start since 2008-09. That's all well and good, first-year coach Tim Miles said, but the Huskers will get a better read on themselves when they host 16th-ranked Creighton (7-1) on Thursday.

Nebraska has lost 10 of the last 14 meetings with its in-state rival, but won three straight against the Bluejays in Lincoln.

"I don't think we'll raise any eyebrows unless we win on Thursday," Miles said.

Miles' mission is to create some momentum for the program as it prepares to move into a new 16,000-seat downtown

arena next season.

Hard as it is to admit for the coach of the state's flagship university, Creighton, with its large fan following in eastern Nebraska, is a program he's chasing.

"They have a marquee program right now and we want to get to that level and we're not there," Miles said. "Can we do it? Absolutely we can do it — and the sooner the better."

Most years at Nebraska, basketball has been something Big Red followers watch passively in the winter when they're not talking about football recruiting.

Miles, who signed a seven-year contract paying \$1.4 million, knows he has a lot of work to do before there is sustained interest. He's not off to a bad start.

The Huskers already are halfway to achieving the win total of the team that finished 12-18 and tied for 11th in the Big Ten.

Nebraska has announced attendance at more than 9,000 for all but one of its five home games, including a season-high 10,045 against USC. And that's even though only two of the five teams Nebraska beat at home, Valparaiso and Tulane, have winning records.

Seniors Dylan Talley (15.6 ppg) and Brandon Ubel (14 ppg), and junior Ray Gallegos (14 ppg) have been the main attractions in Miles' motion offense. Defensively, the Huskers are holding opponents to 42 percent shooting.

Still, the Huskers are picked to finish at the bottom of the Big Ten. Even though the early season wins are good for confidence, they don't mean much if no headway is made in the conference.

"Hopefully the fans like what they see," Miles said. "We're just trying to be the best we can be. We know what everybody expected, and that hasn't changed. We're not picked any higher in the Big

Ten. We just have to keep going out and prove ourselves, that we're not that team. We're ourselves. We're the Huskers of 2012-13 and we have to figure out how to win every game."

Asked if the Huskers have exceeded expectations, Talley said: "Yeah, from the things I was reading before the season, I would say we have. We believe in ourselves. We got up at 6 in the morning every morning over the summer and worked hard for positive results. We play hard and see what happens."

The only misstep so far has been a 74-60 loss to Kent State in which Talley and Ubel combined for 44 points and the Huskers shot 39 percent. Kent State shot 57 percent.

The Huskers bounced back to win at Wake Forest 79-63 — their most lopsided

HUSKERS | PAGE 8

Bielema Excited For Arkansas Job

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (AP) — Bret Bielema watched from afar in April as Arkansas athletic director Jeff Long handled the difficult circumstances surrounding Bobby Petrino's firing, liking what he saw so much that he wrote Long a letter of support a few months later.

Bielema also liked what he heard from Long earlier this week during a clandestine meeting in New York, eventually agreeing to become the Razorbacks' long-term replacement for the scandal-ridden Petrino.

The former Wisconsin coach was introduced in Fayetteville on Wednesday, bringing an end to a nearly eight-month search for Arkansas — which fell from the upper echelon of the Southeastern Conference to also-ran in its season in limbo under interim coach John L. Smith.

The Illinois native takes over a program hit hard by the turmoil following the ouster of Petrino, who was fired for hiring his mistress and initially lying about her presence during an April 1 motorcycle accident. Arkansas began the season ranked in the top 10 before stumbling to a 4-8 finish under Smith, missing a bowl game for the first time since 2008.

"I truly believe that truly successful men are more defined during their times of adversity than during their times of success," Bielema said. "... I know they wanted to have more success and go to a bowl game, and I know they wanted to achieve all the things they felt were in front of them at the end of the year."

"But they persevered."

Bielema will receive \$3.2 million annually for six seasons, leaving behind a Wisconsin program he led to a 68-24 record over the past seven seasons. The 42-year-old coach said he won't coach the Badgers in their third straight visit to the Rose Bowl.

"I just felt it was time for me to try and spread my wings and fly a little bit further," Bielema said.

Long said he interviewed four candidates for the job, though Bielema was his first choice. The athletic director said he first met Bielema when he was an assistant coach at Wisconsin in 2005, but it was his September letter of support following Petrino's firing that caught his attention.

Long first attempted to make contact with Bielema following Wisconsin's 70-31 win over Nebraska on Saturday night in the

Big Ten championship game. The two talked Sunday before eventually meeting into the late hours of Monday night as Long neared an end to the lengthy search that he said included plenty of "ups and downs."

"I'm very relieved," Long said.

Long said he had no indication from Bielema or his representation before Sunday that the coach might be interested in the Arkansas job. He only had the coach's letter — one of "three or four" he received from coaches relating to the difficult decisions surrounding Petrino's firing and Smith's hiring as interim coach.

"I still have the letter," Long said. "That impacted me ... It meant a lot to me. He sent along with it a couple of things he believed in coaching. It had an impact on me."

After sleeping on his discussions with Long, and considering the challenge of taking on the powerhouse of the SEC, Bielema accepted Arkansas' offer Tuesday. He met with his former players at Wisconsin on Tuesday night, introducing himself to the Razorbacks on Wednesday afternoon before his introductory news conference.

Hoops: EPJ, DV Girls Win Openers

ELK POINT — Keely Bertram recorded 17 points as Elk Point-Jefferson opened its season with a 67-55 girls' basketball win over Ponca, Neb. on Tuesday night in Elk Point.

Amy Zeller added 13 points and 13 rebounds for the Huskies, who visit Canton on Friday.

In the loss for Ponca (0-2), Alexis Markworth scored 12 points and Megan Pollard had six steals.

PONCA (0-2).....10 25 35 55
ELK POINT-JEFFERSON (1-0).....12 31 45 67

Dakota Valley 69, Tea Area 22

TEA — A dominant second half and a balanced scoring attack sent Dakota Valley past Tea Area 69-22 in season-opening girls' basketball action Tuesday night in Tea.

McKenzie Mennenga scored 16 points and Jessica Feilmeier added 14 points for the Panthers (1-0), who out-scored the Titans 39-6 after halftime.

Jenna Kittler chipped in with 11 points in the win, while Allison Sexton had nine points and eight rebounds.

DAKOTA VALLEY (1-0).....19 30 51 69
TEA AREA (0-1).....4 16 18 22

Homer 58, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge 46

HOMER, Neb. — Breanna Tighe scored 22 points and the Homer Knights out-scored Laurel-Concord-Coleridge by 12 to secure a 58-46 girls' win Tuesday night in Homer.

Cassandra Stowe added 13 points for Homer (2-0), while Makayla Murphy had 11 points.

Homer led 24-21 at halftime, but the game was tied 41-all after three quarters.

In the loss for the Bears (0-2), Cameron Eddie scored 11 points and grabbed eight rebounds, while Katie Gubbels and Kiley Thompson each had nine points. Audra Corbit chipped in with eight points and 10 rebounds.

Homer hosts Allen on Friday, while LCC hosts Randolph on Saturday in Laurel, Neb. LAUREL-CONCORD-COLERIDGE (0-2).....15 21 41 46
HOMER (2-0).....11 24 41 58

Boys

Homer 66, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge 48

HOMER, Neb. — The Homer Knights drained eight three-pointers and forced 27 turnovers in 66-48 boys' basketball win over Laurel-Concord-Coleridge at home Tuesday night.

Mitch Klooz led the Bears (0-2) with 15 points on four three-pointers in the loss, while Kyle Kardell added 10 points. Nathan Schmitt chipped in with seven points.

Homer hosts Allen on Thursday and LCC hosts Randolph on Saturday. LAUREL-CONCORD-COLERIDGE (0-2).....13 20 30 48
HOMER (1-1).....11 29 49 66