

USD Athletic Director Saylor Leaves



Former University of South Dakota athletic director David Saylor speaks at Yankton Quarterback Club in 2010, shortly after he was hired at USD. Saylor, 43, resigned Thursday to take the same position at Miami University in Ohio.

P&D FILE PHOTO

Family Issues Bring Head Coyote To Miami U

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — So it begins again. For the second time in two and a half years, the University of South Dakota has lost its athletic director to the Football Bowl Subdivision and Mid-American Conference (MAC) ranks. The position was vacated again Thursday when David Saylor resigned to take the same job at Miami University of Ohio. Saylor, 43, was hired at USD in June 2010 after former A.D. Joel Nielsen left for Kent State. This time, though, it was a family matter that spurred Saylor's desire to move closer to home. The mother of Saylor's wife, Katie, recently died suddenly, which set into motion the process of Saylor seeking the same position at a bowl-eligible school with Division I hockey. "Anybody that really knows the situation, knows it's a personal move for him and his family," said USD football coach Joe Glenn, who was hired by Saylor in December 2011.

"He really wanted to close the deal on the arena project, but I think in almost all cases in life, family comes first." The news of Saylor's departure was met with surprise during an early afternoon staff meeting Thursday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion, leaving senior associate athletic director — and now interim A.D. — David Herbster to take control. The idea of Saylor potentially leaving was, according to associate A.D. James Bandy, "Way under the radar." "Nobody saw this coming," Bandy, responsible for Internal Operations, said. "This was a situation where Miami came after him. That it happened to be in Ohio, and where their family concerns are included, we all obviously understand." Saylor is no stranger to the state of Ohio. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1991, spent three years in the private sector

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USD Moves On Without Saylor; Herbster Takes Over In Interim

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VERMILLION — Shortly after the announcement was released, department officials and coaches were quick to point out that, yes, everything will be fine at the University of South Dakota in the wake of athletic director David Saylor leaving. It's not new territory for USD, which had a similar situation two years ago when Joel Nielsen left for the same job at Kent State University. The key now, staff members said Thursday, is to keep moving. "It's not like we're young kids asking the dad for the keys to the car," head men's track coach Dave Gottsleben said Thursday afternoon.



Herbster

True, USD does have three coaches with at least 19 years experience and five others with at least five years on the job, so it's not exactly like everything will change. "For us, it's another obstacle we have to deal with, but I don't see it affecting what we do in our individual sports," Gottsleben said. USD staff was informed of the impending announcement during a meeting Thursday at the DakotaDome. It was at that time that senior associate A.D. David Herbster made clear that life will go on, according to associate A.D. James Bandy.

"It took most of us by surprise, but we all know this is part of the job, people can come and go at the drop of a hat," said Bandy, whose primary responsibilities include internal operations. "There will be some leadership challenges for us, certainly, but I don't think anybody will shy away from them." For the second time in as many athletic director searches, Herbster is the interim A.D. He was the man in charge during the short three-month period between Joel Nielsen and David Saylor in 2010. Herbster did not return phone calls Thursday. The position will likely be opened to a national search, as was the case in 2010 when Nielsen left. "Over the next couple of weeks, president (Jim) Abbott and David will obviously have some meetings to see what they want to do in the interim, as far as advertising for the position," Bandy said.

"I expect one question that will be asked will be, how will this

High School Basketball

Interstate Battle Goes To Trojans

AVON — The Hartington Cedar Catholic Trojans defeated the Avon Pirates 53-48 in a girls' basketball cross state matchup on Thursday night in Avon.

Karly Noecker led the way for the Trojans (4-2) with 19 points. Emily Schrempp added 13 points and an assist. Sierra Becker tallied six rebounds in the victory.

Chesney Nagel led the way for the Pirates (2-2) with 21 points, seven steals, seven rebounds and three assists. Ariana Oorlog netted 17 points and two assists.

The Cedar Catholic Trojans will host Madison on Friday (today). The Avon Pirates will travel to Alcester to take on Alcester-Hudson on Dec. 28.

CEDAR CATHOLIC (4-2).....9 21 38 53
AVON (2-2).....8 21 40 48

Crofton 55, Ponca 41

PONCA, Neb. — Bridget Arens recorded 20 points and seven rebounds as the Crofton Lady Warriors beat Ponca 55-41 on Thursday night in Ponca, Neb.

Allison Arens added 14 points for Crofton (5-0), while Maria Wortmann had seven points and nine rebounds.

The Lady Warriors, who hit the road tonight (Friday) at Creighton, led 29-20 at halftime.

Kianna Krampfer scored 15 points in the loss for Ponca.

CROFTON (5-0).....21 29 45 55
PONCA.....16 20 30 41

Scotland 50, Bon Homme 38

TYNDALL — A pair of seniors led the Scotland Lady Highlanders to a Southeast South Dakota and Little Missouri Valley Conference victory over Bon Homme on Thursday night in Tyndall. With the 50-38 win, the Lady Highlanders improve to 2-1 on the young season.

Forward Kennedy Asche scored 19 points for Scotland while guard Aisha Abbink added 17. Sophomore Hannah Mogck grabbed a game-high 10 rebounds in the win.

Bon Homme, 1-3, got 17 points from sophomore Megan Schmidt. Senior Karlee Kozak added eight points while Megan Schmidt and Liz Kubal led the Cavaliers with six rebounds apiece.

Both teams play Saturday as Scotland hosts Ethan and Bon Homme travels to Centerville. SCOTLAND (2-1).....11 25 41 50
BON HOMME (1-3).....9 20 28 38



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

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Avon's Chelsey Nagel, left, steals a pass intended for Cedar Catholic's Maggie Steffen during their girls' basketball game on Thursday in Avon.

SEARCH | PAGE 8A

Marian Wins NAIA Title, Beating Morningside In OT

ROME, Ga. (AP) — Michael Josifovski made a 35-yard field goal on the final play of regulation to force overtime and hit a 26-yarder in the extra session to give Marian (Ind.) a 30-27 victory over Morningside (Iowa) in the NAIA championship game Thursday night.

Marian (12-1) won its first national title in only its sixth season of football. In the semifinals, Josifovski made a 51-yard field goal on the final play for a 20-17 victory over Missouri Valley College.

Adam Wiese was 22 of 39 for 233 yards and a touchdown for the Knights, and Tevin Lake rushed for 104 yards and two touchdowns on 23 carries.

Joel Nixon was 22 of 39 for 228 yards and two touchdowns for Morningside (13-1), and Fred Jones ran for 118 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries. Nixon also threw two interceptions and lost a fumble.

Morningside passed up a field-goal chance on the first possession in overtime, and Marian's Danny Rojas broke up Nixon's fourth-and-3 pass to Joel McCabe.

Nixon threw a 7-yard touchdown pass to Kyle Schuck with 1:04 left to put the Mustangs back

on top at 27-24, but Marian marched back down the field to set up Josifovski for the tying 35-yard field goal that forced for the first overtime in the history of the championship.

Marian rallied it take a 24-20 lead on Wiese's 61-yard touchdown pass to Nathan Jones with 2:46 remaining.

Ryan Harnett's interception in the end zone for Marian killed what might have been a clinching TD drive for Morningside in the fourth quarter. The Knights then drove 73 yards to cut Morningside's lead to three on Lake's 4-yard run with 7:33 remaining.

Morningside drove 78 yards in 13 plays to open the second half, with Jones scoring from a yard out. But the Mustangs missed the extra point — and that proved to be significant.

Morningside led 14-10 at halftime despite two turnovers that turned into points for Marian. Nixon's fumble deep in his own territory after a scramble set up touchdown for the Knights and they added a field goal after an in-

NAIA | PAGE 8A

Rookie DBs Coming Up Big For Vikings

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP) — In the biggest game of the season, the faces of the future for the Minnesota Vikings defense were never more present.

Safety Harrison Smith and cornerback Josh Robinson, two rookies who are supposed to be learning the ropes and suffering through growing pains, made two of the most important plays of the game to help their team beat the Chicago Bears and stay in the playoff hunt.

They're growing up faster than anyone expected and are being counted on to keep producing even as they grind through the longest football season of their lives.

"We're pleased that both guys are not hurting you. And most rookies, when they do play, they hurt you," defensive coordinator Alan Williams said Thursday. "Ours are not. They're actually helping us and contributing to us winning football games."

Robinson intercepted a pass by Jay Cutler and returned it 44 yards to set up Adrian Peterson's second touchdown run of the first quarter, and Smith returned an interception 56 yards

for a score in the third quarter to help the Vikings beat the Bears 21-14.

It's the kind of playmaking on the back end that has been sorely lacking in this defense for a few years now, and that's why the Vikings invested a first-round pick in Smith and a third-rounder in Robinson in April's draft. Smith has been a been a starter from the season opener while Robinson has been counted on more and more as other cornerbacks have gone down with injuries.

The Vikings (7-6) play at St. Louis on Sunday and believe they need to win their final three games to get into the playoffs. That puts plenty of pressure on a young secondary to play like veterans, but coach Leslie Frazier says these kids have earned his trust. Before the Bears game, he specifically addressed his rookies to try to push them through the wall that typically befalls young players this time of year.

"You can't hide behind the fact that you're a rookie anymore," Frazier said. "You got 12 games into the league now, let's

start playing like veterans in a lot of ways. We challenged some of our young guys last night to step it up and they did."

The rookie wall may be a bit of a cliché, but Williams said it is something coaches have to deal with every season.

"Most rookies go through that. It is a real phenomenon in terms of guys getting tired or getting disinterested," Williams said. "But both of those guys are coming along very well."

Robinson doesn't necessarily buy into it.

"Nah, no wall," he said with a shrug. "Haven't seen one."

They have taken some pride in performing so well, especially after most observers looked at the youth in the secondary and figured it would be one of the team's downfalls this season. Like a proud older brother, 35-year-old Antoine Winfield has been pleasantly surprised by the way they've handled their first professional season.

"You never know what to expect out of young guys," Winfield said. "These guys have worked hard. They're taking care of their bodies and studying that film

and making plays."

Smith has been pretty consistent for most of the year, but his tackling was a little sluggish over the past few weeks. He took the questions to heart and delivered one of his best performances of the season.

"Some people were saying we've fallen off the past couple of weeks," he said. "We just wanted to go out and play ball and have fun. That's why we play. We play for each other."

Jefferson is expected to be ready to play this week after getting cleared from a concussion that knocked him out of the Bears game and Cook could return before season's end from a broken arm. Either way, the experience Robinson has gained over the last 13 games has proven invaluable to him and the rest of the team.

"These young guys are starting to understand what this is about," defensive end Jared Allen said. "They've got a good leader in their room with Antoine. He lets them know exactly what it is. We have a bunch of competitors on this team and it showed."