

Press&Dakotan DAILY DOSE

Daily opinions from the P&D Sports Staff on local and national high school, college and professional sports.



BY JEREMY HOECK jeremy.hoeck@yanckton.net

The spectacle that a national TV audience saw on Thursday afternoon with Jabari Parker is something that no local or area athlete will ever experience. And the way I see it, that's not exactly a bad thing.

Recruiting Is Key, But Should It Be A National TV Spectacle?

The hour or so leading up to the afternoon broadcast was littered with Twitter posts about what Parker was wearing as he walked into the gym, which hats were lined up where on a table near the podium, what color shirt his parents were wearing, and of course, plenty of fans speculating on his eventual decision.

The entire process was pretty ridiculous for a couple of reasons, in my opinion. First, let's ease up a little bit on this stuff, national media. There's no need for something like that to be televised nationally. Sure it's a tough call for the kid, but he certainly doesn't need the pressure. And second, he'll be at Duke for what, one season, maybe two?

As I was interviewing the Press & Dakotan's 2012 Prep Girls Athlete of the Year (you'll find out who it's next week) on Thursday, we got to talking about her college recruiting. It's obviously a tough decision, but she will ultimately make up her mind without the fanfare Parker did. And to me, that's the best way to do it.

YHS Schedule Change

The start times for the Yankton High School girls' and boys' basketball games on Saturday against Aberdeen Central have been moved up. The Yankton girls host Aberdeen and the Bucks play in Aberdeen.

The junior varsity and freshman games will start at 1 p.m., followed by the sophomore games at 2:45 p.m., and the varsity games at 4:30 p.m.

Elks Hoop Shoot Dec. 29

The 41st annual Elks Hoop Shoot competition information has been sent to 30 schools in the Yankton Elks 994 District. In order to compete at the district level, winners from local schools will advance to the finals at the Summit Activities Center on Saturday, Dec. 29, at 10 a.m.

Boys and girls in ages 8-9, 10-11 and 12-13 are eligible to compete. Ages as of April 1, 2013, determines their age category.

Winners in each age group advance to the state level, to be held on Saturday, Jan. 12, in Pierre. Contact Ray Kooistra at 665-5587 for more information.

More Honors For Zenner

BROOKINGS — South Dakota State Univer-

sity running back Zach Zenner has been named to his fourth different Football Championship Subdivision All-America team, earning honors this week from the Walter Camp Football Foundation. The 26-player team was selected by the head coaches and sports information directors of FCS schools.

A sophomore running back from Eagan, Minn., Zenner leads the FCS rushing race with 2,044 yards for an average of 157.2 yards per game. He crossed the 100-yard mark in nine games and topped 200 yards three times, including a school-record 295 yards in the opening round of the FCS playoffs Nov. 24 versus Eastern Illinois. Zenner averaged 6.8 yards per carry and scored 13 touchdowns on the ground, while adding 28 receptions for 197 yards.

Tickets Available For FCS Title Game

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — NCAA officials say a limited number of standing room tickets are available for the Football Championship Subdivision title game between North Dakota State and Sam Houston State.

The tickets are set for online sale at 10 a.m. Thursday at NCAA.com/fcs.

Tickets are \$30 and provide access to watch the game from the concourse. Seats are officially sold out.

The game is scheduled Jan. 5 in Frisco, Texas. It is a rematch of last year's title game.

Pelfrey, Twins Finalize \$4 Million, 1-Year Deal

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Recovering right-hander Mike Pelfrey and the Minnesota Twins finalized a \$4 million, one-year contract on Thursday, filling another hole in a thin rotation.

For Pelfrey, the simple opportunity to pitch — rather than competing with several others for a spot on a team with a deeper staff — was what lured him to Minnesota. Target Field's reputation as a place that's difficult to hit home runs in helped, too, as did the chance to move closer to his home in Wichita, Kan.

After making only three starts for the New York Mets in 2012, a season cut short by elbow ligament-replacement surgery on May 1, Pelfrey's passion for the sport was renewed as well. He said in a phone interview on Thursday he's fully confident he'll be ready for the start of spring training, a little more than 10 months removed from the Tommy John procedure.

Pelfrey went 50-54 with a 4.36 ERA over seven seasons with the Mets.

His deal, agreed to last weekend, includes \$1.5 million in performance bonuses: \$100,000 for 150 innings, \$150,000 for 160 innings and \$250,000 each for 170, 180 and 190 innings and \$500,000 for 200 innings. The 6-foot-7, 230-pound, 28-year-old Pelfrey, who was arbitration eligible, was not offered a contract by the Mets earlier this offseason.

Iowa State Cancels Game With ETSU

AMES, Iowa (AP) — Iowa State says its game on Thursday night against East Tennessee State has been postponed.

The Cyclones says the Lady Cubs encountered travel problems and couldn't make the trip to Ames.

Much of Iowa was hit with the first major winter storm of the season overnight Wednesday. Snow piled up as much as a foot in spots, and Ames was among the towns worst hit by the weather.

The schools say they might reschedule the game if an agreeable date is found.

Top Prospect Parker Chooses Duke

CHICAGO (AP) — Jabari Parker still had just about everyone guessing. Then, he pulled out that blue T-shirt with a white "D," and, finally, it became clear.

The prized prospect from Chicago's Simeon Career Academy, one of the most highly touted recruits in years, is headed to Duke to play for Mike Krzyzewski. Parker made the announcement in front of a national TV audience Thursday, in his high school gym, surely delighting Blue Devils fans.

A 6-foot-8 forward with the ability to nail jumpers from just about any spot when he's not throwing down vicious dunks, Parker can't sign his letter of intent until April 17. But he made his intentions clear with one highly anticipated oral commitment.

Michigan State, Florida, Stanford

and Brigham Young also made his top five and caps from each school lined a table next to the podium. But he said it really came down to three schools, with the Gators and Spartans right there with the Blue Devils.

In the end, he chose to play for Krzyzewski for at least a year before making what many believe will ultimately be a jump to the NBA.

"Duke is always going to be a team in the tournament," he said. "You can't go wrong at the program and most importantly, the long-term investment. I feel like if I go there, I can get a good degree. I can also stay close to home where it's easily accessible to my parents, my family. It's not too far away. Coach K, that's one of the best coaches ever, and I wanted to be able to experience the things that he has next year."

SCOREBOARD

VOLLEYBALL

YANKTON PARKS & REC

Table with 2 columns: Rank, Score. Lists volleyball results for Yankton Parks & Rec.

BASKETBALL

THURSDAY'S S.D. BOYS

Table with 3 columns: Team, Score, Opponent. Lists boys' basketball games from Thursday.

BASKETBALL

THURSDAY'S S.D. GIRLS

Table with 3 columns: Team, Score, Opponent. Lists girls' basketball games from Thursday.

BASKETBALL

THURSDAY'S NEB. BOYS

Table with 3 columns: Team, Score, Opponent. Lists Nebraska boys' basketball games from Thursday.

BASKETBALL

THURSDAY'S NEB. GIRLS

Table with 3 columns: Team, Score, Opponent. Lists Nebraska girls' basketball games from Thursday.

AREA CALENDAR

Friday, December 21

Table with 2 columns: Event, Time. Lists Friday events including basketball and wrestling.

Saturday, December 22

Table with 2 columns: Event, Time. Lists Saturday events including basketball and wrestling.

Sunday, December 23

Table with 2 columns: Event, Time. Lists Sunday events including basketball and wrestling.

COLLEGIATE BASEBALL PRESEASON TOP 25

Dec. 20, 2012

Table with 2 columns: Rank, Team. Lists top 25 college baseball teams as of Dec 20, 2012.

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Table with 2 columns: Event, Status. Lists postponed and cancelled events.

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Table with 2 columns: Event, Status. Lists postponed and cancelled events.

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Table with 2 columns: Event, Status. Lists postponed and cancelled events.

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Table with 2 columns: Event, Status. Lists postponed and cancelled events.

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOC.

Table with 4 columns: Team, W, L, Pct. Lists NBA team records.

WRESTLING

Table with 2 columns: Event, Time. Lists wrestling events.

FOOTBALL

Table with 2 columns: Event, Time. Lists football events.

Hoops

From Page 8A

Pierre 35, Brookings 22

BROOKINGS — Kaitlyn Severson led the Pierre Lady Governors in a 35-22 victory against the Brookings Bobcats in Thursday night basketball action in Brookings.

Severson had a total of eight points and 12 rebounds on the night. Sydney Palmer put up eight points and nine rebounds, while Taylor Hyde and Stevi Claussen each had five points and three rebounds.

For the Bobcats, Emily Johnson had 12 points and two rebounds. Kaitlyn Hadley, Margaret Chell and Sara Tvedt each had three points. Hadley had six rebounds on the night, Chell had two and Tvedt had one rebound.

Brookings faces Sioux Falls Lincoln in Sioux Falls on Jan. 5, and the Lady Governors host Rapid City Central on Friday.

Warner 59, Milbank 39

MILBANK — Rachel Rogers scored 22 points as Warner overcame 20 turnovers to beat Milbank 59-39 on the road Thursday night.

Ashley Rozell added 13 points for Warner, which led 35-14 at halftime.

Boys

Irene-Wakonda 59, Bon Homme 41

IRENE — Gabe King led the Irene-Wakonda Eagles in a 59-41 win against the Bon Homme Cavaliers in Thursday night basketball action in Irene.

King had 21 points, four rebounds, three steals and two assists in the win. Dustin Livingston put up 12 points, eight rebounds, three assists and two steals. Chris Heirings had nine points and Garrett Anderson had eight points.

For the Cavaliers, Dakota Bodden had a total of 10 points, five rebounds and three steals, while Kodi Larson had seven points, nine rebounds and one steal. Mike Mesman also had six points and seven rebounds.

The Eagles hit the road to face Menno on Saturday, and Bon Homme will play against Winner in Tyndal on Thursday.

BON HOMME (2-4).....6 12 22 41
IRENE-WAKONDA (1-3).....16 34 46 59

Viborg-Hurley 59, TDA 30

VIBORG — The Viborg-Hurley Cougars defeated the Tripp-Delmont-Armour Nighthawks 59-30 in Thursday night basketball action in Viborg.

Tyler Gerdes and Andrew Hora each scored 11 points for the Cougars, and Seth Andersen had a total of 10 points. Hora also had 13 rebounds on the night, while Austin Bjerkaas had eight rebounds.

For the Nighthawks, Trevor Payer scored 11 points.

Tripp-Delmont-Armour will face Scotland in Tripp on Jan. 4, and the Cougars will play Beresford in Centerville on Thursday.

TRIPP-DELMONT-ARMOUR (1-4).....3 10 18 30
VIBORG-HURLEY (4-0).....14 38 51 59

Mount Vernon-Plankinton 85, Dakota Christian 69

PLANKINTON — Deric Denning put up 34 points and three rebounds Thursday night to lead the Mount Vernon-Plankinton Titans in an 85-69 win against the Dakota Christian Cadets in Plankinton.

Jared Long had 18 total points and five rebounds in the win, while Kellam Karst had 15 points and three rebounds. Cote Hinker also contributed 10 points and two rebounds.

For the Cadets, Zach Van Zee had 23 points and three rebounds, and Jake Spoelstra made 10 points

and three rebounds. Carter Dykstra and Darren Falls each had eight points.

Dakota Christian faces South Central in Jan. 3 in Burke, and teh Titans will face Aberdeen Roncalli in the Parkston Classic on Saturday.

DAKOTA CHRISTIAN (1-4).....16 35 56 69
MOUNT VERNON-PLANKINTON (5-1).....15 43 64 85

Brookings 64, Pierre 62

PIERRE — The Brookings Bobcats defeated the Pierre Governors 64-62 in South Dakota Valley in similar fashion earlier in the week.

Tyler Nagy led the Brookings (5-1) attack with 29 points and four rebounds. Kaleb Vg added 11 points and three rebounds. Konner Beste netted 10 points in the victory.

Zach Hanson led the way for Pierre (2-3) with 24 points and five rebounds. Lane Severson also added 24 points, nine rebounds and four assists. Cody Honeywell added six points in the loss.

Brookings will travel to Yankton to take on the Bucks on Jan. 5. Pierre will play our Savior New American (N.Y.) in the Mike Miller Classic on Dec. 29 in Mitchell at the Corn Palace.

BROOKINGS (5-1).....12 23 43 64
PIERRE (2-3).....15 35 52 62

De Smet 81, Iroquois 25

DE SMET — De Smet defeated Iroquois 81-25 in South Dakota Boys 'B' basketball action Thursday night. Brad Penny led the way for De Smet with 25 points and five rebounds.

Kyler Asleson added 17 points, seven steals and five rebounds for De Smet (2-2). Andrew Foley and Dylan Gehm each netted seven points in the victory.

Erik Wehlender led Iroquois (0-3) with 11 points and five rebounds. Cody Weed and Roy Miller each added seven points in the loss.

De Smet will travel to Miller on Friday (today). Iroquois will participate in the Holiday Classic in Kimball on Dec. 27.

DE SMET (2-2).....40 44 63 81
IROQUOIS (0-3).....8 14 0 25

Walsh

From Page 8A

"For us as an offense to just cross a certain threshold on the field and know that there's a good chance of the ball getting put through the uprights and getting some points on the (board) is big for us. It takes a lot of pressure off of us. The guy's done an unbelievable job."

Perhaps as important as his big leg, Walsh has a strong mental approach that has allowed him to avoid the crunch-time struggles that many kickers experience.

"His approach mentally has been terrific and it's shown on the field," coach Leslie Frazier said. "He's got ice water in his veins when it comes to making clutch kicks and doing the routine things as well. The fact that he's very coachable has been a plus for us."

Special teams coordinator Mike Priefer and assistant Chris

White worked in the offseason to tweak Walsh's delivery, smooth out his routine and try to instill more consistency in his approach to get him out of the funk that plagued him as a senior at Georgia when he missed 14 of his 35 attempts.

"You have to keep locked in the whole game," Walsh said. "Good or bad, I have a rule where I take about five or 10 seconds to reflect on what happens. Then I let it go and get on to the next kick."

If the Vikings (8-6) are going to make the playoffs, Walsh is likely

going to have to make a few more big ones. They play at Houston on Sunday against the stingy Texans defense, then host rival Green Bay in the finale.

His performance thus far has earned Frazier's faith to run him out there in any situation.

"We weren't afraid we would be in a situation where we were putting ourselves on a shorter field," Frazier said. "We felt very confident that once he went out there, it was a very good chance that he would make the kick and he did."

Irish

From Page 8A

play a very similar scheme and similar techniques. It's been really a tremendous tool for us. ... It's going to really help us a lot."

Freshman cornerback KeiVarae Russell was recruited as a running back and came to Notre Dame with dreams of scoring touchdowns. Instead, coach Brian Kelly moved him to defense before fall camp started.

"Of course I always think about what it would be like if I played running back," Russell said. "But it would have been tough to have a big impact coming in this year, with (running backs) Pierre Wood and Theo

Riddick having such great seasons, and George Atkinson III. If Coach said I could play running back next year, I wouldn't do it because I've come to enjoy corner a lot."

The transition wasn't exactly seamless. Russell had to learn a new position and completely shift how he prepares for the game. The touchdown pass he gave up during the season opener against Navy in Dublin, Ireland, still sticks in his mind.

"I think I've gotten a lot better," Russell said. "My confidence has increased from the first game, when I allowed that touch-

down. I was beat down after that. But I've kept getting more experience throughout the year, learning the techniques of other players and the schemes of our defense."

Russell said he embraces the challenge of guarding Alabama receiver Amari Cooper, also a freshman.

"He's very strong, runs great routes, knows how to attack the ball," Russell said. "It's going to be fun, me and him looking each other in the eye, freshman to freshman. I'm going to be looking him in the eye, every play, and letting him know I'm here."

Advertisement for L&S ELECTRIC featuring prompt service, quality workmanship, and competitive prices for commercial, residential, and farm wiring.

Advertisement for Morning Coffee at KYNT AM 1450, featuring weekday morning coffee service from 7:40 am to 8:20 am.

Advertisement for Shaw Hardwoods and Yankton Paint & Decorating, featuring hardwood floors and interior painting services.