

College Teams Adjust To New Officiating Emphasis

BY JEREMY HOECK

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The days of 60-55 finals in college basketball needed to truly become a thing of the past.

At least according to those in charge.

Instead, those final scores needed to be in the 80s, 90s or even higher.

And so, with new college basketball rules in place for all levels — from the NCAA ranks on down to the NAIA — this season to increase scoring, coaches and players across the area say they are still adjusting.

"It's a work in progress for us, but it's the same way for everyone," said Mount Marty College men's basketball coach Andrew Baker, in his first season at the MMC helm.

"It's been a little frustrating at times, but you just have to do a better job coaching and teaching."

The biggest teaching point, according to coaches and players?

Using feet more on defense, rather than reaching or grabbing the offensive player.

"The big thing we tell our guys is, 'You have to play through it,'" Baker said. "You have to make quicker adjustments, and you have to preach, 'Hands off, hands off.'"

Those handchecks that used to go without being called naturally led to lower-scoring games, particularly at the NCAA Division I level.

The average number of points scored by D-I teams last season was 67.5, the lowest since the 1981-82 season, according to the NCAA.

And so, the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel did something about it. To allow for "more offensive freedom," the committee pinpointed four types of personal fouls that were now deemed to be against the rules:



Mount Marty College's Lorenzo Davis prepares to shoot a free throw during a recent home game. The Lancer men are shooting more than five more free throws a game thanks to a new officiating emphasis to remove hand-checking and arm bars from defensive play.

- Keeping a hand or forearm on an opponent
- Putting two hands on an opponent
- Continual "jabs" by extending arms or placing forearm on an opponent
- Using "arm bars" to impede the progress of the offensive player

The committee decided that something had to be done to increase scoring, according to Yankton resident Colin Kapitan, the coordinator of basketball officials for the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference.

"They made it a point of emphasis seven or eight

years ago, but it wasn't getting what they wanted, so they made it a rule," Kapitan said. "It was called in November and December, but by January or February, it was back to the way it used to be."

To help clear up those inconsistencies, Kapitan said referees at the Division I level were in fact told to follow the rule or else they might not get scheduled for post-season action.

In the Northern Sun, Kapitan said he has challenged his veteran officials to "call it and the younger guys will too."

That is where an adjustment period is required. Not only players and coaches still finding ways to adjust to the more frequent whistles, the refs are as well, Kapitan said.

"The players are the easiest ones to adjust. They want to play," he said. "If they get called for two quick fouls, they'll stop doing it. They don't want to sit on the bench."

Though it may be still too early to evaluate the true impact of the new rules, coaches have certainly taken notice of the changes, according to Mount Marty women's head coach Tom

Schlimgen.

"You can tell by stats, with all the free throws being shot, but I don't know if it's affected our stuff much," Schlimgen said. "We've been pretty adamant about not trying to put people on the line so much."

True to form, the Mount Marty women have not seen an increase in free throw attempts this season. The Lancers are actually shooting fewer free throws by average than last season.

Mount Marty averaged 24 foul shots per game last season, helped by all-conference point guard April Winne's drives to the hoop. This season, with Winne out with a knee injury, the Lancers are averaging 21.6 foul shots.

"But I think teams in our conference might be a little concerned," Schlimgen said. "They like to trap and press and be physical. We think that part of it could be a plus for a team like us."

Briar Cliff, for example, utilizes full-court defensive pressure, which understandably could lead to more fouls. Offensively, the Chargers do, however, lead all of NAIA Division II with an average of 38.1 free throw attempts per game — an increase from 27.1 last season.

Sure, the new rules have forced defenses to adjust more than offensive players, but any change that leads to better defensive practices can't be a bad thing, Schlim-

gen said.

"Refs have told us, 'You can touch, touch, touch, but if it's there too long, you'll get called for it,'" he said. "If it's two hands on a kid, that's an automatic whistle now."

"You can still defend a kid, but you can't have any of the holding."

Unlike the Mount Marty women, the Lancer men's team has benefited from the new rules.

Through seven games, the MMC men are averaging 23 free throw attempts, an increase from 17.6 last season.

Part of those more foul shots has been an increased focus on driving to the hoop, Baker said.

"We have to be aggressive. We want to make sure we reverse the ball and get a chance to drive," he said.

"You don't want to make it too obvious, though, especially if a guy's on your hip."

Despite some early frustrations to the new rules, teams will eventually like the new format, Kapitan said he believes.

"The freedom of movement is what they wanted, because scoring has gone down every year," he said. "That's because the defenses were allowed to do so much."

"They just wanted a better flow to the game."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

Wrestling

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120), Jacob Smith (Jr., 160), Cole Globke (Sr., 182, state qualifier), Austin Hofer (8th, 113), Dalton Kotillinek (So., 126)

NEWCOMERS: Jalen Kaufman (Fr., 170), Ernie Johnson (8th, 285), Logan Dick (Jr., 285), Toby Goodmanson (So., 152), Edgar Salazar (7th, 132)

Parker

COACH: Kevin Andersen
ASSISTANT: Jason Bridges
VITALS: Class B, Region 2
TOP PROSPECTS: Adam

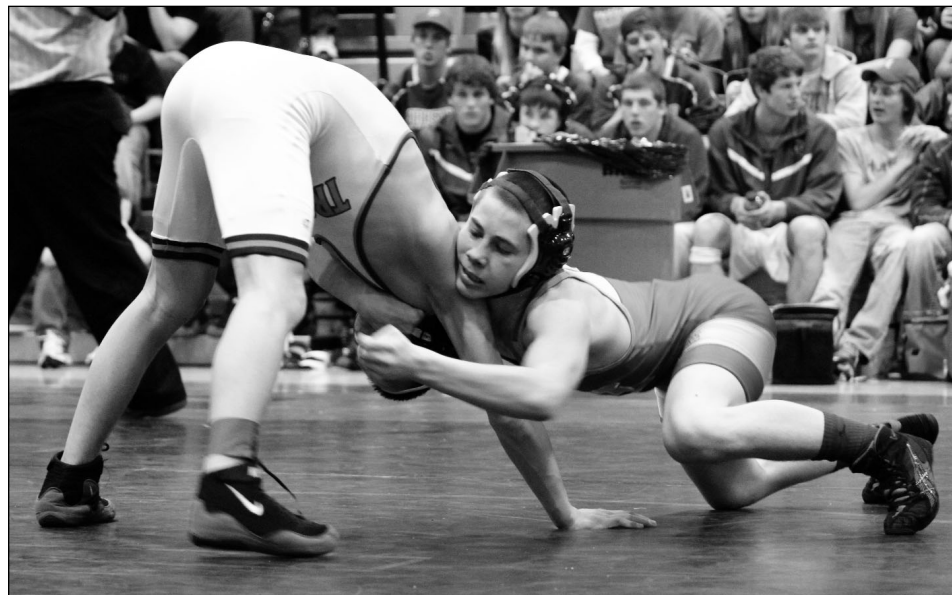
Harms (Sr., 182), Kordell Buyck (So., 182), Alec Dagle (Sr., 195, state qualifier), Payton Jensen (Jr., 285, state qualifier), Davon Walton (8th, 106), Grant Plucker (8th, 106), Chase Andersen (Fr., 106), Jayden Even (Fr., 113), Brandin Jensen (So., 120), Travis Leber (8th, 126), Zamael Santino (8th, 132), Dorian Verhey (Jr., 138), Pierce Plucker (So., 145), Andy Leber (So., 152), Jon Boyle (Jr., 160), Jared Leisinger (So., 170)

Parkston

COACH: Jared Digmann
ASSISTANTS: Ryan Meyer, John Gilman, Mitch Breen, James Boehmer

VITALS: Class B, Region 3
LAST YEAR: The Trojans did not lose a dual and won the state Class B championship behind a record for most points scored.

TOP PROSPECTS: Jake Weber (Sr., 120), Chase Stoebner (Sr., 138), Aaron Weber (Sr., 152), Lonn Stadlman (Sr., 160), Mitch Heisinger (Sr., 170, third at state), Chandler



BON HOMME-SCOTLAND: Duncan Stoebner (right)

Baumgart (Sr., 182), Andrew Semmler (Sr., 220, fourth at state), Brady Reiff (Jr., 285, state champion), Cameron Fanning (Jr., 132), Ethan Murtha (Jr., 138), Wes Dvorak (Jr., 152, state runner-up), Dillon Stadlman (Jr., 160), Miles Semmler (Jr., 182), Austin Bertram (Jr., 195, sixth at state), Austin Ripp (So., 145, sixth at state), Kaden Kummer (So., 145), Anthony Buchmann (So., 170), Logan Mahoney (Fr., 106, seventh at state), Kyler Holzbauer (Fr.,

113), Blake Beitz (Fr., 132, state champion), Noah Reichert (Fr., 285), Paul Petersen (Fr., 285), Jonah Zwinger (8th, 106), Dawson Semmler (8th, 126, seventh at state), Brady Schoenfelder (8th, 132), T.J. Bigge (8th, 285), Rocky Berg (7th, 113), Luke Beitz (7th, 120), Slayton Neugebauer (7th, 126), Clayton Buchmann (7th, 138)

Wagner

COACH: Brady Nolz

ASSISTANTS: John Tyler, Richard Kokesh

VITALS: Class B, Region 3
LAST YEAR: The Red Raiders finished third at the state tournament.

TOP PROSPECTS: David Kocer (Sr., state champion 160), Trevor Lensing (Jr., state runner-up 170), Brady Soulek (Sr., state qualifier), Nick Dion (Sr., eighth at state 132), Truman Ashes (Fr.), Logan Kafka (So.)



WAGNER RED RAIDERS: Megan Kocer

S.D. Gymnastics

Wagner

COACH: Cherie Petry
ASSISTANTS: Samantha Dvorak, Craig Fleming

VITALS: Class A
LAST YEAR: The Red Raiders finished ninth at the state tournament. Gone from that team are two letterwinners.

TOP PROSPECTS: Megan Kocer (Sr.), Bobbi Soukup (Sr.), Hannah Fleming (Jr.,

state placer), Krista Dvorak (So., state placer), Adrian Weber (So.), Rachel Dion (So.), Jensen Holzbauer (Fr.), Chloe Noteboom (Fr.), Kelsey Barnett (Fr.), Alexis Dion (Fr.), Breanna Kotab (8th)

NEWCOMERS: Juanita Cummings (8th), Katelin Woods (8th), Megan Merkwon (7th), Cassidy Liggett (7th), Maggie Barnett (7th), Ashiah Zepher (7th)

BON HOMME CAVALIERS

Boys' Basketball

Dec. 16	.....vs. Freeman	Jan. 25	.....at Dakota Christian
Dec. 20	.....vs. Scotland	Jan. 28	.....at Beresford
Dec. 27	.....vs. Irene-Wakonda	Jan. 30	.....vs. Andes Central
Jan. 3	.....at Winner	Feb. 3	.....vs. Corsica-Stickney
Jan. 10	.....at Wagner	Feb. 7	.....at Avon
Jan. 14	.....at Vermillion	Feb. 8	.....at Viborg-Hurley(V)
Jan. 16	.....at Bloomfield	Feb. 11	.....at Burke-SC (Bonesteel)
Jan. 18	.....vs. Chamberlain	Feb. 14	.....at Platte-Geddes
Jan. 21	.....at Tripp-Delmont-Armour(T)	Feb. 18	.....at Mt. Vernon-Plank (MV)
Jan. 23	.....vs. Parkston	Feb. 21	.....at Gregory

Girls' Basketball

Dec. 10	.....at Tripp-Delmont-Armour(T)	Jan. 23	.....vs. Parkston
Dec. 13	.....vs. Vermillion	Jan. 25	.....at Dakota Christian
Dec. 19	.....at Scotland	Jan. 28	.....at Beresford
Dec. 21	.....vs. Centerville	Jan. 30	.....vs. Andes Central
Dec. 27	.....vs. Irene-Wakonda	Feb. 1	.....Tri-Valley Classic (Alcester)
Jan. 3	.....at Winner	Feb. 3	.....at Gregory
Jan. 6	.....vs. Parker	Feb. 6	.....at Avon
Jan. 10	.....vs. Wagner	Feb. 8	.....vs. Chamberlain
Jan. 13	.....vs. Freeman	Feb. 14	.....at Platte-Geddes
Jan. 14	.....at Burke-SC (Bonesteel)	Feb. 18	.....at Mt. Vernon-Plank (MV)

Gymnastics (with Yankton)

Dec. 2	.....Mitchell/S.F. Washington Tri.	Yankton
Dec. 7	.....Sioux Falls Inv.	Lincoln HS
Dec. 10	.....Mitchell/S.F. Lincoln Tri.	Mitchell
Dec. 12	.....S.F. Roosevelt/S.F. O'Gorman Tri.	Yankton
Dec. 16	.....Wagner Dual	Wagner
Dec. 20-21	.....Mitchell Inv. (Team competes on Dec. 20)	Mitchell
Jan. 11	.....Brookings Inv.	Brookings
Jan. 18	.....Pierre Inv.	Pierre
Jan. 23	.....Vermillion Dual	Yankton
Jan. 28	.....S.F. O'Gorman/S.F. Washington Tri.	Yankton
Feb. 8	.....Eastern South Dakota Conference	Mitchell

Wrestling (with Scotland)

Dec. 5	.....Wagner Dual	Wagner
Dec. 7	.....Canton Dual Tour.	Canton
Dec. 12	.....Crofton Dual	Tyndall
Dec. 14	.....Burke-Gregory Inv.	Gregory
Dec. 17	.....Marion-Freeman/Parker Tri.	Parker
Dec. 21	.....Elk Point-Jefferson Inv.	Elk Point
Jan. 4	.....McCook Central-Montrose Inv.	Salem
Jan. 9	.....Elk Point-Jefferson Dual	Scotland
Jan. 11	.....Brandon Valley Inv.	Brandon
Jan. 18	.....Mitchell Tour.	Mitchell
Jan. 21	.....Parkston Dual	Tyndall
Jan. 25	.....Warrior Inv.	Winner
Feb. 1Wagner Tour.	Wagner
Feb. 4Burke-Gregory Dual	Tyndall
Feb. 15Holland Inv.	Howard

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