

Big Sky Bound: USD Vs. Montana State In BracketBuster

Jackrabbits Land Murray State For TV Game In ESPN Hoops Series

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Travel issues and scheduling concerns aside, the University of South Dakota men's basketball team is headed to Big Sky country later this month.

The Coyotes (8-15), losers in five of six, were paired Monday night with Montana State of the Big Sky Conference as part of the ESPN BracketBuster series, which is in its final year of existence.

USD, whose RPI jumped 12 spots in the latest rankings after two road losses last week, will travel to Bozeman, Mont., on Sunday, Feb. 24 for a 2 p.m. Central matchup.

"I think it's a neat idea to play new teams from other areas of the country, especially teams you probably wouldn't see unless you make it a tournament or something like this," junior Trevor Gruis said Monday night.

"The whole travel thing puts a wrench into things because of when it is, but at the same time, it's good to see other competition."

Though the two schools have met just once in their history (won by MSU in 1946-47), there is a connection between the programs.

Montana State assistant coach Shawn Dirden spent last season on the bench with the Coyotes, so naturally there's a sense of familiarity.

"It's pretty crazy that of all the

teams we could get, it's the one he went to," sophomore guard Brandon Bos said. "I'm sure he kind of knows what we like to do, and how our coaches coach, so I can't wait to see how that goes."

Said Coyote head coach Dave Boots, "We haven't had that too often, where we play a former player or a former coach so soon. I can't really remember that happening lately, but it'll be nice to see him again."

The Bobcats (10-10), coached by Brad Huse, are a rather deep team. Eight players average 20 minutes a game and four score in double figures — led by senior guard Christian Moon.

With still three weeks before that game, the Coyotes, however, aren't necessarily worried about MSU yet, Bos said.

"I think we'll treat it just like another non-conference game," he said. "Any game we can get is a chance to get better, and that's a good thing for us."

The contest in Bozeman is the first of three straight road games — all within seven days — to close the regular season for the Coyotes. From Montana, USD travels to IUPUI (Feb. 28) and Western Illinois (March 2) before the Summit League Tournament in Sioux Falls.

Making matters even worse is that the BracketBuster game is on a Sunday afternoon because MSU hosts the Big Sky Indoor Track Championships the previous Thursday through Saturday.

BRACKETS | PAGE 8

3-Star Receiver To Sign With USD

Khalid Kornegay, a 3-star Rivals.com wide receiver from Tulsa, Okla., originally verbally committed to play football at FBS Tulsa but will instead sign with the University of South Dakota on Wednesday, his coach confirmed Monday.

The 6-foot-3, 185-pound Kornegay caught 19 passes for 231 yards and two touchdowns for Tulsa Union last fall, and also averaged 40.3 yards per kickoff return.

Kornegay's teammate, cornerback Marquice Fletcher, also verbally committed to USD and is likely to sign on Wednesday.

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Homer Tops Wynot In L&C Final

LAUREL, Neb. — The Homer Knights jumped out to a 29-13 halftime lead and claimed a 54-37 victory over Wynot in the championship game of the Lewis & Clark Conference girls' basketball Tournament on Monday at the Laurel-Concord High School gym.

Homer has accounted for two of Wynot's three setbacks this season. The Knights upended the Blue Devils 46-35 on Dec. 11.

Cassandra Stowe finished with 12 points, six assists and six steals for Homer (19-2), which won its 10th straight game. Makayla Murphy and Jessica Nogelmeier each had 10 points, with Nogelmeier also grabbing seven rebounds. Brandan Tighe scored nine points and Brooke Tighe had eight points in the victory.

For Wynot (18-3), Erica Burbach scored 11 points.

Homer plays its last road game of the regular season today (Tuesday), traveling across the border to face Elk Point-Jefferson. Wynot, which had its 10-game win streak snapped, also travels to South Dakota today, facing Irene-Wakonda.

HOMER (19-2)	.....	16	29	38	54
WYNOT (18-3)	.....	8	13	28	37

Regular Season

Avon 40, Freeman 39

FREEMAN — Chesney Nagel's 19 points led Avon to a tight 40-39 victory over Freeman on Monday night in Freeman.

Nagel recorded a double-double in the contest as the junior also grabbed 11 rebounds and added four assists. Ariana Oorlog added 12 points while Heidi Cap pulled down eight rebounds as the Pirates win for the eighth time in their last nine games.

Senior Dina Soulek lead the Flyers with 10 points. Nicole Saarie added eight points while Erika Sage recorded six points and four rebounds.

Avon, 11-5, faces Viborg-Hurley tonight (Tuesday) in Viborg.

Freeman hosts Hanson tonight (Tuesday) in their final home game of the regular season.

AVON (11-5)	.....	11	24	31	40
FREEMAN	.....	8	17	29	39

Alcester-Hudson 59, Irene-Wakonda 56

ALCESTER — Shenia Doering and Courtney McKee both recorded double-doubles as Alcester-Hudson edged Irene-Wakonda 59-56 in girls' action Monday in Alcester.

McKee had 20 points and 17 rebounds, while Doering had 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Cubs (10-5). Taylor Kjosie chipped in with eight points and six rebounds.

For the visiting Eagles (4-11), Caitlin Hinseith scored 16 points, Kyleigh Melstad had 15 points and Bailey Hinseith posted 13 points. Dana Schenk had eight points.

Both teams are in action tonight (Tuesday), with Alcester-Hudson at home against Chester and I-W at Wynot, Neb.

IRENE-WAKONDA (4-11)	.....	11	21	41	56
ALCESTER-HUDSON (10-5)	.....	16	35	45	59

Platte-Geddes 63, Bon Homme 51

TYNDALL — Platte-Geddes used a big first quarter to knock off Bon Homme 63-51 in Class A girls' basketball action on Monday night in Tyndall. Platte-Geddes raced out to a 29-8 first-period lead and never looked back on the way to victory.

The Black Panthers got 17 points from junior Josie DeGroot. Mackenzie Millar added 16



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Wynot's Kelsie Higgins, left, passes the ball away from Homer's Brooke Tighe after diving on a loose ball during the championship game of the Lewis & Clark Conference girls' basketball tournament on Monday in Laurel, Neb.



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Wausa's Spencer Rosberg puts up a shot in traffic during the first half of the Vikings' matchup with Bancroft-Rosalie in the championship game of the Lewis & Clark Conference boys' basketball Tournament on Monday in Laurel, Neb.

Boys: B-R Edges Wynot For Lewis & Clark Title

LAUREL, Neb. — Bancroft-Rosalie survived a late surge by Wausa to upend the Vikings 60-55 in the championship of the Lewis & Clark Conference boys' basketball Tournament on Monday at the Laurel-Concord High School gym.

Bancroft-Rosalie led by double digits in the second half, but the Vikings closed the gap to one, 51-50, with 4:04 to play. The Panthers answered with five straight points, then survived three potential game-tying three-point attempts by the Vikings in the final 30 seconds to claim the victory.

Nick Sjuts scored a game-high 22 points to lead Bancroft-Rosalie. Carston Tietz added 17 points in the victory.

For Wausa, Trevor Waleley led a balanced attack with 15 points, 10 rebounds and four blocked shots. Marcus Claussen posted 14 points,

five assists and two blocks. Reid Friedrich netted 11 points. Austin Conn had eight points, seven rebounds and four assists. Hunter Vanness also had seven rebounds for the Vikings.

Bancroft-Rosalie, 16-4, travels to Class D1 unbeaten Howells-Dodge today (Tuesday). Wausa, 17-2 after having its nine-game win streak snapped, travel to Hartington today in Lewis & Clark regular season action.

WAUSA (17-2)	.....	12	29	44	55
BANCROFT-ROSALIE (16-4)	.....	20	32	51	60

Regular Season

Parkston 58, Scotland 33

PARKSTON — Parkston led 32-15 at the half on the way to a 58-33 rout of the Scotland Highlanders on Monday night in Parkston.

Jalen Hurley led a balanced scoring attack for

BOYS | PAGE 8

NFL Commissioner: Super Bowl Host New Orleans 'Terrific,' Despite Blackout

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The blackout at the Superdome will not stop the Super Bowl from returning to New Orleans.

Commissioner Roger Goodell said that despite the electrical outage which delayed Sunday night's game for 34 minutes, the city did a "terrific" job hosting its first NFL championship in the post-Katrina era.

"Let me reiterate again what an extraordinary job the city of New Orleans has done," said Goodell, speaking Monday at a post-Super Bowl media conference held for the game's most valuable player, Baltimore quarterback Joe Flacco, and winning coach John Harbaugh. "The most important thing is to make sure people understand it was a fantastic week."

New Orleans has hosted 10 Super Bowls, including Baltimore's 34-31 victory over San Francisco, tied for the most with Miami.

While serving as the site of America's biggest sporting event and focus of an unofficial national holiday gets any city a lot of attention, this game had special mean-

ing for New Orleans.

The city last hosted the Super Bowl in 2002 and officials were hoping this would serve as the ultimate showcase — on a global scale — of how far it has come since being devastated by Katrina in 2005. The storm winds tore holes in the roof of the Superdome and there was water damage from rain effecting electrical systems and causing mold to fester. More than \$330 million has been spent to upgrade the facility, which has hosted the Sugar Bowl, Saints games, two BCS title games and a men's Final Four since the storm.

Yet the loss of power was an embarrassment that quickly became perhaps the game's signature moment.

Goodell said not to worry.

"I do not think this will have an effect on future Super Bowls in New Orleans," he said. "I fully expect to be back here for Super Bowls. I hope we will be back. We want to be back here."

Local officials have said they will bid to host an 11th Super Bowl in 2018 to co-

incide with the 300th anniversary of the city's founding. Goodell made it sound like that is still in play.

"This will not affect the view of the NFL of the success of the game here in New Orleans," Goodell continued. "We know that they have an interest in future Super Bowls and we look forward to evaluating that. Going forward, I do not think this will have an effect at all on what I think will be remembered as one of the great Super Bowl weeks."

Goodell said he had no concerns about the adequacy of the Superdome going forward because "this is clearly something that can be fixed and it's clearly something we can prepare for and we will."

For Goodell, it seemed, it was important to recognize how much fans and the league's business partners enjoyed dining at the city's renowned restaurants, attending parties in the home of Mardi Gras, and the ease of moving around with everything centrally located downtown.

"I do not think this will have an effect

on future Super Bowls in New Orleans," Goodell added. "I fully expect to be back here for Super Bowls. I hope we will be back. We want to be back here."

It wasn't the first time Goodell has stuck up for the city.

He has been widely credited with working behind the scenes to get the Superdome renovated on a fast track after Katrina struck. It reopened in September 2006, in time for the Saints to return permanently to New Orleans after spending one season displaced to San Antonio.

Still, some Saints fans were critical of Goodell's handling of the league's bounty investigation of the team, and resulting sanctions that included the full season suspension of coach Sean Payton.

"After all we've been through here in New Orleans, it seems like we can't escape the worldwide attention of these kinds of events," said Doug Thornton, vice president of SMG, which manages both the Superdome and neighboring New Orleans Arena for the state. "It was an unfor-

tunate circumstance at such a great moment for the city. I think the city was just spectacular this week. The host committee did a great job. It was a flawless event up to that point and it was just a spectacular week.

"So obviously for me, it was a disappointing moment."

Thornton said nothing inside the Superdome malfunctioned, but that the stadium's power supply was cut off from a nearby substation, and that once power was restored, everything inside the dome resumed normal operation.

Thornton also dismissed reports that the halftime show featuring Beyonce had anything to do with the outage, pointing out that that portion of the event was on independent generator power. In fact, Thornton said the dome's electrical system, which has not once failed since the storm, used less power during the Super Bowl than a typical Saints game.

Flacco also praised New Orleans as a host.