

# New Recruits Aim To Help USD Turn The Page

BY JEREMY HOECK

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VERMILLION — Will the 2013 football recruiting class for the University of South Dakota help the program turn a corner?

Only time will tell, but the kids who inked their intent letters Wednesday on National Signing Day say they're ready to help the Coyotes rebound from a 1-10 season.

"I want to win, that's the biggest thing," said Tulsa, Okla., cornerback Marquice Fletcher, who was one of 32 recruits announced by USD.

"After struggling like they did, I what to come in to help them turn it around."

As is always the talk on the biggest recruiting day of the year, stars and rankings stand out, just as much as positions and potential do.

To that end, the Coyotes signed two kids — Khalid Kornegay (WR, Tulsa, Okla.) and Sean Finley (LB, Fountain Valley, Calif.) — who earned a 3-star ranking from various recruiting sites, and five more 2-star players.

Kornegay, who had previously committed to FBS Tulsa before choosing USD, is one of the few recruits who could conceivably make an immediate impact for the Coyotes.

"The class, in general I believe, will try its best to help the team win," said Kornegay, a 6-foot-3 receiver who ran the ball, caught passes and returned kickoffs as a senior last fall.

"All we can do is what's asked of us."

Not only did the Coyotes win a few battles against "like" schools, they were able to fend off Pac-12 programs for Fountain Valley, Calif., linebacker Sean Finley. The 3-

star rated Finley said Wednesday he had offers from Arizona and Nevada, but stuck with USD because of its business school and a "family atmosphere."

Not to mention, the chance to help USD turn a corner.

"I know things will turn around. Coach Glenn will bring in some big-time players," Finley said. "It's cool to be part of a rebuilding process."

"Hopefully by the time I'm a junior or a senior, we'll be a playoff team."

And not only was the recruiting class USD's largest since 2004 (36), it was the first full cycle for the staff. Head coach Joe Glenn and a handful of assistants came board mid-way through the process last year.

"I always think there's strength in numbers," Glenn said. "We went out and talked to a bunch of guys, which we wanted to do."

"We tried to fill in across the board, but the athleticism really stands out more than anything."

Versatility was also a focal point.

The USD staff — with its first full recruiting cycle together — sought out players who could potentially see time at a variety of positions, specifically aiding in special teams.

Kornegay, who set the Oklahoma state record for longest kickoff return for a touchdown (99 yards), is one of those kids.

The Coyotes ranked seventh in the Missouri Valley Football Conference last season in kickoff return average, but were second-best in punt returns. Kornegay, however, figures to add another weapon in that area for USD.

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## DV's Lambert Twins Go Their Separate Ways ... To USD, SDSU

BY JEREMY HOECK

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NORTH SIOUX CITY — Since third grade, Taylor and Tanner Lambert have been teammates. As such, they've never played against each other.

That could very well change.

The twin brothers and seniors at Dakota Valley High School each signed Wednesday as football walk-ons to Division I schools; Taylor to the University of South Dakota and Tanner to South Dakota State.

Each cited academic reasons — Taylor wants to pursue business, Tanner engineering — as the tipping point, leading to them going in separate directions for the first time in their lives.

"Everybody assumed we'd stay at the same place," Tanner, a Class 11A all-state running back, said. "We always said it didn't really matter, but I think we surprised a few people."

"It wasn't like I was trying to avoid him."

The assumption that the brothers would sign together was a rather safe one, given they went on their campus visits together. They both had other regional NAIA and Division II offers, but ultimately wanted the highest level.

"It was pretty stressful," Taylor, an all-state linebacker said. "We kind of looked at those other ones (offers), but we wanted to go bigger and better than that; to challenge ourselves."

The duo proved to be a challenge for opposing defenses and offenses.

Tanner — also a standout wrestler — rushed for 1,759 yards and 17 touchdowns as a senior last fall, when the Panthers finished 7-3 and advanced to the second round of the playoffs.

Taylor, a star on the other side of the ball, set a school-record with 120 tackles last fall, to go along with five sacks, two fumble recoveries and two blocked punts.

"We're opposites when it comes to personalities, I'm a little more out-going, goofy than he is," Taylor said. "Some people said even when Tanner won a state (wrestling) title, he didn't look happy."

During the recruitment process, the brothers talked to both schools about joining the program, they said. Taylor said, however that "one day USD showed up and talked about me being a walk-on, and it stuck with me."

"I know they have a great business school, and having a dome is nice, you don't have to worry about the weather," said Taylor,

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# Bucks Duo To Walk On At SDSU

Yankton's Hunhoff, Soulek Ready For Opportunity To Play In Brookings

BY CHRIS RILEY

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BROOKINGS — The South Dakota State Jackrabbit football team will feature some local talent in the years to come as a pair of Yankton High School seniors plan on walking on to the team next fall, joining another former Buck who is transferring to Brookings for his sophomore year.

Troy Hunhoff and Kellen Soulek, both currently seniors and Yankton high and big pieces — figuratively and literally, in recent Bucks football success have confirmed that they will join the Jackrabbits next fall as walk-on recruits.

"Throughout the football season I kept in touch with (SDSU head) coach (John) Stiegelmeier," Hunhoff said. "Coach (Dan) Mitchell and (Arlin) Likness helped me make a highlight tape that I sent to SDSU at the end of the season."

Hunhoff, who played tight end, defensive line and handled punting duties for the Bucks this season (while averaging a school record 44 yards per punt), will likely play tight end but indicated that he may also move to offensive tackle for the Jackrabbits.

"I am going to prove myself and do my best next year," Hunhoff added. "Hopefully I can work my way up and get some playing time and help out the team as much as I can. If they need me somewhere else I will do that."

The 2012 All-State and All-ESD selection is planning on pursuing a degree in agricultural systems technology. Hunhoff said that he enjoys helping on the family form North of Yankton and that the agricultural systems technology



P&D FILE PHOTO

Yankton's Troy Hunhoff celebrates after scoring during the Bucks' playoff game at Sioux Falls O'Gorman during the 2012 season. Hunhoff was announced as a 2013 walk-on for the South Dakota State University football team on Wednesday. Fellow Buck Kellen Soulek also plans to walk on at SDSU, joining his brother Ty in the program.

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## Hartington Standout Headed To Wayne State



P&D FILE PHOTO

Hartington, Neb., prep standout Michaela Dendinger fires the discus during the 2012 Nebraska State Track and Field Championships in Omaha, Neb. Dendinger, who finished third in the Class D event a year ago, will attend Wayne State College and throw for the Wildcats, the institution announced on Wednesday.

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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HARTINGTON, Neb. — The best throwers are a mix of power and speed, and Wayne State track and field coach Marlon Brink feels he has found that mix on Hartington High School standout Michaela Dendinger.

Dendinger, from Coleridge, Neb., will attend WSC and compete for the Wildcats beginning next season, the NCAA Division II institution announced on Wednesday.

"I felt very comfortable there. They truly made me feel at home," Dendinger said of Wayne State. "It's also close to home, which was a big thing for me."

Dendinger finished third in the discus in Class D at the Nebraska State Track and Field Championships last May, recording a toss of 121 feet, three inches. Dendinger, who was also a 2012 state qualifier in the shot put, was also a state placewinner in the discus in 2010.

"She's been a consistently good performer throughout her career, an all-around athlete," Brink said of Dendinger. "Even on the track, she runs the four-by-one (400-meter relay) and the 100."

Not only does Dendinger run on Hartington's 400 relay, she was part of the squad that set the Wildcats' school record in the event. She also holds the school's discus record.

"Michaela has speed, agility, strength and quickness," said Hartington girls' track and field coach Laura Noecker. "She holds our discus record and is on our four-by-one record; I'd like to know how many athletes in Nebraska could say that."

Dendinger was a key component of the Hartington squad that won both Lewis & Clark and district track and field titles a year ago.

"We can use her in just about any event," Noecker said. "You need athletes like that, especially at a small school. I'd take 20 of her, if I could."

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Crofton, Neb., football standout Maximilian David, right, signed a national letter of intent to compete in football at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colo. He is seated with his mother, Kirsten Lemke.

## Crofton's David Headed West

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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CROFTON, Neb. — Maximilian David was looking for a place where he could study engineering. What he found was that, and much more.

David, a senior at Crofton, Neb., High School, signed a national letter of intent on Wednesday to attend the Colorado School of Mines and play football for the Orediggers.

David started his college search without considering athletics, focused solely on his academic pursuits.

"Before I decided to play football (in college), I was looking at where to go," he said. "I wanted a top-class public education for engineering."

Crofton head football coach Tony Hoffman was happy with how David went about the decision.

"Max has a great head on his shoulders. Education came first, and football was a big bonus," Hoffman said. "He did a good job of eliminating other options and choosing what was best for him."

Once CSM was on David's radar, he sent him to head coach Bob Stitt and went to a camp there in Golden, Colo., where Stitt first saw the lineman.

"I liked the way he moved around," said Stitt, a Nebraska native and Doane College alumnus. "He has a good combination of size and great footwork."

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