

USD Softball Team Begins Season Today In Nashville

BY ALAN DALE
Vermillion Plain Talk

VERMILLION — To make the 2015 softball season the most successful one during the University of South Dakota's time as an NCAA Division I program, the Coyotes will have to set that tone as road warriors.

Beginning Friday in Nashville, Tennessee, the USD women will try to improve on back-to-back 29-win seasons this campaign when they take the field against Ball State today (Friday) at 1:30 p.m. in the first of four games at the Music City Classic.

USD will follow that game up with contests Saturday against Georgetown and the hosts Belmont and wrap the weekend's action Sunday at 11 a.m. vs. Kansas City.

This weekend begins a two-month road odyssey as the USD women are scheduled to make trips to Florida twice Iowa, Kansas, and Texas before Summit League play begins. They still won't play their first game at home until April 11 when they host a doubleheader against league foes Fort Wayne.

Mix in some more trips to Ames and Omaha, along with an excursion to Grand Forks and the Coyotes will play all but 11 of their 55 scheduled games in the warm embrace of Vermillion.

But according to eighth-year head coach Amy Klyse and the players this could be the year the Coyotes take that next big step toward prominence.

Picked by league coaches this pre-season to finish third — beat North Dakota State and IUPUI — in the Summit, a break here and there, a quickly adjusted new infield and a stable of solid arms in the bullpen could push them forward a bit more and maybe to the program's first ever NCAA Division I National Tournament appearance.

Where Are They At?

Last season the Coyotes finished 29-22 overall, 9-8 in Summit League action, while only going 4-5 on its paltry home schedule. They ultimately went 1-2 in the league tournament in Fargo, dropping two straight after an opening win against South Dakota State.

USD was denied a 30th win when it saw the season end with an 11-8 loss to the host and eventual champion North Dakota State Bison.

Now, the Coyotes expect more from themselves in year four as a Summit member after three years and a combined 33-27 record.

"Through the eight years we have transitioned from Division II to Division I it's really hard to label (where they are at)," Klyse said. "We have two different

categories. As a program overall, as a staff we are great in working well together and that filters down to the kids. I think we are at a place where we can compete for a conference championship and that's a great place to be.

"We have gotten to the point where on any given day we can beat any team we can play. If we are on our 'A' game we can beat any team we play that's on our schedule."

The Coyotes are seeing that ideology bear fruit especially after a fall ball win over the Cornhuskers.

"It's not anymore that we think we can, we have gone out and actually have done it," Klyse said. "Our thought process is that it's expecting to happen all the time. We obviously have to show up and work hard every day. We believe when we wake up and go to play these Top 25 teams we can compete with them. Consistently beating those teams and winning our conference championship would be great and is certainly something we can do."

Klyse knows that to take the next step the Coyotes will have to replace essentially their entire infield, but the newer players are showing their mettle.

Daly is also happy with the play of the new infielders backing up the ladies



P&D FILE PHOTO
South Dakota pitcher Rachel Cue sends the ball home during a game in the 2014 season. Cue and the Coyotes open the 2015 season today (Friday) in the Music City Classic at Nashville, Tenn.

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Bucks Down Harrisburg

HARRISBURG — The Yankton Bucks stretched its current win streak to a season-best four games, beating Harrisburg 67-61 in Eastern South Dakota Conference action on Thursday.

Brady Hale led Yankton with 20 points and eight rebounds. Austin Johnson netted 17 points. Matt Fitzgerald had 11 points. Bradey Sorenson scored 10 points off the bench. Tanner Frick added five assists.

For Harrisburg, Cody Eide led the way with 18 points.

Yankton takes a 12-4 record, 11-2 in the ESD, into a rematch with Aberdeen Central on Feb. 14 in Aberdeen. The Golden Eagles handed Yankton its last setback, a 34-27 decision on Jan. 24.

Harrisburg, 1-11 and 1-10, travels to Brookings tonight (Friday).

Harrisburg downed Yankton 69-63 in the JV game. For Yankton, Syd Boots led YHS with 14 points. Jared Rafferty had 13 points. Keenan LaCroix and Jordan Payer had 12 points each for the Bucks.

Yankton won the sophomore game 46-41, led by 15 points from Payer. Trevor Rafferty added seven points in the win.

Harrisburg took both freshmen games. In the 'A' game, a 56-32 setback, Ben Jurens had 16 points and Kellen Franzen had six points for Yankton. In the 'B' game, a 69-60 setback, Andy LaBarge scored 17 points, Brady Dangler had 11 point and Cole Brummer had 10 points for Yankton.

Lewis & Clark Conf.

Winnabago 83, Bloomfield 60

WINSIDE, Neb. — Winnabago downed Bloomfield 83-60 in the quarterfinals of the Lewis & Clark Conference boys' basketball Tournament on Thursday in Winside, Nebraska.

No statistics were available for Winnabago (17-1), which draws the winner between Hartington-Newcastle and Laurel-Concord-Coleteridge in the semifinals on Saturday in Allen.

Coyotes Crush WIU 75-61



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
South Dakota's Brandon Bos takes Western Illinois' Remy Roberts-Burnett off the dribble during their Summit League men's basketball game on Thursday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — One of the many rallying cries for the University of South Dakota men's basketball team this season?

Something head coach Craig Smith calls NBA: 'Next best action.'

Five days after a 1-point home loss, the Coyotes

bounced back in a big way Thursday night, cruising past Western Illinois 75-61 in Summit League action at the DakotaDome.

With a game looming at first-place North Dakota State, the Coyotes (11-13, 5-5) certainly didn't want four straight losses on their backs.

"It's nice to have some momentum going into Saturday's game, that'll be a tough game," senior Brandon Bos said.

Up one at halftime against the Leathernecks (8-13, 3-7), USD was considerably more aggressive in the second half. The hosts out-scored WIU 24-10 in the paint after halftime.

"We knew we had to come out with a lot of energy, but we knew they would come back with a run," said junior Tre Burnette, who scored 19 points and grabbed seven rebounds.

The early stages of each half were dominated by the Coyotes. They started the first half 14-2 and then scored the first 14 points of the second half.

Everyone in the DakotaDome knew what USD had to do: Avoid giving it up. Senior Tyler Larson even joked later that it's well known USD has

also

Listen To The Coyotes Talk About Thursday's Victory Over WIU.

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JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Wagner's Trevor Lensing takes down Crofton-Bloomfield's Ethan Poppe during their 182-pound match in a wrestling triangular on Thursday in Vermillion. Wagner pinned Poppe to help the Red Raiders to the dual victory. Vermillion swept both teams to take the triangular.

Tanagers Sweep Home Triangular

VERMILLION — The Vermillion Tanagers scored a pair of victories in a home wrestling triangular on Thursday.

Vermillion beat Crofton-Bloomfield 67-6 and Wagner 54-21.

In the win over Crofton-Bloomfield, Vermillion picked up ins from Jacob Husby (113), Noah Walker (138) and Regan Bye (160). Kyle Seibel (126) and Brett Bye (170) each won by technical fall.

In the win over Wagner, Trey Hage (120), Andrew Pietrzak (126), Walker (138), Carter Kratz (145) and Regan Bye (160) won by pin.

Wagner beat Crofton-Bloomfield in the other match. No other information was reported.

Vermillion travels to Yankton for its invitational tournament on Saturday. Start time is set for 9 a.m. at the Summit Center.

VERMILLION 67, CROFTON-BLOOMFIELD 6: 106 — Riley Beach V by forfeit; 113 — Jacob Husby V pin. Christian Kleinschmit 0:51; 120 —

Trey Hage V dec. Lucas Miller 7-5; 126 — Kyle Seibel V tech. fall Reese McFarland 4:00; 132 — Kabe Culver V by forfeit; 138 — Noah Walker V pin. Levi Honeywell 5:12; 145 — Carter Kratz V by forfeit; 152 — Josh Westhause V by forfeit; 160 — Regan Bye V tech. fall Quinten Moles 2:00; 170 — Brett Bye V pin. Caleb Johnson 1:19; 182 — Ethan Poppe CB by forfeit; 195 — Brandon Hertz V by forfeit; 220 — Noah Westergaard V by forfeit; 285 — Open

VERMILLION 54, WAGNER 21: 106 — Riley Beach V pin. Preston Nedved 1:40; 113 — Jacob Husby V dec. Ben Soukup 2:40; 120 — Trey Hage V pin. Calvin McBride 3:19; 126 — Andrew Pietrzak V pin. Tony Bruquier 1:58; 132 — Kyle Seibel V dec. Sineway Marshall 7:5; 138 — Noah Walker V pin. Ethan Heith 3:53; 145 — Carter Kratz V pin. Logan Kafka 5:46; 152 — Josh Westhause V by forfeit; 160 — Regan Bye V pin. Cole Soulek 1:01; 170 — Brett Bye V by forfeit; 182 — Andrew Soukup W by forfeit; 195 — Trevor Lansing W by forfeit; 220 — Jace Johnson W dec. Noah Westergaard 5:0; 285 — Truman Ashes W by forfeit

Parkston 42, Gregory-Burke 28
PARKSTON — The Parkston Trojans used five pins to pull away from Gregory-Burke 42-28 in prep wrestling action on Thursday.

Logan Mahoney (120), Dawson Semmler (138), Lucas Bietz (152), Miles Semmler (195) and Austin Bertram (220) all won by pin for Parkston. Atlas Willuweit (106) and Skye Soesbe (182) won by pin for Gregory-Burke.

106 — Atlas Willuweit GB pin. Tucker Murtha 2:55; 113 — Frank Even GB by forfeit; 120 — Logan Mahoney P pin. Caleb Stukel 0:55; 126

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LANCER BASKETBALL

MMC Lancers vs. Hastings College on Saturday, February 7th

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