

Coyote Men Set To Host Young But ‘Veteran’ Bison

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — Saul Phillips knows all about growing pains for a new Division I basketball program.

He was an assistant coach for the North Dakota State men’s basketball team during the 2005-06 season when the Bison blew a 16-point lead at Green Bay and five days later gave back a 23-point lead at Idaho State.

Three years later, that group led by four redshirt freshman — remember Ben Woodside? — went on to win the Summit League championship and advance to the NCAA Tournament.

“I remember thinking, ‘At least we’re getting 20-point leads to give away,’” Phillips said Wednesday on the bus ride down to Vermillion. “It’s tough to take at the time, but we knew we’d be OK.”

“There are ups and downs, and I don’t know if we’re completely past that, but the comfort level is better right now.”

Are they ever.

North Dakota State, at 11-3 overall, 2-0 in the Summit League and ranked No. 14 in the mid-major poll, brings its relatively young roster to the DakotaDome for a 7 p.m. matchup tonight (Thursday) with the University of South Dakota.

The Bison have mostly the same lineup as last season when they won 17 games and lost in the first round of the league tournament. It’s all part of the progression, much as it was seven years ago, Phillips said.

“We went back to that same model,” he said. “It took a while to get some traction, but we’re making strides. Now we’re veteran, at least with the number of games played, and it’s a great thing to have.”

With a starting lineup that includes four juniors and a sophomore, the Bison are balanced and at the same time rather dangerous. Taylor Braun leads in scoring (15.3 ppg), while Marshall Bjorklund averages 12.4 points and 5.8 rebounds, and point guard Lawrence Alexander — the young-

Join Our Coyote Gameday Chat Tonight At 7 pm

Press & Dakotan assistant sports editor Jeremy Hoeck will host a “Coyote Gameday” chat during tonight’s (Thursday) North Dakota State at South Dakota men’s basketball game.

Game time begins at 7 p.m., with the chat starting 15 minutes prior to the game.

Find the chat online at <http://www.yankton.net/coyotegameday>

ster in the group — contributes 10.6 points and 3.8 assists.

Mike Felt chips in 9.5 points a game, thanks to 41 percent on three-pointers, and TrayVonn Wright averages 8.2 points and 5.7 rebounds. In all, it looks to be a unit made for a short-term and a long-term run.

“They’ve been playing for a long time together,” USD head coach Dave Boots said Wednesday. “That’s how you judge a program, how long have you played together?”

“We still have too many new guys, but we’re working toward what they’ve done.”

The Coyotes (6-8, 2-1), meanwhile, have been led by a pair of first-year transfers. Senior point guard Juevol Myles averages 15.1 points and 3.3 assists, and junior guard Karim Rowson adds 11.3 points and 4.7 rebounds.

Of the 11 players who have seen time this season, six are in their first or second years with the program — including five among the main eight.

USD, coming off a Monday loss at Kansas State, has continued to make incremental progress in its second year in the Summit League, Boots said. With two convincing league wins and a loss at the buzzer, steps are being made.

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South Dakota’s Trevor Gruis, 50, attacks the basket during a home game earlier this season. Gruis and the Coyotes host North Dakota State in Summit League basketball action tonight (Thursday).

P&D FILE PHOTO

Briar Cliff Men Surge Past MMC

SIOUX CITY, Iowa — Briar Cliff outscored Mount Marty 30-10 to end the game to claim a 78-70 victory over the Lancers in Great Plains Athletic Conference men’s basketball action on Wednesday.

MMC led 60-49 before the Briar Cliff run.

Jake Shipley scored 23 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to lead Briar Cliff (13-5, 4-4 GPAC), which is receiving votes in the latest NAIA poll. Taylor Murren scored 18 points and Clay Harreld added 12 points in the victory.

Joe Hieb led MMC (6-10, 2-6 GPAC) with 17 points. Saladin Smith netted 14 points. Jose Pena-Benjamin netted 11 points and Chevy Fischer grabbed seven rebounds for the Lancers.

The Lancers return home on Saturday to face Hastings.

MOUNT MARTY (6-10)

Saladin Smith 5-8 2-5 14, Scott Odekir 3-5 0-0 6, Joe Hieb 8-14 0-0 17, Austin Harms 2-5 0-1 6, Jose Pena-Benjamin 4-3 4-11, Scott Sellers 0-0 0-0 0, Chris Richardson 2-4 0-0 4, Tyler Payer 1-4 0-0 3, Jeff Larsen 1-4 0-0 2, Chevy Fischer 3-5 0-0 7. TOTALS: 30-57 5-10 70.

BRIAR CLIFF (13-5)

Taylor Murren 6-16 3-5 18, John Engler 2-5 0-0 4, Jake Shipley 7-19 6-7 23, Turner Vahey 2-8 3-4 9, Michael Collison 2-4 2-6, Ricky Torres 1-4 0-0 2, Clay Harreld 3-6 4-4 12, Zach Otting 2-4 0-1 4. TOTALS: 25-66 18-23 78.

At the half: MMC 38, BC 38. Three-Pointers: BC 10-28 (Shipley 3-7, Murren 3-10, Harreld 2-3, Fahey 2-5, Engler 0-1, Torres 0-1, Otting 0-1). Rebounds: BC 43 (Shipley 11), MMC 32 (Fischer 7). Personal Fouls: MMC 18, BC 12. Fouled Out: None. Assists: BC 13 (Murren 3), MMC 12 (Odekir 3). Turnovers: MMC 14, BC 12. Blocked Shots: MMC 5, BC 1. Steals: MMC 6 (Smith 2, Hieb 2), BC 6 (Shipley 2).

MIDLAND 82, DAKOTA WESLEYAN 60: FREMONT, Neb. — James Parrott scored 25 points to lead Midland to an 82-60 victory over Dakota Wesleyan in Great Plains Athletic Conference men’s basketball action on Wednesday.

Galen Gullie netted 16 points for Midland (11-5, 6-3 GPAC). Jerome Vaughn had 10 rebounds and Ben Imig added six assists in the victory.

For DWU (8-9, 3-5 GPAC), Jalen Voss scored 13 points and Aireus Stephenson scored 10 points. Hurley native Bo LaCroix had four points off the bench. Viborg native Stephen Lee had four rebounds for the Tigers.

NORTHWESTERN 94, CONCORDIA 74: SEWARD, Neb. — Northwestern’s Stu Goslinga scored a game-high 22 points on 11-12 shooting in a 94-74 victory over Concordia in Great Plains Athletic Conference men’s basketball action on Wednesday.

Zack Leeper netted 19 points and Daniel Van Kalsbeek scored 18 points and had eight rebounds off the bench for Northwestern (12-4, 6-2 GPAC). Ben Miller added 16 points and six assists in the win.

Max Wegener led Concordia (5-9, 2-6 GPAC) with 13 points off the bench. Joel Haywood scored 11 points and Porter Birtell added 10 points for the Bulldogs.

NEBRASKA WESLEYAN 61, MORNING-SIDE 66: LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska Wesleyan overcame a game-high 24 points and eight rebounds from Morningside’s Danny Rudeen to claim a 61-56 victory over the Mustangs in Great Plains Athletic Conference men’s basketball action on Wednesday.

Trevor Johnson scored 18 points to lead Nebraska Wesleyan (8-5, 3-5 GPAC). Jonah Bradley netted 14 points and Eric Jackson added 11 points.

Kyle Nikkel added 10 points for Morningside (8-10, 3-5 GPAC).

IPFW 68, NAVY 63: FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — Luis Jacobo scored 22 points Wednesday night and IPFW defeated Navy 68-63.

Jacobo also had three steals and was 5 for 9 from beyond the 3-point line. Frank Gaines added 17 points and Joe Edwards scored 15 for the Mastodons (7-9), who shot 50 percent in each half.

Worth Smith and Brandon Venturini scored 17 points apiece for the Midshipmen (6-9). Venturini was 5 for 8 from behind the arc and Navy was 10 of 19 from long range. Overall the Midshipmen shot 49 percent.

Neither team led by more than eight points and the lead changed hands six times.

NO. 16 CREIGHTON 79, ILLINOIS ST. 72: NORMAL, Ill. (AP) — Junior forward Ethan Wragge was 6 of 9 from 3-point range for his 18 points to lead No. 16 Creighton to a 79-72 victory over Illinois State on Wednesday night.

Grant Gibbs had 16 points for the Bluejays (13-1, 2-0 Missouri Valley Conference), while leading scoring Doug McDermott (23.5 points per game) finished with 15 points and nine rebounds.

Tyler Brown and Bryant Allen each scored 15 points to lead the Redbirds (9-5, 0-2).

Creighton led 42-39 at halftime, although Illinois State mounted a furious run that culminated with a 3-pointer by Nick Zeisloft with 2 seconds left to make it a three-point game.

The teams combined for 26 3-pointers in the game, 17 in the first half.

NO. 8 OHIO ST. 70, NEBRASKA 44: COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Deshaun Thomas outscored Nebraska in the first half 18-17 and finished with 22 points to lead No. 8 Ohio State past the Cornhuskers 70-44 on Wednesday night in the Big Ten opener for both teams.

Lenzelle Smith Jr. added 17 points for Ohio State (11-2, 1-0), which won its 15th consecutive Big Ten home opener. The Buckeyes have a tough test on Saturday at No. 11 Illinois.

The Buckeyes led by at least 20 points for almost all of the second half.

How bad was it for the Cornhuskers (9-5, 0-1)? Only 8:27 remained when they finally exceeded the 31 points that their football counterparts scored in a 14-point loss to Georgia in the Capital One Bowl a year earlier.

Ray Gallegos had 14 points to lead Nebraska, which shot 29 percent from the field.

WICHITA STATE 75, DRAKE 63: DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Nick Wiggins scored a season-high 18 points off the bench and Wichita State beat host Drake 75-63 on Wednesday night to match its best start in 59 years.

Malcolm Armstead added 14 for the Shock-

ers, who are 13-1 for just the second time since starting with 16 wins in 17 tris in 1953-54. The 1982-83 team also started 13-1.

Wichita State broke things open with an 18-3 run at the outset of the second half in winning their second Missouri Valley Conference game in as many tris.

The Bulldogs got within 69-61 with 1:01 left, but Wichita State had little trouble running out the clock.

Freshmen Joey King and Micah Mason combined for 29 points for the Bulldogs (6-7, 0-2), who committed 19 turnovers in falling back below .500.

GPAC Basketball: Briar Cliff Women Battle Past MMC

Lancers’ Forsch Goes Over 1,000 Career Points In Effort

SIOUX CITY, Iowa — Sixth-ranked Briar Cliff survived a strong start by Mount Marty to claim an 86-72 victory over the Lancers in Great Plains Athletic Conference women’s basketball action on Wednesday.

MMC led 22-13 just 7:30 into the game, but the Chargers outscored MMC 32-13 to end the half with a 45-35 edge. The Lancers twice cut the BC lead to five points in the second half but could get no closer, thanks to a 16-4 run in the second half.

Mattie Murren scored 21 points — hitting seven of nine from three-point range — to lead



Forsch

Briar Cliff (15-3, 6-2 GPAC). Kelsey Evans netted 14 points. Avon native Kela Cihak had 13 points and seven assists. Sara Reeves netted 11 points. Former Freeman standout Paige Herrboldt added five points in the win.

For MMC, Allison DeKam had a career-high 22 points and added 11 rebounds. Brittany Little scored 16 points. Taylor Forsch hit five three-pointers for 15 points, the fourth time in five

games she has hit five or more three-pointers. April Winne (Scotland) had four assists and Alexa Berg added three steals for MMC.

Forsch also went over 1,000 points in the game. She now stands at 1,006 points for her collegiate career.

The Lancers, 9-7 overall and 4-4 in the GPAC, return home for a matchup with Hastings on Saturday. Start time is 2 p.m.

MOUNT MARTY (9-7)

Alexa Berg 0-5 0-0 0, April Winne 1-5 2-4 4, Taylor Forsch 5-10 0-0 15, Allison DeKam 9-18 4-4 22, Brittany Little 5-7 6-8 16, Tara DesLauners 0-0 0-0 0, Alyssa Whitham 3-6 0-0 8, Kelli Norrid 0-0 0-0 0, Hannah Youngberg 0-2 0-0 0, Holly Hegge 1-2 3-4 5, Raquel Sutura 1-3 0-0 2. TOTALS: 25-58 15-20 72.

BRIAR CLIFF (15-3)

Kelsey Evans 5-7 3-4 14, Kela Cihak 5-9 2-5 13, Mattie Murren 7-10 0-0 21, Summer Gordon 3-6 0-0 6, Sara Reeves 4-5 3-7 11, Paige Herrboldt 2-2 0-0 5, McKenzie Shipley 2-2 1-2 7, Alex Fuller 0-0 0-0 0, Stone Masters 2-5 0-0 5, Chante Williams 0-0 0-0 0, Heather Haber 1-3 0-0 2, Lexi Henschke 0-1 0-0 0, Regan Cooper 1-4 0-0 2. TOTALS: 32-54 9-18 86.

At the half: BC 45, MMC 35. Three-Pointers: BC 13-20 (Murren 7-8, Shipley 2-2, Herrboldt 1-1, Evans 1-2, Cihak 1-3, Masters 1-3), MMC 7-21 (Forsch 5-9, Whitham 2-4, Sutura 0-1, Youngberg 0-2, Winne 0-2, Berg 0-3). Rebounds: MMC 33 (DeKam 11), BC 30 (Gordon 6). Personal Fouls: BC 19, MMC 18. Fouled Out: None. Assists: BC 20 (Cihak 7), MMC 15 (Winne 4). Turnovers: BC 17, MMC 17. Blocked Shots: BC 4, MMC 3 (DeKam 2). Steals: BC 15 (Cihak 3, Murren 3), MMC 9 (Berg 3).

DAKOTA WESLEYAN 75, MIDLAND 65: FREMONT, Neb. — Kim Johnson scored 19 points to lead Dakota Wesleyan past Midland 75-65 in Great Plains Athletic Conference women’s basketball action on Wednesday.

Taylor Piper and Amanda Hart each scored 14 points for DWU. Hart’s four three-pointers in the game gave her a DWU-record of 234 for her career.

Jami Thramer led Midland with 20 points and 11 rebounds. Joelle Andersen had 10 points. Taylor Shepard added 12 rebounds.

NO. 1 CONCORDIA 71, NO. 8 NORTHWESTERN 68: SEWARD, Neb. — The Northwestern women gave the top-ranked and unbeaten Concordia Bulldogs their toughest test of the season before falling 71-68 in Great Plains Athletic Conference women’s basketball action on Wednesday.

Northwestern (11-4, 5-3 GPAC) led 35-34 at the half, but Concordia took the upper hand down the stretch.

Bailey Morris scored 19 points and had seven rebounds off the bench for Concordia (15-0, 8-0 GPAC). Kristen Conahan had 17 points. Former Cedar Catholic standout Tracy Peltz added seven points and three assists in the win.

Samantha Kleinsasser led Northwestern with 14 points. Karen Hutson and All Dunkelberger each had 13 points, with Dunkelberger also recording six assists. Kendra DeJong added 10 points and nine rebounds.

NO. 3 MORNING-SIDE 65, NEBRASKA WESLEYAN 50: LINCOLN, Neb. — Morningside needed a 23-8 run in the second half to claim a 65-50 victory over Nebraska Wesleyan in GPAC women’s basketball action on Wednesday.

Chelsie Trask led Morningside (15-2, 7-1 GPAC) with 22 points, seven rebounds and five assists. Ashlynn Muhl scored 11 points and Jessica Tietz added 10 points on 5-5 shooting in the victory.

Mallory Shanahan led NWU (2-11, 0-8 GPAC) with 15 points and 13 rebounds. Kaitlyn Janata added 13 points.

Nebraska’s Pelini Upbeat, Again, After Bowl Loss



RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/ORLANDO SENTINEL/MCT

Nebraska quarterback Taylor Martinez (3) looks to pass during the Capital One Bowl on Tuesday in Orlando, Fla. The Georgia Bulldogs defeated the Nebraska Cornhuskers, 45-31. Nebraska finished 10-4 on the season, and gave up 53 points and 595 yards of offense per game in the four losses.

BY ERIC OLSON
AP Sports Writer

For a third straight year, Nebraska finished the season in a swoon and with coach Bo Pelini predicting better days are ahead.

The Cornhuskers (10-4) appeared on the verge of a breakthrough, ending the regular season with six straight victories to win the Big Ten Legends Division. But the embarrassing 39-point loss to Wisconsin in the conference championship game and the 45-31 Capital One Bowl loss to Georgia raised questions about whether Pelini can return the program to the elite status it enjoyed more than a decade ago.

Pelini has lost four games in each of his five seasons, and his reputation as a defensive guru has taken a hit with the Huskers allowing an average of 53 points and 595 yards in this season’s losses.

Still, Pelini said he saw enough positives against Southeastern Conference runner-up Georgia to be optimistic about 2013, when Nebraska’s schedule gets considerably softer. The No. 23 Huskers led the sixth-ranked Bulldogs 24-23 at halftime after wiping out an early 9-0 deficit, and they were up 31-23 midway through the third quarter before Ameer Abdullah’s fumble at the Georgia 38 turned the momentum.

“There’s no question we can play with any team in the country,” Pelini said. “We want to make that next jump. We want to win them all. We want to compete for a national championship. I don’t think we’re far away. We’ll be a better football team next year. I believe that.”

Pelini offered variations of the same message after the Huskers finished 2011 with three losses in five games and 2010 with losses

in three of four.

The Huskers figure to be loaded on offense next season. They’ll have back 17 of the top 22 players from a unit that averaged 35 points and 461 yards a game. Taylor Martinez will be a fourth-year starter at quarterback and, with Abdullah, will give the Huskers a pair of 1,000-yard rushers. Kenny Bell is among five returning receivers who caught at least 10 passes.

Four starters are back on an offensive line that paved the way for 200 or more yards of rushing in all but two games. But the line allowed five sacks against Georgia and 35 for the season to rank 106th nationally.

Turnovers were the Huskers’ biggest problem. Their 22 lost fumbles are most in the country, and no one in the Big Ten threw more than Martinez’s 12 interceptions. Martinez completed 62 percent of his passes — up from 56 last season — for 2,871 yards and 23 touchdowns. He also led the Huskers back from big second-half deficits in four Big Ten wins.

But he still tends to force throws under pressure; eight of his 12 interceptions came when the Huskers were trailing.

The biggest personnel loss is Rex Burkhead, who was limited to three games because of a knee injury. Burkhead, who ran for a season-high 140 yards against Georgia, ended his career fifth on Nebraska’s all-time rushing chart with 3,329 yards.

Defensive improvement is crucial if the Huskers are going to make a run at their first conference championship of any kind since 1999.

The Huskers allowed an average of 16 points in home games but 39 on the road. Opponents with winning records scored 34 a game.

Nebraska is 93rd nationally against the run and dropped from first to fifth in pass defense after allowing Georgia quarterback Aaron Murray to throw for 427 yards and five touchdowns. Georgia’s 591 total yards were the most Nebraska has allowed in a bowl game, and the 45 points tied for most against Nebraska in a bowl.

Defensive backs coach Terry Joseph, whose roots are in the SEC, said the bowl was further evidence of how far the Huskers have to go to return to prominence.

“When you play against a team like them, and play to win at a real high level, you’ve got to have depth, and you have to have some guys who can finish,” Joseph said. “When you’re going against great players, your margin for error is not that big. You get exposed when you’re not perfect. And we were not perfect.”

The Huskers will go young on defense in 2013 with the departure of eight seniors.

The front four returns Thad Randle, Chase Rome and Jason Ankrh. Aaron Curry and Avery Moss, both of whom saw limited action as freshmen, will be back in the mix on the defensive line. Vincent Valentine, who redshirted after an impressive preseason camp, also will be a factor.

David Santos and Zaire Anderson, freshmen this season, will lead the linebacker corps. Michael Rose and Thomas Brown will join them after sitting out as redshirts.

The Huskers have experienced players returning at the cornerback spots but will break in new safeties.

The schedule sets up favorably for Pelini. The Huskers open

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