

# Western Illinois Keeps Coyote Women Winless In Summit



DAVID LIAS/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK  
South Dakota's Margaret McCloud drives for a layup past Western Illinois' Ashley Luke during the first half of Thursday basketball action in the DakotaDome. Watching at right is USD's Bridget Arens.

**BY JEREMY HOECK**  
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VERMILLION — As if the defensive frustrations weren't already piling up for the University of South Dakota women, it ran into a steady dose of three-pointers in their first home Summit League game. And for the fourth straight game, USD gave up at least 81 points in a loss. Spurred by a barrage of three-pointers, Western Illinois never looked back from a hot first half in beating the Coyotes 81-71 on Thursday night at the DakotaDome.

"That's frustrating, but that's been the story of our last four games," said USD sophomore Kelly Stewart, who finished with 12 points and five rebounds. "We'll play good defense for about 23 seconds and then we'll just mess up on one little thing.

"Then all of a sudden there's a girl behind the line knocking them down."

The catalyst for Western Illinois (10-9, 2-1) was sophomore guard Michelle Maher who hit 7-of-10 shots from long range for a game-high 27 points. Sophomore Paige Harmon added a 4-of-4 effort on threes for 16 points.

"You could say, 'They had a great night,' but they're a great three point shooting team," USD head coach Amy Williams said.

And it wasn't just that WIU was making three-pointers, it was that it was getting uncontested threes — particularly late in the shot clock — that proved to be worse for the Coyotes.

"We just have to get better and know we can't give up a shot at the last minute," sophomore guard Tia Hemiller said. The Watertown native finished with

12 points, six rebounds and five rebounds.

Despite all those defensive lapses, the Coyotes had a legitimate shot to edge closer in the final minutes.

Stewart hit a three-pointer with 4:32 left to bring USD within 67-62, but WIU followed with a three of its own.

Later, with 2:59 remaining, Hemiller brought the Coyotes within 74-68, but again, the Leathernecks followed with a three-pointer.

"We call those dagger threes," Stewart said. "All your momentum is going and they hit one of those."

"Basketball's a game of mistakes, we just have to go to the next play and make up for it."

The Coyotes, who shot 36 percent

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## USD Men Suffer First League Loss

MACOMB, Ill. (AP) — Garret Covington scored 21 points to lead hot-shooting Western Illinois to a 79-61 win over South Dakota on Thursday to give Jim Molinari his 300th win as a head coach.

The Leathernecks (8-11, 2-2 Summit League) hit 7 of 10 3-pointers on the way to a 62 percent shooting night and made 16 of 18 free throws. Jabari Sandifer had 13 points and Michael Ochereobia and Tate Stensgaard added 10 apiece.

Tyler Flack led the Coyotes (8-10, 3-1), which shot just 38.5 percent, with 11 points, Brandon Bos and Adam Thoseby had 10 each.

Western Illinois out-rebounded South Dakota by 15, limiting the Coyotes to 19 boards.

The Leathernecks were leading 15-14 12 minutes into the game but then went on an 11-0 run. Jordan Foster started it with a 3 and ended it with a layup. In between, Covington knocked two consecutive 3's.

It was 33-21 at the break.

W. ILLINOIS 79, S. DAKOTA 61

S. DAKOTA (8-10)  
Flack 4-8 2-2 11, Cruis 2-4 1-1 5, Norris 1-3 0-0 2, Bos 4-8 1-2 10, Rowson 0-3 2-4 2, Thoseby 3-7 2-2 10, Kasperbauer 1-5 6-6 9, Pomlee 1-4 0-0 3, Robertson 3-7 0-0 6, Larson 1-3 1-2 3. Totals 20-52 15-19 61.

W. ILLINOIS (8-11)  
Conde 4-5 0-0 8, Ochereobia 3-6 4-5 10, Sandifer 5-8 2-2 13, Roberts-Burnett 3-6 1-2 7, Covington 5-8 7-7 21, Foster 2-3 2-2 7, Mikusak 1-1 0-0 3, Stensgaard 5-7 0-0 10, Link 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 28-45 16-18 79.

Halftime—W. Illinois 33-21, 3-Point Goals—S. Dakota 6-18 (Thoseby 2-2, Flack 1-1, Bos 1-2, Pomlee 1-3, Kasperbauer 1-4, Norris 0-1, Larson 0-1, Rowson 0-2, Robertson 0-2), W. Illinois 7-10 (Covington 4-5, Mikusak 1-1, Foster 1-2, Sandifer 1-2). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—S. Dakota 19 (Flack 5), W. Illinois 34 (Conde 9), Assists—S. Dakota 14 (Larson 3), W. Illinois 19 (Foster 4). Total Fouls—S. Dakota 12, W. Illinois 17. A.—2,288.

## Cavaliers Edge Trojans

TYNDALL — Bon Homme edged out Parkston 70-68 on Thursday evening in Tyndall.

Scott Van Winkle led Bon Homme (6-4) with 27 points, while John Barrett added 17 points in the victory.

Jalen Hurley led Parkston (8-3) with 20 points and 11 rebounds. Zach Scott added 15 points in the loss.

Bon Homme will travel to Dakota Christian on Saturday, while Parkston will play in the Hanson Classis this weekend.

BON HOMME (6-4).....19 37 52 70  
PARKSTON (8-3).....23 38 51 68

**Avon 52, Andes Central 49**

LAKE ANDES — Despite a one-point lead at halftime, Avon was able to edge out Andes Central 52-49 on Thursday.

Brandon Kocmich led Avon (4-5) with 19 points, while Logan Mudder added 13 points.

Chris Bad Hand led Andes Central (3-7) with nine points in the loss.

Avon will host Wagner on Saturday, while Andes Central will travel to Wessinton Springs on Monday.

AVON (4-5).....12 27 41 52  
ANDES CENTRAL (3-7).....14 26 37 49

**Scotland 60, Marion 56**

MARION — The Scotland Highlanders overcame a 10-point fourth quarter deficit to beat Marion 60-56 in boys basketball action on Thursday.

Seth Ireland scored 25 points for Scotland, which outscored the Bears 25-11 in the fourth quarter. Travis Skorepa netted 12 points. Tanner Skorepa had 11 points and five steals. Shayne Bloch had four steals in the victory.

Nick Gortmaker led Marion with a game-high 26 points, as well as four assists and five steals. Jacob Wuertz finished with 10 points and nine rebounds. Lincoln Langerock added four assists for the Bears.

Scotland, 5-7, travels to Wagner on Jan. 30. Marion hosts Chester tonight (Friday).

SCOTLAND (5-7).....10 20 35 60  
MARION (1-7).....14 32 45 56

**Freeman 58, Menno 52**

FREEMAN — Freeman edged Menno 58-52 on Thursday evening in Freeman.

Cole Paulson led Freeman (5-3) with 20 points and eight rebounds. Brennan Schmidt added 16 points in the victory.

Chet Peterson led Menno (3-6) with 16 points in the loss.

Freeman will travel to Madison on Saturday, but will play DeSmet. Menno will travel to Howard

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P&D FILE PHOTO  
The Yankton High School student section tries to distract Watertown's Marcus Gravatt (40) as the Arrow shot a free throw during the second half of their Eastern South Dakota Conference boys' basketball game on Dec. 13 at the Summit Center. The new YHS seating arrangement, with the student section behind the basket, debuted in that game and has gone over well with players, students and fans.

## New Seating Arrangement Adding To Summit Center Atmosphere

**BY JEREMY HOECK**  
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A permanent change to seating at the Summit Center for Yankton High School athletic events, namely basketball, has been met with approval from administrators on down to fans.

The students, especially, like the opportunity the new setup provides for becoming a factor in games.

"It's nice to have that advantage, it's like the students are our sixth man out there," said Gazelles senior guard Anna Gulick.

Moving the students to the west corner of the gym and as the visiting fans to the south weren't the main reason for the changes, though, according to YHS athletic director Ryan Mors.

Yankton will host more double-headers down the road (potentially six at home next season), and will have to accommodate both sets of Yankton and visiting parents, not to mention students from the opposing school.

Not only did the change provide Yankton with a better way to utilize its space, it "brings a better atmosphere in the gym," Mors said.

**"We've had great crowds already, and I've even gotten some compliments from opposing fans. It's turned out to be a nice advantage."**

**RYAN MORS, YHS ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR**

"We've had great crowds already, and I've even gotten some compliments from opposing fans," he said. "It's turned out to be a nice advantage."

Although the official statistics would show that opposing teams aren't necessarily adversely affected during the third and fourth quarters when they face the YHS students, the hometown players say they can sense a difference.

"It definitely adds a new atmosphere at the end of a game," Bucks senior Lane Sawatzke said. "It brings a new element to our games, I guess."

Through five home Bucks games, opposing teams are hitting 69 percent of their free throws in the first half and 61 percent in the second half — when they are greeted by a loud and inviolent YHS student section.

In four Gazelles home games, however, opponents are shooting significantly

better in the second half, 80 percent, compared to 59 percent in the first half.

Field goal percentages are better after halftime, as well, while visiting girls' teams are hitting 64 percent of their three-pointers in the second half — compared to 69 percent in the first half.

Still, the Yankton Bucks are well aware of the impact their students can provide in a close game. Head coach Chris Haynes pointed specifically to the home opener against Watertown, when the Arrows went 9-of-16 at the line after halftime.

"Whether or not our crowd had anything to do with that, it's debatable," Haynes joked. "Regardless, it has been a better atmosphere."

The final decision on the home seating changes was made last fall after some initial discussions last summer, Mors said. It was met with

# Gazelles Down Vermillion In Gymnastics Action

**BY SHAUNA MARLETTE**  
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According to the Yankton-Bon Homme Gazelles' head coach Luke Youmans, the thought of what his team will be without seniors Elsie Kotalik and Ashtyn Haak is hard to imagine. Case in point, the Gazelles tumbled to an all-around victory Thursday night behind the 1-3 finish of the two seniors, topping Vermillion 135.85 to 128.05.

"These two girls have been with the program for so many years, it is hard to imagine what it will be without them," Youmans said. "They are more than just great athletes and bring more than athletic ability to the table. They are hard workers and great role models for our younger team members."

In route to the senior night victory, Kotalik had a night high 34.850 all-around, placing first on the balance beam (9.05), second on uneven parallel bars (8.2) and floor exercise (9.0) and tying

for fourth on vault with a score of 8.6. Haak's 3<sup>rd</sup> place all-around score of 33.6 was earned with a 4<sup>th</sup> place tie on uneven parallel bars (7.95), 7<sup>th</sup> place finish on floor (8.45), second on beam (8.35) and fourth on vault (8.6).

"(They) are great kids with hearts of gold," Youmans added. "Our younger girls are going to have to learn to fill their voids in the future."

Youmans said the strength of the Gazelles team is that on any one night, six-seven different girls have the ability of taking that first place all-around victory.

"While tonight it was Elsie's night," he said. "Any of our girls can compete and turn it on and take the victory. That has been the strength of our team this season."

Other place winners for the Gazelles in all-around were fourth place Emily Dufek (33.25) and fifth place Haleigh Diede (33.0).

Vermillion saw 7<sup>th</sup> grader

Carter Williams take second in the all-around with a 33.6 score. She took first in the floor exercise with a score of 9.1, high score for the night.

On the vault Diede took first with a score of 8.8.

In the uneven parallel bars Duffek was first with a score of 8.55.

Youmans said from here on out it is going to be important for every practice to be a competition.


"Our next event will be home again next Tuesday," he said. "We will be facing some of the best teams in the state including Sioux Falls O'Gorman. It will be important to see how we stack up against the best in the state. To be able to compete with them we need to keep that competitive edge in practice."

Adding that next Tuesday's event will be the last event for this year's junior varsity, Youmans said he has been very impressed with



SHAUNA MARLETTE/P&D  
Yankton-Bon Homme's Ashtyn Haak competes on the vault as assistant coach Justin Olson looks on during the Gazelles' home dual with Vermillion on Thursday. She scored an 8.6 in the event, helping the Gazelles to the dual victory.

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# LANCER BASKETBALL

Tomorrow! MMC vs. Doane on Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup>

WOMEN'S TIP-OFF: 2 PM | MEN'S TIP-OFF: 4 PM | CIMPL ARENA

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