

# USD Football Ticket Sales Starting To Pick Up

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VERMILLION — A University of South Dakota football ticket campaign has picked up steam in recent days despite some unforeseen obstacles, according to a USD ticket official.

To build excitement for the Oct. 20 football game between USD and defending FCS champion North Dakota State in Sioux Falls, the USD athletic department is offering a combo package for a pair of games. For \$35, fans can purchase tickets to the Colgate home game at the DakotaDome on Sept. 8 and the NDSU matchup six weeks later.

“Our sales have picked up in the last

two days,” Brad Simons, coordinator of ticket operations and sales at USD, Wednesday. “It’s one of those things where we’re trying to encourage fans to buy early, so we can have more red than green up there.”

As of Wednesday afternoon, USD has sold about 170 ticket bundles in the promotion, according to senior associate athletic director David Herbster.

While momentum continues to grow, a problem arose this week that angered some NDSU fans — who travel well and figure to do so to Sioux Falls.

A technical glitch in USD’s online ticketing system mistakenly assigned NDSU fans who had already purchased tickets to the wrong section at Howard Wood Field.

Naturally, that upset some Bison fans, who lit up message boards and comments Wednesday in frustration. The NDSU fanbase — which, by all indications, might number as high as 10,000 — will instead be located in a couple of sections behind the Bison bench.

As part of the two-game promotion, NDSU fans have started ordering tickets to both, Simons said.

“It’s not a crazy amount, but they’re definitely making the circles around their fans to get people buying,” he said.

Even if Bison fans are required to purchase a ticket to the Colgate game, there are indications that some would donate them to USD, according to Simons.

The glitch in the ticketing system — which Simons said is “new to most of us around here” — should be back up by today (Thursday), he said. In the meantime, the ticket office was handling orders over the phone.

Another area of focus for the “home” game in Sioux Falls has been where to seat season ticket holders.

USD had made sure to seat those folks in the same relative location at Howard Wood that they would have sat at the DakotaDome, Simons said. A conversion chart was created to ensure accuracy, though the walkways in the aisles are different — for example, at the dome they are row 14, while it would be row 1 at Howard Wood.

“We had to do some adjusting and sliding some people around, but I think we did a fairly good job,” Simons said.

The special two-game ticket package — called the “Coyote Pack” — runs through the end of June. On Wednesday, Aug. 1, tickets for all USD home games are opened to the general public.

Among the other home games on the schedule for the Coyotes are Illinois State (Sept. 29), Western Illinois (Oct. 6) and Northern Iowa (Nov. 10).

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## AP Source: Saints, Brees Apart On Guaranteed Money

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Drew Brees and the New Orleans Saints still must close a significant gap in guaranteed money if they are to agree on a five-year contract worth about \$100 million by Monday’s looming deadline for a long-term deal, said a person familiar with the negotiations.

The sides were more than \$10 million apart in the guaranteed portion of the contract on Wednesday, the person told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because talks are ongoing.

The stakes are high for both sides and the negotiations have lasted for months, including long gaps in communication between the two camps.

Brees, who is 33 and entering his 12th season, has never before had the chance to negotiate a contract on par with the elite quarterbacks of the game. The Saints, meanwhile, risk alienating the best quarterback in franchise history, not to mention their fan base, by failing to make an offer to his satisfaction by Monday — the deadline for players with the franchise tag to sign long-term deals.

Several months ago, Brees first raised the possibility that he would not report to the opening of training camp if all that was on the table at that time was the one-year franchise tag of about \$16.3 million. People familiar with the quarterback’s plans say that remains the case.

Brees has said he does not want to play under a one-year contract with no long-term security in the coming seasons. He did it once before, with costly consequences, when he played under the franchise tag for San Diego in 2005 and wound up with a career-threatening injury to his throwing shoulder.

That injury led him to accept a six-year, \$60 million deal with New Orleans in 2006, which left him playing for well below market value in the past few seasons, even as he was setting club and league records.

Brees had hoped that an extension would be done before 2011, but when it was not, he decided not to hold out and played without the security of a long-term contract. He remained healthy the entire season and passed for an NFL single-season record 5,476 yards. Brees considered that an act of faith in the Saints, and now he is insistent that that faith be returned in the form of a contract that not only would give him the highest average annual salary in the game, but also guarantee a significant portion of his salary.

General manager Mickey Loomis has said he understands that Brees’ contract is the most important deal on which he has worked in his career. However, he has stressed that such a deal, with the potential to affect the team’s ability to sign other players, must be entered into with caution.

Both sides have offered proposals that would give the Saints more flexibility under the NFL’s salary cap than New Orleans would have if Brees played for the franchise tag the club has placed on him.

In those proposals, a relatively low base salary number in the early years would be offset by guaranteed signing bonuses that are pro-rated, for salary cap purposes, over the life of the contract.

Such a contract structure would increase the salary cap burden of Brees’ contract significantly in the final years, but the salary cap likely will be higher by then.

The current salary cap is about \$120 million, but could rise substantially under a new NFL TV deal that will begin in 2014. Under the league’s current labor agreement, players are supposed to receive about 55 percent of TV revenues.



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

**Yankton Reds shortstop Jordan Kathol dives at Sioux Falls West's Joel Swenson as Swenson goes to second for a stolen base during the opening game of their VFW Teener baseball doubleheader on Wednesday at Yankton's Riverside Field. Results from the doubleheader were not available at presstime.**

## Tickets For Buffalo Bills’ Toronto Game Slashed Black Sox Stop Bards

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP) — Tickets for Buffalo’s “home” game against Seattle in Toronto have been reduced from past Bills contests at Rogers Centre.

Buffalo will take on the Seahawks on Dec. 16, and tickets in every section have been cut up to 51 percent, as both Rogers Media and the Bills look to increase awareness and atmosphere around a team that made an offseason splash in its attempt to

get back to the AFC playoffs.

As a result of the new pricing structure, 58 percent of tickets are less than \$100, and 88 percent of tickets are less than \$150. Those who have already purchased tickets as part of the “Bills in Toronto Series” will have the option to receive a refund for the price difference or have their seats upgraded.

“The reduced price-point is fantastic value for a premium sporting

event. These ticket prices are now more in line with the average NFL ticket price and are the right price-point in this market,” Rogers Media senior vice president Dale Hooper said. “After four seasons of the Bills in Toronto, we were able to establish some significant key learnings. We have adjusted our ticket prices every year, and have made good on a new price package, one that’s right for today’s environment.”

FREEMAN — Lee and Brett Scherschligt each had three hits as Freeman held off Avon 4-3 in South Central League amateur baseball action on Tuesday in Freeman.

Mitch Wollman added two hits in the victory.

For Avon, Cash Kocer had two of the Bards’ five hits.

Austin Smidt picked up the win, with Brett Scherschligt earning the save. Bill Roach took the loss.

Freeman, 4-16 overall and 4-12 in the SCL, travels to Irene on Thursday. Avon hosts Tabor on Thursday.

AVON .....001 020 000 — 3 5 3  
FREEMAN .....100 120 00X — 4 9 2  
Bill Roach, Logan Tycz (7) and Dan Bures; Austin Smidt, Brett Scherschligt (7) and Allen Scherschligt

## NASCAR: Hornish Has Chance To Get Back To Cup In No. 22

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Sam Hornish Jr. sent team owner Roger Penske a text message a day after AJ Allmendinger’s suspension making clear his desire: If a failed drug test keeps Allmendinger sidelined, Hornish wants to drive the No. 22 Dodge.

He is getting his chance this weekend at New Hampshire, where Penske has tabbed Hornish to again fill the seat vacated Saturday night when Allmendinger was suspended hours before the race at Daytona.

“I sent Roger a text, basically saying if they needed me, I’d be more than willing to figure out how to make it work,” Hornish said. “I had to speak up because I didn’t want anybody else to step in there, or anybody else to have the chance to step in there because I didn’t say anything.”

This is a fresh opportunity for Hornish, who has been trying to re-build his career the last two years.

He spent almost all of last season without a ride as sponsorship difficulties at Penske made Hornish the odd man out in the organization. It was a huge fall for one of the most decorated American drivers in IndyCar history.

Hornish left that series for NASCAR at the end of the 2007 season armed with three championships, and 19 victories including the 2006 Indianapolis 500.

His desire for a new challenge led Penske to move Hornish to his NASCAR operation, where he immediately struggled and failed to show enough improvement to warrant a seat in the elite Sprint Cup Series. In three seasons, he had just eight top-10 finishes in 106 starts. His highest points finish was 28th in 2009.

Penske kept him on, and the organization worked all of last season trying to build a program for Hornish. It came together in the Nationwide Series, where Hornish this season is running the full schedule. Through 16 races, he has nine top-10 finishes and is ranked fourth in the standings.

Yet the Sprint Cup Series is where Hornish wants to be, and he got the call last Saturday to get to Daytona in a hurry.

Hornish had finished 10th in Friday night’s Nationwide race and returned home to North Carolina. Penske officials pulled him out of a Charlotte television studio, where he was an analyst on a live television program, and flew him back to Daytona International Speedway.

He got to Allmendinger’s car minutes before he had to get inside and drove someone else’s car on almost no notice.

Even though a cut tire led to his 33rd-place finish, Hornish cherished the opportunity.

“You know, I was on the lake in the morning, doing a TV show in the afternoon and got to race at Daytona at night,” he said. “All in all, that’s not that bad of a day.”

This time, he has a week to prepare.

Penske Racing decided it was in the best interest of the team to name a replacement driver for Sunday even before Allmendinger’s situation with NASCAR is resolved. Allmendinger failed a random drug test taken June 29, and his business manager said Wednesday the driver tested positive for a stimulant.

Allmendinger has asked for his “B” urine sample to be tested, and his suspension stands at least through that process.

Hornish isn’t viewing this opportunity as anything more than a chance to get some seat time in the Cup Series.

“It’s no secret I want to be in Cup, and this isn’t the way I wanted to get here, but I wanted the chance when it became available,” he said. “They gave me this opportunity for this two weeks, and I’ll try to do the best I can to my ability. I know it might only be this two weeks, regardless of what any outcome we might have, and all I can do is be blessed for the chance I have right now.”

Hornish wanted the opportunity last December, when the No. 22 unexpectedly came open after Penske suddenly split with Kurt Busch at the end of the season. He was passed over for Allmendinger,

## NBA Free Agency Begins: Heat Stock Up On Shooters; Howard Saga Continues

BY BRIAN MAHONEY  
AP Basketball Writer

The Miami Heat got two more shooters. The Orlando Magic, at least for now, are keeping their center.

A flurry of deals were completed Wednesday and another one was put on hold on the first day contracts could be signed in the NBA.

Ray Allen and Rashard Lewis inked their deals with the NBA champions, who will rely on their perimeter accuracy to create more space on the court for LeBron James and Dwyane Wade.

The Spurs announced Tim Duncan was staying in San Antonio and the Knicks completed a sign-and-trade to bring Marcus Camby to New York. But there’s no deal for the best big man of them all in the NBA right now.

The Magic can’t find an agreement they like for All-Star center Dwight Howard, who has asked for a trade to Brooklyn. The Magic have tried to accommodate, only to find nothing from the Nets that fit their desires.

“We’ve had discussions with Brooklyn, we’ve had discussions with a host of different teams about a host of different issues. And the answer is, ‘Yes we’re still talking to them,’” Magic general manager Rob Hennigan said.

“We’re still looking to do whatever it is that puts us in the best position from a sustainability standpoint, (and) from a strategic standpoint.”

“... Currently as they stand I think the parameters that we’ve talked about are a little bit in a stationary position. And currently as it’s constructed I’m not sure there’s really anything to discuss.”

Instead, the Nets re-signed their current center, Brook Lopez, to an extension. He had been linked to the Howard trade talk for months but knows he will at last begin the season in Brooklyn, ineligible to be traded until Jan. 15.

Free agency opened July 1 and teams were able to begin signing

players at 12:01 a.m. EDT Wednesday. Deron Williams got a quick start, signing his five-year, \$98 million extension with the Nets while in Las Vegas for the U.S. Olympic team’s training camp right after the window opened.

Even though he hasn’t been able to get Howard, Nets general manager Billy King kept Williams, traded for All-Star guard Joe Johnson and forward Reggie Evans, kept starting forward Gerald Wallace and signed Bosnian forward Mirza Teletovic.

“Billy’s done a good job of making some big moves and it makes us relevant again,” Williams said. “Just the move to Brooklyn itself, being in New York, makes things better.”

Things are looking up for another longtime lowly team, the Los Angeles Clippers. Blake Griffin wanted to be a part of it, signing a five-year extension that could pay him about \$95 million.

“It’s exciting and that was the goal from day one, to start building something and not just fall into the history of the program,” Griffin said of the Clippers, who also signed guard Jamal Crawford, “and I think we’ve done a good job of turning the ship in the right direction.”

Allen decided to leave one good situation for another, taking less money from the Heat than the Celtics were offering. With he and Lewis, Miami will have options all over the court.

“You’ve got to double-team LeBron. You have to double-team Dwyane Wade. You’ve got to double-team Chris Bosh. And then you think they’re going to leave Ray Allen open?” Lewis said. “They’ve got to leave somebody open. So I have to go shoot a million jumpers tonight and be ready to knock them down.”

Another good 3-point shooter, Ryan Anderson, has a new home. After leading the league in 3-pointers last season and winning the NBA’s Most Improved Player award, he was dealt by the Magic to New Orleans for Mexican Gus-

tavo Ayon.

The Hornets have three days to decide if they want Eric Gordon to play with Anderson. He signed an offer sheet in Phoenix for four years and \$58 million, but New Orleans has three days to match the deal for the restricted free agent.

Also: —The Knicks brought Camby back to New York in a sign-and-trade with Houston and re-signed guard JR Smith. They were still working to complete deals with Jason Kidd and Steve Novak, both of which had already been agreed to.

And even with Kidd coming aboard, Jeremy Lin will enter next season as the Knicks’ starting point guard. Coach Mike Woodson repeated that the Knicks would “absolutely” match an offer sheet Lin had agreed to sign with Houston, and that he would go to training camp as the starter.

—The Toronto Raptors acquired point guard Kyle Lowry from Houston and signed fellow guard Landry Fields to a three-year offer sheet worth nearly \$20 million that the Knicks would have three days to match.

—The Golden State Warriors agreed to send Dorell Wright to the Philadelphia 76ers in a three-team trade that will net guard Jarrett Jack from the New Orleans Hornets, two people familiar with the decision said.

Amid all the dealing, there was no chance Duncan was going anywhere. Terms were not disclosed, though Yahoo Sports cited anonymous sources in reporting the 36-year-old forward got a three-year, \$36 million deal from the Spurs.

“Tim Duncan has established himself as one of the best players in NBA history,” coach Gregg Popovich said. “He is an unselfish superstar who loves to compete and has only one goal when he steps on the court — to do whatever it takes to help his team win. We are all thrilled that he’ll spend his entire career as a San Antonio Spur.”