

Doubleheaders Returning To Summit League Slate

Basketball: Coyotes Will Host Twinbills On Jan. 31, Feb. 28

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Summit League basketball fans, get ready for double-headers next season.

With the 2014-15 men's schedule released Wednesday, two days after the women's slate, doubleheaders will become a reality, starting next January.

The University of South Dakota, which has said all along that it wanted to host more doubleheaders, will have two such situations next season.

- Saturday, Jan. 31 with both teams hosting newcomer Oral Roberts,

- Then Saturday, Feb. 28 with the women hosting Western Illinois and the men taking on South Dakota State.

Gone from the conference format is the true 'mirror' format, and in place is a kind of 'hybrid' look, that most notably, includes some doubleheaders.

"It's very conducive for the fans to be able to get out and support both teams," USD men's basketball coach Craig Smith said Wednesday while on the road recruiting.

"I think it would create more excitement as a whole to get more people involved."

The biggest challenge for USD?

A team with a whole new coaching staff and a number of new faces will have to play five of its first seven league games on the road.

"We've got our work cut out for us," Smith said. "We'll have to keep our guys together."

The flip side, he added, is that the back end of the league schedule is heavy on home games.

USD isn't alone in hosting doubleheaders, though. The South Dakota State women and men will play North Dakota State on Jan. 4, while both Coyote squads will face IUPUI on Jan. 24 in Indianapolis.

"I think it'll be fun for our fans to have a few doubleheaders," USD women's coach Amy Williams said this week.

"It'll just be very interesting how the fans adjust to coming to games on other days of the week. It's not quite that same consistency."

The Coyote women, for example, will host Summit League games on Thursday (3), Saturday (3), Wednesday and Friday. And the Coyote men will host conference games on Saturday (3), Thursday (2), Wednesday (2) and Friday.

South Dakota State, meanwhile, has one doubleheader next season at Frost Arena.

On Saturday, Feb. 21, the Jackrabbit women will host USD, followed by the Jackrabbit men against Oral Roberts.

According to SDSU women's coach Aaron Johnston, not every school in the

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South Dakota's Tyler Flack slams the ball home after splitting through the Cal State-Northridge defense during the first half of their men's basketball game this past season. USD will host two doubleheaders during the 2014-15 Summit League schedule, as the league announced its men's basketball schedules Wednesday morning.

P&D FILE PHOTO

A New Generation Emerging At Golf's Oldest Major

HOYLAKE, England (AP) — Even when he's not the favorite, Tiger Woods is still the show at the British Open.

Woods earned that attention by piling up majors at a faster rate than anyone in history, and the attention is just as great now because his recent past includes back surgery and his immediate future is more uncertain than ever. ESPN plans to show his entire round on-line Thursday.

Not to be overlooked at golf's oldest championship, however, is a new generation of stars.

Rickie Fowler and Harris English will be playing ahead of him. Two groups behind will be Jordan Spieth and Hideki Matsuyama. They are among 25 players who share a bond that speaks to the state of golf. Woods has never won a major during their professional careers.

Yes, they saw his dominance on TV. They just never experienced it.

They were not around for the decade when Woods won majors with regularity, sometimes by a record score, sometimes by a record margin. They missed the

days that were so Tiger-centric a player couldn't get through an interview without being asked something about Woods.

"Tiger ruined a lot of guys' lives," Charles Howell III, a longtime friend of Woods who lived through those times, said earlier in the year. "He caused a lot of people some sleepless Sunday nights. But he also motivated an entire generation behind him."

Howell's point was that while the next generation might have been in awe of Woods, being outside the arena allowed them to study him without getting scarred. They learned from the way he worked. They were more prepared than the generation before them.

The talk at this British Open is that it is more open than ever.

But then, that's been the case since Woods won his last major six years ago. Since that 2008 U.S. Open, 19 players have won majors, and no one has won more than two. In the 24 majors leading up to his last major, Woods won six, Phil Mickelson won three and no one else won more than one.

"Looking at the different amount of winners in the last five years at the major championships, we're seeing so many players win," Henrik Stenson said Wednesday. It's so competitive. At some point there might have been 20 guys battling out for it. And now it feels like anyone in the field can win if they have a great week. So it's definitely tighter."

Stenson, No. 2 in the world and among the favorites this week, will be playing alongside Woods for the opening two days.

"He's just one of the guys I need to beat if I want to do well this week," Stenson said. "But it's a good start if you know you can beat him."

Woods is playing his first major of the year because of March 31 back surgery. Returning to Royal Liverpool was always the target — he won his third claret jug on these links in 2006 when it was brown and fast, not green and slower as it is this year. Woods came back sooner than he expected, missing the cut at Congressional three weeks ago in what had the feeling of a 36-hole rehab assignment.

He feels healthy. He feels strong. And he still commands a presence.

That much was clear when Woods played only two holes Wednesday as spectators scrambled for a view. He brings energy and excitement to a golf tournament.

Does he bring intimidation?

The Open is his next opportunity to see if he can regain the mystique that a younger generation has yet to experience. Matt Kuchar, who played a practice round with Woods on Sunday, doesn't think it will take much. He's not sure Woods ever lost it.

"The kids today grew up idolizing him," Kuchar said. "He gets back on form again, I don't think that intimidation factor is gone at all. These are the kids that grew up watching him and wanting to be him."

Kuchar said it can be intimidating to play alongside, although Patrick Reed sure wasn't flustered having Woods in the group ahead of him at Doral, and Spieth didn't look rattled when he shot 63 at Torrey Pines (the North Course) with Woods in his group.

Is there a difference between watching dominance on TV and seeing it in person?

"You're saying a different intimidation for the guys who are now just coming up and just watched it on TV as opposed to my generation that were actually losing by 10 to it?" Kuchar said with a laugh. "I'm not sure. If I was to go shoot baskets with Michael Jordan right now, I would be pretty intimidated. So it's probably similar. The guys that played against him and got scored 40 on probably have a similar feeling to me in the awe that surrounds a guy like that."

It all unfolds on Thursday, where the only mystery greater than Woods in the English weather. The final day of practice featured sunshine and rain. Hoylake when it's green is there to be attacked — it's the only course on the Open rotation with four par 5s. The greens are not severe. The fairways are relatively flat, which makes them more fair.

All eyes will be on Woods, and there's nothing unusual about that. The difference is that no one is sure what they will see.



Yankton Lakers second baseman Myles Carda, left, puts a tag on Sioux Falls East's Austin Van Bockren during the first game of their VFW Teener baseball doubleheader on Wednesday at Riverside Field.

Lakers Pound Past Sioux Falls East

The Yankton Lakers pounded out 25 runs in claiming a doubleheader sweep of Sioux Falls East in VFW Teener baseball action on Wednesday at Riverside Field.

Yankton overcame an early 5-0 deficit to win the opener 14-7.

Trey Bakke went 3-4 with three RBI, and Caid Koletzky, Myles Carda, Garrett Tennant and Nate Eihacker each had

two hits and one RBI to lead Yankton. Oakley Palmer, Jackson Somsen and Jack Schoenfelder each had a hit and a RBI. Carter Peterson added a hit in the victory.

Isiah Woods started and picked up the win. Somsen pitched the final two innings.

Yankton carried its momentum into the second game, rolling to an 11-2 decision.

Carda, Tennant, Bakke and

Ben Wold each had two hits for the Lakers. Palmer, Koletzky, Peterson, Somsen, Lance Haak and Wyatt Duncan each had hits in the victory.

Kellen Franzen picked up the victory, with Bakke and Koletzky throwing in relief.

The Lakers next play in the Mid-Summer Shootout, which begins Friday in Sioux Falls. The Lakers open with Pierre, a 7:30 p.m. contest Friday evening.

Ex-Players Know NFL Concussion Deal Will Prompt Hard Choices

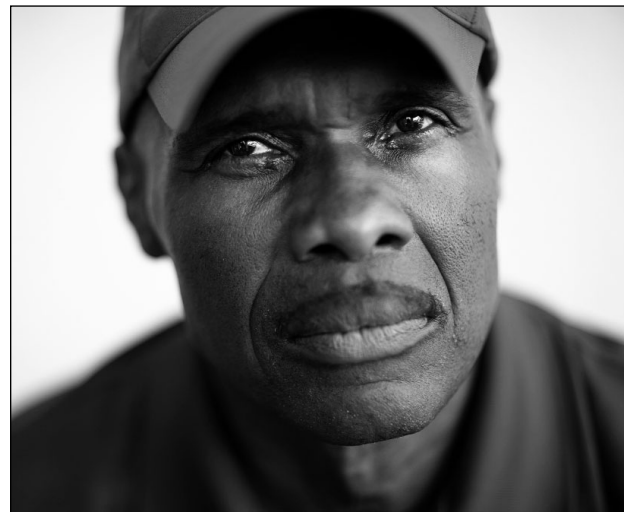
BY MIKE KASZUBA
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(MCT) Somewhere in the 163-page National Football League concussion settlement there is presumably help for Matt Blair, the former Minnesota Vikings All-Pro linebacker who is now 63 and has increasing memory problems.

Blair said he played through two concussions during his football days, although compared with some of his Vikings teammates he feels fortunate he can continue a freelance photography career. But he said his forgetfulness goes beyond what someone his age should be experiencing. "If someone tells me something right away, I just don't remember it right away," said Blair, who said he has not been medically diagnosed with a memory-loss disease. "I can feel it and know that it shouldn't be that way."

Critics of the settlement, which a federal judge in Pennsylvania tentatively approved last week, said Blair is typical of many of the estimated 20,000 former NFL players who will be asked to endorse the plan: They will have to decide whether to accept it before knowing whether they will ever get a dime from it.

Chris Seeger, the co-lead counsel for the retired NFL players who are supporting the settlement, said however that Blair and others like him will also need to think about something else: If they opt out of the agreement, they



Matt Blair, pictured July 9, in Plymouth, Minn., is a former Minnesota Vikings All-Pro linebacker who is now 63 and has increasing trouble remembering things.

will be on their own in trying to prove that any dementia or other brain trauma was caused by playing in the NFL. Under the agreement, any former player with an approved diagnosis will not have to show that the injury came from playing in the NFL.

"It offers [Blair] a lot," Seeger, speaking from New Jersey, said of the settlement. With the legal battle lines now drawn — and with former players having until Oct. 14 to opt out of the deal — lawyers are trying to sell the plan as the best deal they will likely get from the NFL, while other attorneys will be trying to amass enough opt outs to undermine the settlement.

Since 2011, more than 5,000 former players have filed concussion-related lawsuits against the NFL, and the

settlement's effects will be felt among hundreds of former Vikings and University of Minnesota and other local college players who had NFL careers. One early lawsuit, featuring 370 former players, included former Vikings Jim Marshall and Fred McNeill.

Former Gopher tight end Ben Utecht testified before the Senate Committee on Aging in Washington in June regarding concussions. Matt Birk, the former Vikings center who has assumed a high profile on player issues since retiring, said he had at least three football-related concussions.

"I think the only money that the NFL will ever pay on concussion-related injuries are in this settlement," said

Iowa-Iowa State To Kick Off At 2:30 p.m.

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Iowa's home game against rival Iowa State will kick off at 2:30 p.m. on Sept. 13.

The Hawkeyes announced the start time for their date against the Cyclones on Wednesday. The matchup will be televised

on ABC, ESPN or ESPN2.

Iowa also says its opener against Northern Iowa will start at 11 a.m.

The Hawkeyes will face Ball State at home on Sept. 6 at 2:30 p.m.