

# USD Men To Play Florida Gulf Coast At Sanford Pentagon

## Coyotes To Play Game In Sioux Falls For Second Straight Season

BY JEREMY HOECK

[jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net](mailto:jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net)

The University of South Dakota will get its crack at a school known by its 'Dunk City' moniker.

Announced Wednesday, USD will host Florida Gulf Coast – a member of the Atlantic Sun Conference – on Monday, Dec. 28 at the Sanford Pentagon in Sioux Falls.

The seventh Division I men's basketball game at the Pentagon since it opened in 2013, the match-up with Florida Gulf Coast will be the second for USD – the Coyotes lost to UNLV in front of a sellout crowd last season.

"I think it'll be fun," said Casey Kasperbauer, who will be one of

five seniors on the USD roster this season.

"It was fun getting to play UNLV," he added. "The seats were filled, and it was obviously mostly Coyote fans and some new faces that I haven't seen in Vermillion."

To that end, the UNLV game last season wasn't the only barometer Kasperbauer could use for such a game.

Two years ago, the Coyotes played a game against Wyoming – a much more familiar opponent – out in Rapid City, which meant a whole new group of fans.

When it comes to Florida Gulf Coast, however, the only barometer would be the 2013 NCAA Tournament, when the Eagles became the

only No. 15 seed to advance to the Round of 16.

"We all know about their run in the NCAA Tournament. That's how I know them," Kasperbauer said.

Even with a new head coach (Joe Dooley), FGCU hasn't slowed down. The Eagles have posted three consecutive 20-plus win seasons, and last season went 22-11 on the way to a CollegeInsider.com Tournament appearance.

Florida Gulf Coast, which beat South Dakota State by 13 points last season in Sioux Falls, will host the Jackrabbits on Dec. 19 in Fort Myers. There was no announcement Wednesday if USD would make a similar return trip to Florida.

For now, the Coyotes will savor

the opportunity to play in front of another sellout crowd an hour away from Vermillion.

"Our players and everyone involved with our game last year in the Pentagon had a fantastic experience," head coach Craig Smith said in the release.

"This game in Sioux Falls is a great way to play in front of our largest alumni and donor base."

Tickets go on sale next Tuesday at 11 a.m. at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com) and at the Pentagon box office.

"The people at the Sanford Pentagon run a first-class event," said FGCU's Dooley. "The great hospitality we experienced from every one last year made it an easy choice for us to return again this season."

For USD, meanwhile, it'll be a rare opportunity to face a team from the Atlantic Sun. About the only connection to that league would be New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), which like USD is a former member of the Great West Conference.

"It's going to be really fun to play against an opponent that we wouldn't normally play against," Kasperbauer said. "It's good to play a high quality opponent, a mid-major like us."

Among the other previously-announced non-conference games next season for the Coyotes: At Kansas State, a return trip to UNLV and a Sacramento State Tournament (with Sacramento State, Pacific and

COYOTES | PAGE 8

## Elster Headed To MMC

Taylor Elster of Sioux Falls will transfer to Mount Marty College and compete for the softball program, according to an announcement from MMC.



Elster

Elster, a pitcher who played one year at South-west Minnesota State, was a two-year varsity letterwinner at Brandon Valley High School, earning honorable mention All-State honors as a senior.

"After watching her pitch we thought she could help our program. She has the ability to throw with velocity and is determined in the circle," MMC head softball coach Albert Fernandez said of Elster. "With hard work and dedication Taylor will continue to develop and become a part of our pitching staff in the years to come."

The daughter of Bruce and Angie Elster of Sioux Falls, she plans to major in exercise wellness at MMC.

## Crush, Flamez Split Pair

The Yankton Fury Crush split a girls' softball double-header with the Vermillion Flamez on Tuesday at Yankton's Riverside Park.

In the opener, Yankton bounced back from an early deficit to claim a 14-3 victory.

Elsie Marquardt had a double, a single, two RBI and a run scored to lead a balanced Yankton attack. Brooke Madson had two hits, a RBI and two runs scored. Rachel Hamburg had a hit, two RBI and two runs scored. Chloe Koletzky had a hit, a RBI and two runs scored. Tiffany Nelson and Payton Vellek each had a hit, a RBI and a run scored. Bailey Sejnoha had a hit and a run scored. Leann Sasse had a RBI and two runs scored. Bridget Nolz scored twice in the win.

Vellek picked up the win, allowing five hits.

Vermillion bounced back to take the nightcap 9-7.

Madson had two hits, two runs scored and a RBI

CRUSH | PAGE 8

## Dancing On The Diamond



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton's Miles Carda, right, tries to avoid a tag attempt by Renner's Carter Halvorson, 1, during the opening game of their American Legion junior baseball doubleheader on Wednesday at Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field. Carda was called out on the play. Results were not available at presstime.

## Lakers, Reds Score Wins



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton Lakers Kieren Luellman, center, is congratulated after driving in the game-winning run of the Lakers' 7-6 victory over Mitchell in VFW Teener baseball action on Wednesday at Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

Kieren Luellman's single with the bases loaded in the ninth lifted the Yankton Lakers to a 7-6 victory over Mitchell in VFW Teener baseball action on Wednesday.

The game was originally scheduled for a double-header but was shortened to a single nine-inning game due to available personnel.

Michael Drotzmann had four hits, including a double, and one RBI for Yankton. Rex Ryken had a pair of hits. Cole Sawatzke had a hit and two RBI. Peyton Mueller, Case Roth and Luellman each had a hit and a RBI. Owen Feser and Sam Mooney each had a hit in the victory.

Ryken picked up the win in relief.

The Lakers, 17-8, travel to Renner on Monday.

BASEBALL | PAGE 8

## Micko Named First Augie Swim Coach

SIoux FALLS – Augustana director of athletics Slade Larscheid announced Wednesday that Lindsey Micko has been named the first head coach of Viking women's swimming.

Augustana athletics announced the addition of women's swimming as its 19th varsity sport on April 21. Micko will begin her duties at Augustana on Sept. 1 and will lead her team into competition during the 2016-17 academic year.

Micko, a native of Brookings, has spent the last four years as the head age group coach with the First Colony Swim Team in Sugar Land, Texas. With the First Colony Swim Team, Micko oversaw 9-14 year-old swimmers for a gold medal swim club, including the management of staff, coaching of two groups and the development of an IMX program. During her time with the first Colony Swim Team, she was nominated for Gulf Swimming Age Group Coach of the Year and coached athletes to multiple USA Swimming Top 10 performances. She was also a member of the USA Swimming Age Group Development Committee.

From 2008-12, she was the senior team coach and head age group coach for the Cypress Fairbanks Swim Club in Houston, Texas where she coached two relay teams that were ranked No. 1 in the country and several USA Top 10 individual swimmers. Micko led the Cypress Fairbanks Swim Club to Gold Medal Status as one of the top teams in the country. She was responsible for the day-to-day coaching of high-level swim group with swimmers ranging from 13-18 years-old as well as

AUGIE | PAGE 8

## Tigers' Roth Headed To USD

BY JEREMY HOECK

[jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net](mailto:jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net)

It's already been a busy summer for Ethan Roth, but he found time to finalize his college decision.

The University of South Dakota. Roth, a senior this fall at Harrisburg High School, announced Wednesday that he verbally committed to play football at USD, where both of his parents attended college.

From football and basketball workouts, and a construction job, Roth – a 6-foot-4, 280-pound defensive tackle – hasn't had time for much else this summer.

"It's not bad," he said Wednesday night from Vermillion, where he and his Harrisburg teammates are participating in a USD team camp. "It's a good way to spend my time."

Roth, who helped guide Harrisburg to the Class 11AA football semifinals last season, was named the offensive line MVP at a North Dakota State camp last month. And it was around that time when he was extended an offer by the USD coaches during a visit to the Vermillion campus.

The school held a special place

in his heart, said Roth, whose father Bob and mother Sarah were both former students.

"My parents went here and I've always followed USD football," Roth said. "I enjoyed everyone down here, and they have my major. Academics is a starting factor for me."

The opportunity to potentially help turn the tides at USD was also a factor in his decision, Roth said. The Coyotes went 2-10 last season and are just 3-21 in the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

"Every single player goes to a school to help make a difference," Roth said. "I want to help make this one of the best programs out there. I'm really confident in their program."

Roth also knows what it's like to help a team turn the corner. He also plays on the Harrisburg boys' basketball team, which won just one game last season.

"You just have to keep getting better," he said. "That's the good thing about it, it keeps you motivated."

Verbal commitments are not binding until athletes sign on National Signing Day.

Follow @jhoeck on Twitter



P&D FILE PHOTO

Harrisburg's Ethan Roth, right, battles a Yankton player during a Class 11AA playoff football game in the 2014 season. Roth announced on Wednesday that he has committed to the University of South Dakota.