

UND President: No Nickname Will Be An Option

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Selecting a new nickname for the University of North Dakota has been so fraught with backlash that the school's president said Friday he'd reconsider another option — none at all.

A committee submitted a list of five potential nicknames earlier this week for UND President Robert Kelly to approve for a public vote, but didn't include the possibility of going forward as "just North Dakota." That prompted people who want no nickname to make angry postings on social media and organize a petition drive and at least one protest.

Kelley believes a new nickname would be in the best interest of the

Grand Forks school, he said in an email Friday morning to the campus community, but that he still wants to review fans' opinions on having no moniker.

"I think students, alumni, and fans would benefit from having cheers, chants and songs that connect to a true nickname," Kelley wrote.

The five potential nicknames are Roughriders, North Stars, Fighting Hawks, Nodaks and Sundogs. The school has been without a nickname for the last three years after the state Board of Higher Education retired the controversial Fighting Sioux moniker that the NCAA deemed hostile and abusive. That

followed a decades-long debate, a failed attempt to fight the NCAA, which threatened sanctions, and a failed attempt by lawmakers to save the name.

UND spokesman Peter Johnson said Kelley's reconsideration is appropriate because the committee was torn over whether to advance no nickname to the list of finalists, eventually voting 7-4 to keep it off.

"They clearly had different thoughts on it. There were people who were eloquent and passionate on both sides of the issue," Johnson said.

The issue has even sparked protests, such as one Friday outside of the Chester Fritz Auditorium, which

is located across the street from the president's residence. Organizer Krista Easterday, a Fargo resident who supports the school not having a nickname, says she doesn't think the school is listening to the majority of opinions — no nickname.

"Right now, it's all about being heard and it's all about taking a stand against something that thousands of people have been upset about for months, but have remained quiet about," she said.

Lowell Schweigert, a former UND quarterback and member of the nickname committee, said it appears many of those who favor no nickname are trying to re-ignite the campaign to bring back the Fighting

Sioux moniker.

"It's probably time for some acceptance and it's time for some serious thought and it's probably time to put some past disappointments and hurts and emotions behind us.

"If now is not a good time to choose a nickname, when is a good time?" he asked.

For Easterday, no matter what the outcome is, she would be, "perfectly content that when it is opened for a public vote that people picked a new nickname. Whether it's Roughriders or Nodaks or whatever, I would bow down to the majority and be completely happy with that."

S.D. State B Legion Tournament

Vermillion Downs Garretson 8-4



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK

Vermillion's Jake Odens slides safely into home in the opening game of the Class B Legion baseball tournament in Salem.



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK

Tabor's Cole Uecker lines a single at the Class B Legion baseball state tournament in Salem.

West Central Rolls Past Tabor 18-8 In Opener

BY MICHAEL HAMMOND
sports@yankton.net

SALEM — In the South Dakota Class B State American Legion Baseball Tournament, West Central easily handled Tabor, 18-8, in seven innings Friday in Salem.

The game was close early with both teams putting up two runs in the first inning. Tabor took the lead after the second thanks to Brendan Bares scoring on a single hit by Chase Kortan. West Central got a run of their own in the top of the third to tie the game up on a bases loaded hit-by-pitch. In the bottom of the third Hunter Young was able to respond for Tabor by hitting a three-run home run the left field giving them the lead, 6-3.

Things then started to get rough for Tabor in the fourth after a close call that did not go their way. West Central then went on to score seven runs in the inning to take a four run lead. Tabor could gain back one of the runs the

following inning when Cole Uecker hit a single which plated Kortan.

Three more runs were then tacked on by West Central in the top of the fifth making the score of the game, 13-7. Tabor was able to add another run in the bottom half before allowing West Central to score five in the seventh to complete the ten-run rule and win the game.

West Central coach Mark Rockafellow did not see a game like this coming.

"They are a good ball club," Rockafellow said. "We expected to see Chase (Kortan) today and we did.

"We did what we have been doing lately and that is come out and hit the ball."

Justin Sebert pitched all seven innings for West Central allowing eight runs on six hits and two walks, collecting the win. Eight out of the nine batters for West Central were able to collect

Odens, Vermillion Play West Central Today

BY MICHAEL HAMMOND
sports@yankton.net

SALEM — Vermillion started the South Dakota State Class B American Legion Baseball Tournament with a victory.

In Friday's first game in Salem, Vermillion was able to defeat Garretson 8-4.

Vermillion was able to jump out to an early lead in the top of the second inning scoring three runs thanks to two Garretson errors and a sacrifice fly by Nate Robertson. In the third they were able to keep the momentum going with a single by Jack Brown that plated Cole Anderson, who had just stolen a base. Garretson was able to bring in a run in the bottom of the third with a double from Cole Fiegen. Vermillion scored the rest of their runs in the fourth inning with hits from Jake Odens, Carter Kratz, and Anderson along with walks from two player, to take an, 8-1 lead.

Odens started the game for Vermillion, pitching five innings and allowing one run on six hits and three walks, earning the win, before giving way to Kratz in the sixth.

"I wanted to win," Odens said. "That was my mindset before the game even started."

Kratz pitched two scoreless innings before allowing a run in the eighth in-



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK

Ethan James steps on third for an out during Vermillion's 8-4 win over Garretson in the Class B Legion baseball state tournament in Salem.

ning. In the ninth inning Garretson was on the comeback trail scoring two runs thanks to three hits off of Kratz and an error. The play of the game was from Odens, who had been moved to right field and grabbed a ball that got by the first baseman and throw out the runner at second to end the game.

"I was just reacting," Odens said. "I didn't try to do too much and it worked out.

Vermillion coach Jason Gault was pleased with the victory in the tournament's first game. Gault is also in his final year coaching Vermillion Legion.

"I thought (Odens) did a good job keeping the ball down," Gault said. "I thought our hitters did a good job of hitting strikes in their zone with guys on base.

"It has been an absolute pleasure being involved in Vermillion baseball, and we have a community that really believes in what we do."

Although they won the game Vermillion had a tough time when Garretson's Micah Mader was at the plate. Mader was able to go 4-for-4 with a walk, a stolen base, and a run scored. Mader also played innings at second base, shortstop, and third base in the field.

Vermillion's next game will be at 5 p.m. today (Saturday) against the winner from the Tabor vs West Central game.

"The key is going to be pitching," Gault said. "We have Hunter Christopherson on the mound, he's kind of like Jake, and he's got a good fastball and a great off speed pitch."

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Baseball: Menno Blanks Lesterville In 6B

IRENE — Macon Oplinger struck out nine in a complete game shutout as the Menno Mad Frogs blanked Lesterville 3-0 on Friday night at the District 6B Amateur Baseball Tournament in Irene.

Oplinger held Lesterville to four hits. Dylan Lehr doubled and singled for Menno, while Josh Berndt singled twice.

Alex Wagner struck out 10 in a complete game loss for Lesterville.

Lesterville will play the Freeman-Tabor loser on Sunday at 7:30 p.m., while Menno will play the Freeman-Tabor winner next Tuesday at 8 p.m.

LESTERVILLE 000 000 000 - 0 4 0
MENNO 100 001 01X - 3 6 0
Alex Wagner and Zach Johnson; Macon Oplinger and Tale Brucker, Jared Nelson (2)

son hit a grand slam and a two-run home run to help top-seeded Crofton rout Scotland 25-0 in five innings from Thursday night at the District 6B Tournament.

Tyler Zimmerman added a double and two singles for Crofton, while Kyle Mueller, Nick Hegge, Brandon Hegge and Alex Mueller all doubled and singled. Ben Hegge (three innings) and Gage Rethwisch (two innings) combined to hold Scotland to two hits.

Scotland will play Irene in an elimination game Sunday night at 5 p.m., while Crofton meets Wynot in next Tuesday's semifinals at 6 p.m.

SCOTLAND 000 00 - 0 2 3
CROFTON 449 8X - 25 17 0
Josh Vaith, Jared Klobik (3) and Anthony Walloch; Ben Hegge, Gage Rethwisch (4) and Carl Schieffer

Expos scored eight runs in the second inning and held off Irene 11-8 in Thursday night's first round meeting at the District 6B Tournament.

Lee Heimes singled three times for Wynot, while Steve Heimes singled twice and Kyle Wiepen doubled. Scott Morrison pitched into the third inning and Jason Sudbeck got the win in relief.

For Irene, Simon Healy doubled twice and singled, while George Sees and Trevor Jacobsen both singled twice. Healy took the loss.

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WYNOT 080 012 00X - 11 11 1
Simon Healy, Mike King (7) and Sam Parkinson; Scott Morrison, Jason Sudbeck (3) and Steve Heimes

VFW Teeners
SIOUX FALLS — The Yankton Lakers wrapped up their VFW Teeners regional tournament with a split of

two games Friday in Sioux Falls. Yankton beat Brandon 14-4 in the first game and was later defeated 18-3 by Sioux Falls West.

In the first game against Brandon, Rex Ryken was 4-4 with a grand slam, a triple and two singles for Yankton. Michael Drotzmann added a pair of hits and a pair of RBIs, while Sam Mooney had two hits and an RBI. Kyle Withrow chipped in with a double.

Levi Wiersma pitched three innings for the win.

In the second game against Sioux Falls West, Owen Feser had a hit and an RBI for Yankton, while Ethan Wishon, Wiersma, Ryken, Drotzmann and Mooney all had one hit.

Yankton will next play Pierre in a play-in game to the state tournament. The

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