

Basketball | Summit League Championships

Jacks Claim Fifth Straight Title



South Dakota State players and fans celebrate after the Jackrabbits beat South Dakota 56-53 for the championship of the Summit League Women's Basketball Tournament on Tuesday at Sioux Falls Arena. SDSU has never lost in the Summit League Tournament, winning its fifth straight league title. USD was playing in its first Summit League Tournament.

SDSU Holds Off Coyotes 56-53

BY CHRIS RILEY
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SIoux FALLS — When Sioux Falls landed the Summit League Championships a handful of years ago, the hope was that someday South Dakota's local talent and teams would be on display in the college game's biggest state. Mission accomplished, as USD and SDSU played down to the wire in a wildly entertaining women's final before a Summit League women's championship attendance record 6,153 fans at the Sioux Falls arena on Tuesday afternoon in a nationally televised game.

A new chapter was added to the schools' storied rivalry as the Jackrabbits overcame a late deficit to claim a 56-53 victory and the automatic NCAA Tournament berth that comes with it.

"It wasn't a game where things came easy to either team," SDSU head coach Aaron Johnston said. "To have the fans from both sides makes for an emotional game. It's one people will remember for a long time."

Trailing 46-41 with 8:57 left in the contest after a pair of Tempestt Wilson free throws, the Jackrabbits went on a 15-7 run to close the game, their 15th straight Summit League Tournament victory — extending their Summit League record.

SDSU senior Ashley Eide, a first-team All-Summit League selection, scored eight of her 10 points during that final nine-minute stretch after struggling for most of the game with foul trouble.

Megan Waytashek led the Jackrabbits with 11 points and seven rebounds, as the sophomore aided a 19-for-23 effort from the free-throw line for SDSU. Senior Katie Lingle grabbed a game-high 10 rebounds and added eight points.

In order to win the championship, all of us had to gut it out," Lingle said. "They (USD) played really tough."

The Coyotes came out strong, going up by as many as nine points in the first-half before taking a 32-28 lead into the locker room.

"We feel really disappointed to have let this one slip away," USD coach Amy Williams said. "I could not be more proud of my team — they fought and executed our game plan, played tremendous defense and played excellent on the boards. We just put (SDSU) on the foul line a little too much in the second half."

Coyotes' sophomore Nicole Seekamp, named tourney MVP, had 17 points at the break but scored just three in the final 20 minutes as SDSU's defensive pressure held the Coyotes to only 21 second-half points.

"We knew coming into the game that we couldn't get down in the first half like we did in the first two games," Seekamp said. "We just

Commentary: Cornemann, Jacks Maintain Edge Over Rival Coyotes

BY JEREMY HOECK
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SIoux FALLS — Six minutes in a regular season game might seem significant, and in many cases, they are, but in a nationally-televised championship game, it's a different story.

Chloe Cornemann will tell you as much.

Throw in the idea of a record — not to mention heavy with blue and yellow — crowd, an NCAA Tournament berth on the line and faced with beating a rival for the third time, and those six minutes on the court feel a tad more intense than an ESD game.

"I'm not going to lie, I was very nervous," the Yankton native and South Dakota State freshman guard said after walking out of the team locker room Tuesday afternoon.

The big stage like a Summit League women's final has a way of getting to even the most intense and otherwise focused players like Cornemann.

Though her championship game stat line reads 0-for-0 shooting with zero points and two turnovers, being on the court for such an environment Tuesday at the Sioux Falls Arena wasn't exactly like sitting in the stands two years ago watching her sister, Ketty, cut down the nets for the Jacks.

"Oh yeah, it's a hundred times different," Chloe said. "The nerves, the feelings, the intensity, it was definitely different."

That was about where the differences ended Tuesday, though.

Winner of now five consecutive Summit League post-season crowns, SDSU again got the better of its in-state rivals south on Interstate 29. In what was there 32nd win in the last 35 games over the Coyotes, the Jacks did little to let the gap narrow in the Summit.

Let's face it, it was the matchup we all wanted.

Everyone wanted to see a State-



South Dakota's Lisa Loeffler, 44, finds herself surrounded by South Dakota State defenders during the second half of the Summit League Championships on Tuesday at Sioux Falls Arena.

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PLAIN TALK FILE PHOTO
Vermillion Athletic Director Jason Huska shakes hands with Coach Gary Culver after he and Principal Curt Cameron (at Culver's right) presented the coach with the game ball on Sept. 23, 2011. Vermillion defeated the Lennox Orioles 20-0 that night in the DakotaDome to give Culver his 200th coaching victory. Culver and longtime gymnastics coach Mark Upward both resigned their coaching positions on Monday night.

Vermillion Begins Search To Replace Two Longtime Coaches

BY DAVID LIAS
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Administrators and the board of the Vermillion School District will follow a standard procedure of placing "Help Wanted" advertisements in education-related publications as they begin the search to replace two of the state's most experienced high school coaches.

Monday night, the board agreed to release both Gary Culver and Mark Upward from their extra duty assignments as football coach and gymnastics coach, respectively.

Both men will continue in their roles as educators for the Vermillion School District. Culver teaches mathematics at Vermillion High School. Upward is the district's ele-

mentary principal.

"The openings will be advertised, and we'll take applications, and screen the applications," Superintendent Mark Froke said Tuesday. "Interviews will be taken, and we'll select the best possible people that we can to serve the students and the school district."

Culver, the all-time winningest coach at Vermillion High School, has completed 36 years at the helm of the Tanager football program. During his tenure, he led the Tanagers to five state championships in 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995 and 1999.

Under his direction, the Tanagers also won 10 regional championships, 12 Big Eight Conference

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SDSU Men Return To NCAA Tourney

BY JEREMY HOECK
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SIoux FALLS — There was a brief, though not so quiet, chant by the blue and yellow-clad fans for Nate Wolters.

"M-V-P."
And once again, the South Dakota State senior point guard didn't disappoint. All he did was lead his team to a second straight NCAA Tournament berth.

"It feels about the same, really," said Wolters, who was named Tournament MVP after leading the Jacks past North Dakota State 73-67 in Tuesday night's Summit League men's championship at the Sioux Falls Arena.

"It's just an unbelievable experience, we love playing here," Wolters added. "Being able to win two times in a row is a great experience for us."

Sure, Wolters had help from his Jacks teammates, but his dominating stat line (27 points, 6 rebounds, 6 assists) and leadership proved too much for the third-seeded Bison.

He was also rather tough, finishing the game with blood on his hand and jersey.

"The guy plays 40 minutes a game, it's not like he's standing around," SDSU coach Scott Nagy said. "Those last five minutes he got after Taylor Braun; everywhere he turned, Nate was there."

"Nate is a tremendous defender when he decides he's going to be a good defender."

Prior to tip-off, and as the game showed, North Dakota's defense was going to be an issue. The Bison surrendered

58 and 43 points in their first two victories in the tournament, but gave up significantly more to the Jacks.

"A lot of times, good offenses can beat good defenses, it just can," Nagy when asked about the Bison's traditionally strong defense.

"We have a player in Nate Wolters that nobody's ever really been able to stop."

The matchup was the first post-season tournament title showdown between the two long-time rivals since 1980, well before any of the current players were born.

They were, however, familiar with each other — they were two spots apart in the RPI — and were well aware of the other's tournament success.

"We were confident coming in," SDSU senior Tony Fiegen said. "Being the number one seed, we realized we had a target on our back. We were experienced, and we couldn't let that affect us."

Nor could the Jacks let the NDSU physicality get to them.

At one point in the intense second half, Wolters scored nine straight points for the Jackrabbits — who needed every one at the time.

The Jacks responded to NDSU's surge of four three-pointers — cutting the deficit to 54-52 at the 7:23 mark — with consecutive 3's by Wolters and Dykstra, keeping the crowd loud and involved.

North Dakota State got as close as 66-60 with 1:07 remaining, but the combination



DICK CARLSON/INERTIA
Nate Wolters of South Dakota State, 3, drives toward Kory Brown of North Dakota State during their championship game at the 2013 Summit League Tournament at the Sioux Falls Arena.

Brown Fired As Hoops Coach At UMKC

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri-Kansas City has fired basketball coach Matt Brown after six seasons and with the program poised to leave the Summit League for the Western Athletic Conference.

Brown was 64-122 with the 'Roos, including an 8-24 record this season. The longtime assistant to current Michigan coach John Beilein had just one winning season in Kansas City. He had one year left on his contract.

The Roos' season ended Sunday with a 69-58 loss to North Dakota State in the quarterfinals of the Summit League tournament in Sioux Falls, S.D.

UMKC, which has been playing Division I basketball since 1987, has already announced plans to join the WAC next season. It has been a member of the Summit League since 1994.

The Roos have never qualified for the NCAA tournament.

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