

Press&Dakotan DAILY DOSE

Daily opinions from the P&D Sports Staff on local and national high school, college and professional sports.



BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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ABERDEEN — There is something to be said for the work it takes to be consistently at or near the top. Take, for example, the White River boys' basketball team. For six consecutive years, the Tigers have ended their season in the state championship game. White River has three championships, two runners-up and one to-be-determined. This year the Tigers have been incredibly impressive, rolling past opponents at a rate of better than 40 points per game, with their one loss coming to DeLaSalle, Minn., one of the elite bigger programs of that state.

Hard Not To Be Impressed With White River's Run

To put White River's run in perspective, no other boys' basketball program in South Dakota history had ever made six consecutive finals. Custer was the only other one with five straight, from 1989-1993 (three titles).

Coach Eldon Marshall has built the program in a manner you would want a program to be built. He has asked kids to work hard on both ends of the floor, play fundamentally sound basketball and play with energy and unselfishness.

That dedication has begun to pay off in other sports as well, as White River's football program has also begun to thrive.

When will White River's run end? It's hard to say. But lessons of hard work and teamwork will pay off for them for years to come.

HOOSIERS FOURTH GRADE CHAMPS



The Yankton Hoosiers boys' basketball team won the fourth grade division championship in the Sioux Falls Lincoln spring tournament, held March 8-9. The Hoosiers have also won titles in four other tournaments this season. Team members include: (front, L-R) Aidan Feser, Matthew Mors, Carson Koletzky, Brodey Peterson, (back) coach Aaron Feser, Trevor Fitzgerald, Jimmie Cunningham, Austin Frick, Quentin Moser and coach Jay Fitzgerald.

Somsen Pitches Jacks To Shutout

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Yankton native Layne Somsen and J.D. Moore combined on a 7-hit shutout as the South Dakota State baseball team blanked Saint Louis 3-0 Friday afternoon in the opening game of a 3-game series.

Somsen struck out six Billiken batters and walked only one in 8 2/3 innings. The senior right-hander exited after giving up two hits in the bottom of the ninth, before Moore retired one batter to end the game.

Doane's Engle Throws Perfect Game

CRETE, Neb. — Doane College pitcher Elliott Engle faced 21 Manhattan Christian College batters on Friday afternoon, preventing each one of them from reaching base to record the school's first perfect game. The Tigers won 7-0, earning their third-straight shutout.

Engle finished the game with 12 strikeouts in seven innings of work as he improved to 2-2 on the year. He has pitched shutouts in his last two outings.

Cornbelt Vs. CBH All-Star Hoops Game Rosters Set

ALEXANDRIA — A total of six area players from the Cornbelt Conference will compete in the March 19 senior all-star basketball game against the Custer Battlefield Highway Conference on

March 19 in Alexandria.

The girls' game will start at 5:30 p.m., followed by the boys' game at 7 p.m. Mount Marty College and Dakota Wesleyan women's and men's coaches will guide the teams.

On the Cornbelt Conference girls' roster are Kylie Hughes and Katherine Luke from Marion, Ashton Deide from Menno and Dina Soulek of Freeman. Among the Cornbelt boys' players are Shaun Becker and Caleb Lang from Freeman.

Lesterville Athleing Meeting March 17

LESTERVILLE — The Lesterville Athletic Association annual meeting will be Sunday, March 17 at 2 p.m. at the Lesterville Community Center.

For more information, contact Mary Kulish at 605-364-7617.

'Fighting Sioux' Letters For Sale

GRAND FORKS, N.D. (AP) — Ralph Engelstad Arena on the University of North Dakota campus is selling one full set of 'Home of the Fighting Sioux' letters from the outside of the building.

The sale is through an online auction at <http://www.theralph.com>. It opens Monday and closes on Friday, March 29. Each letter is 2 feet high and the full set is about 70 feet long.

The university has retired the Fighting Sioux nickname. Sixty-eight percent of North Dakota voters last June voted to drop the nickname deemed "hostile and abusive" by the NCAA.

Cassel Ready To Backup Ponder

Vikings

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MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Matt Cassel is signed, sealed and delivered in Minnesota, and there is no question what his role will be with the Vikings.

"The fact of the matter is," Cassel said in a conference call on Friday, "Christian is the starting quarterback."

When Cassel agreed to terms on Thursday, there was speculation that he was coming in to compete with third-year starter Christian Ponder for the No. 1 job. But Vikings coach Leslie Frazier and GM Rick Spielman stand firmly behind Ponder, who has been up and down in his first two seasons.

So they went into this offseason in search of a quality veteran who would accept his role, but also be able to handle the offense capably if Ponder were to go down with injury or fail to progress as he is expected. Cassel appears to fit the mold. He was a career backup in college at Southern Cal then spent his first three seasons in the NFL buried on the bench behind Tom Brady. When Brady went down with a knee injury in 2008, Cassel stepped in and led the Patriots to an 11-5 record.

"I think I understand the role completely, without a doubt," Cassel said. "At the same time, both being a starter and a backup, your preparation, what you do on a daily basis, doesn't change." It was a whirlwind courtship. Cassel was released on Thursday, got on a plane to Minnesota and agreed to terms on a deal by late Thursday afternoon.

After making the Pro Bowl with 27 touchdowns and seven interceptions in his second season in Kansas City in 2010, Cassel and the Chiefs struggled the next two years. He threw six touchdowns and 12 interceptions in nine

and downs. They believed he was missing that threat on the outside to make his life easier. The two-time Pro Bowler will join a non-descript receiving group that includes veteran Jerome Simpson, who is coming off an injury-plagued 2012 season, and youngsters Stephen Burton and Jarius Wright.

The Vikings no doubt will look to add more in the draft coming up next month as well, but having Jennings in the fold gives the group instant credibility and an accomplished veteran that can serve as a mentor to the younger players in the group. Jennings was widely hailed as a great locker room presence who relished charitable work in the Green Bay community, which certainly can't hurt as well.

One of the main reasons the Vikings parted with Harvin was

the trouble the volatile 24-year-old would occasionally cause behind the scenes. That won't be an issue with Jennings.

"He's as great a player," Ponder said of Jennings earlier this week. "He's been doing great things in Green Bay, and he'd bring leadership to that position. Kind of a dynamic guy you can put in the slot and outside. I've always admired his work in Green Bay, and he seems like a great guy to have on a team."

The move was somewhat surprising from Spielman, who has preached that he wants to build through the draft rather than make many big splashes in the free agent market. He hinted at the opening of free agency that the Vikings would stay true to that philosophy, and they did through the first few days.

They locked up their own free agents, including right tackle Phil Loadholt and full-back Jerome Felton, and signed backup quarterback Matt Cassel to a one-year deal.

But it turns out that the chance to add Jennings to help Ponder proved too much to pass up.

games last season for the 2-14 Chiefs, who cut him with two years left on his contract.

"It was a long year. There's no doubt about it," Cassel said. "Anytime a team goes 2-14 there's a lot of things you'd like to change and a lot of things you'd like to fix."

Cassel worked out with Ponder in Los Angeles last summer and the two have already talked on the phone about being teammates.

"I think we'll have a great (meeting) room," Cassel said. "I'm there to add value. I'm there to help him out in whatever capacity that is, and go from there."

He said all the right things on Friday, but there it's hard to imag-

ine that he would have jumped so quickly at this opportunity if he didn't see a chance for him to eventually get a chance to play and re-establish himself as a starting-caliber quarterback.

Ponder has a history of injuries, both in college and his first two seasons in the NFL, including last season when he was unable to play in the playoff game against Green Bay because of an arm injury. That forced the Vikings to start backup Joe Webb, who faltered badly in the 24-10 loss.

Cassel no doubt will inspire much more confidence, both from the coaching staff and the rest of the offense, to be able to run coordinator Bill Musgrave's offense if he need be.

from the basket in the final four minutes, they kept on the attack, with Jacobsen scoring five points in the final 94 seconds.

"Last night we stalled too much and let (James Valley Christian) back in," Huether said. "Tonight we tried to be aggressive."

The Cougars dropped behind by double digits in consecutive state tournament games, a habit they will have to break to in order to win its first state title as a co-op.

"We know we have to be better at the start. We can't come out like we have the last two nights," Huether said. "If we played like we can play, it should be a good game."

Dupree (23-2) will face South Central in the third place game, a 6 p.m. start.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/aceman904

VIBORG-HURLEY 37, DUPREE 34
VIBORG-HURLEY (23-2): Pretty Weasel 0-2 0-0 0, Lonbrake 0-3 0-0 0, N.Widow 4-11 2-2 12, T.Widow 2-5 1-1 5, Creighton 2-10 0-0 6, Deal 3-7 0-1 7, Shaving 2-7 0-2 4. Totals: 13-45 3-8 34.
DUPREE (23-2): Gerdes 1-7 2-3 4, Bjerkas 0-1 0-0 0, Huether 4-6 1-2 11, Jacobsen 3-5 3-4 11, Hora 3-9 3-4 9, Andersen 1-6 0-1 2. Totals: 12-34 9-14 37.
DUPREE 8 15 47-34
VIBORG-HURLEY 9 9 12-37
3-pointers: Dupree 5-21 (Pretty Weasel 0-1, Lonbrake 0-3, N.Widow 2-4, T.Widow 0-3, LeBeau 2-7), Deal 1-3, V4H 4-13 (Gerdes 0-3, Huether 2-3, Jacobsen 2-3, Hora 0-2, Andersen 0-2). Rebounds: Dupree 27 (Shaving 7), V4H 31 (Andersen 10). Assists: Dupree 6 (N.Widow 3), V4H 6 (Jacobsen 3). Total fouls: 15, V4H 13.

Cougars

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"We made some small tweaks to our defense," Schoenfeld said. "They were getting the ball in the post in the first half, and that was hurting us. We did a better job of keeping the ball out of their in the second half."

Huether came out on fire in the fourth quarter. After cashing in a free throw, he banked in a jumper to give the Cougars their first lead of the second half. Two possessions later, he drained a three-pointer to stretch the Viborg-Hurley lead to four, 31-27.

"That was a big shot," Hood said. "But like we told our kids, the game wasn't decided at the end. There were six points we should have had in the first quarter, missed bunnies ..."

A Cash Deal three-pointer helped end the Cougar run, but Dupree could not get closer than two points the rest of the way.

Unlike Thursday night, when the Cougars pulled the ball away

SCOREBOARD

BOWLING

CROFTON, NEB.
MEN'S COMMERCIAL LEAGUE
HIGH TEAM GAME: Crofton Elevator 869
HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAME: Dee Lammers 258, Dennis Merkel 243, Brian Wiebelhaus 232
HIGH INDIVIDUAL SERIES: Dee Lammers 658, Brian Wiebelhaus 594, Rob Wiebelhaus 593
A STANDINGS: Wiebelhaus Rec 65-55, Crofton Elevator 61.5-58.5, Don's Auto 59-61, Merkel Insul 41.5-78.5
B STANDINGS: DSM Apts 67-53, Coor's Light 63-57, Gooden Steele 61.5-58.5, Leader Angus 61.5-58.5
HIGHLIGHTS: Dee Lammers — 86 over game avg., 143 over series avg.; Brad Scheffer 5-10; Doug Moser 5-10

VOLLEYBALL

YANKTON PARKS & REC
WOMEN'S UPPER COMPETITIVE LEAGUE TOURN.
RESULTS: Bud Bumpers def. Slammin Hot 2-1 22-20, 12-21, 21-17; Ear, Nose & Throat Associates def. Bud Bumpers 2-0 21-17, 21-11
WOMEN'S LOWER COMPETITIVE LEAGUE TOURN.
RESULTS: Cork'n Bottle def. The Associates 2-0 21-16, 21-19; Becker Body/JJ Benji's def. TNT 2-1 11-21, 21-18, 21-17; Cork'n Bottle def. TNT 2-1 21-17, 16-21, 21-19; Cork'n Bottle def. Becker Body/JJ Benji's 2-0 21-6, 21-16; Becker Body/JJ Benji's def. Cork'n Bottle 2-0 21-19, 21-16

BASKETBALL

S.D. STATE BOYS' TOURN.
CLASS AA
March 14-16 at Sioux Falls
First Round, March 14
S.F. Roosevelt 73, R.C. Stevens 43
Brandon Valley 62, Huron 29
Pierre 60, R.C. Central 47
S.F. Lincoln 53, Brookings 48
Consolation Semifinals, March 15
Huron 37, R.C. Stevens 32
Brookings 73, R.C. Central 61
Semifinals, March 15
Brandon Valley 57, S.F. Roosevelt 51
Pierre 47, S.F. Lincoln 45
Seventh Place, March 16
R.C. Stevens (10-15) vs. R.C. Central (10-13), noon
Consolation Championship, March 16
Huron (17-8) vs. Brookings (18-7), 1:45 p.m.
Third Place, March 16
S.F. Roosevelt (22-2) vs. S.F. Lincoln (13-12), 6 p.m.

AREA CALENDAR

BASKETBALL, BOYS' S.D. State Class AA Tourn. at Sioux Falls; S.D. State Class A Tourn. at Rapid City (Platte-Geddes); S.D. State Class B Tourn. at Aberdeen (Viborg-Hurley vs. Dupree, 7 p.m., KVHT-FM)
Saturday, March 16
No activities scheduled
Sunday, March 17
No activities scheduled
Monday, March 18
No activities scheduled
Tuesday, March 19
No activities scheduled

ARIZONA CARDINALS—Released QB Kevin Kolb. Signed DE Matt Shaughnessy. Agreed to terms with CB Antoine Cason on a one-year contract.
CHICAGO BEARS—Agreed to terms with CB Zack Bowman on a one-year contract.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS—Released S Tom Zbikowski.
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS—Signed CB Alan Ball, RB Justin Forsett and DT Roy Miller.
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS—Signed OL Geoff Schwartz and CB Sean Smith.
MIAMI DOLPHINS—Signed TE Dustin Keller and WR Brandon Gibson to one-year contracts.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS—Signed QB Matt Cassel and WR Greg Jennings.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS—Signed WR Donald Jones.
NEW YORK GIANTS—Re-signed LB Keith Rivers.
NEW YORK JETS—Signed RB Mike Goodson and FB Lex Hilliard.
OAKLAND RAIDERS—Signed LB Nick Roach.
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES—Acquired WR Anellus Benn and a 2013 seventh-round pick from Tampa Bay for a 2013 sixth-round choice and a conditional 2014 draft pick.
SAN DIEGO CHARGERS—Agreed to terms with RB Danny Woodhead on a two-year contract.
WASHINGTON REDSKINS—Re-signed LB Bryan Keith.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League
ANAHEIM DUCKS—Acquired C David Steckel from Toronto for RW Ryan Lash and a 2014 seventh-round draft pick. Reassigned F Patrick Maroon to Norfolk (AHL).
BUFFALO SABRES—Assigned C Mikhail Gorigorenko to Quebec (QMJHL). Traded D T.J. Brennan to the Florida Panthers in for a 2013 fifth-round draft pick.
MONTREAL CANADIENS—Signed C David Deshams to a four-year contract extension. Assigned F Petteri Nokelainen to Hamilton (AHL). Recalled F Mike Blunden from Hamilton.
NEW YORK ISLANDERS—Agreed to terms with F Colin McDonald on a two-year contract extension, through the 2014-15 season.
OTTAWA SENATORS—Signed D Michael Sdao to a one-year entry-level contract.

BASEBALL
American League
BOSTON RED SOX—Optioned RHP Rubby De La Rosa and RHP Allen Webster to Pawtucket (IL) and c Christian Vazquez to Portland (EL).
NEW YORK YANKEES—Agreed to terms with OF Brennan Boesch on an minor league contract.
National League
PITTSBURGH PIRATES—Optioned LHP Andy Oliver and C Tony Sanchez to Indianapolis (PCL), Frontier League.
NORMAL CORNBELTERS—Signed 1B Adam Demer.
WASHINGTON WILD THINGS—Sold the contract of OF Darian Sandorf to Chicago (AL). Signed OF Rogelio Noris to a contract extension.

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS—Signed F DeJuan Summers to a 10-day contract.
NEW YORK KNICKS—Signed F Kenyon Martin for the remainder of the season.
Women's National Basketball Association
WASHINGTON MYSTICS—Named Eric Tibbault assistant coach.

FOOTBALL
National Football League

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL
American League
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FOOTBALL
National Football League

State

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in Friday's semifinals of the South Dakota boys Class A basketball tournament.

Shaul was the only player in double figures for the Titans, who shot 40 percent and held the Black Panthers to 30 percent from the field.

After a tight first period, Tea Area pulled away. It forced 29 turnovers leading to 30 points.

Tea Area (22-3) is making its first appearance at the state tournament. Platte-Geddes (17-8) came into the tournament as the No. 8 seed but knocked off No. 1 Clark-Willow Lake in the first round.

Coby Johnson led Platte-Geddes with eight points and 13 rebounds.

ABERDEEN RONCALLI 52, PINE RIDGE 32. RAPID CITY (AP) — Aberdeen Roncalli pulled away after halftime to beat Pine Ridge 52-32 Friday in a consolation game at the South Dakota boys Class A basketball tournament.

The Cavaliers (17-5) outscored the Thorpes 34-14 in the second half to move into the fifth-place game. They shot 44 percent from the field

and made 17 of 20 free throws. Dominic King made seven of 13 shots from the field en route to 17 points. He also had nine rebounds. Kory Schwan added 10 points.

CLARK-WILLOW LAKE 61, SPEARFISH 53. RAPID CITY (AP) — Clark-Willow Lake regrouped after being upset by an eight seed in the first round to beat Spearfish 61-53 Friday in the consolation round of the South Dakota boys Class A basketball tournament.

Leading 24-18 at the half, the No. 1-seed Cyclones (22-1) pulled away in the third quarter and coasted to the win. Spearfish (18-7) scored 24 points in the fourth quarter but couldn't make up the difference.

Skyler Flatten led Clark-Willow Lake in scoring with 22 points. Tyson Jenkins had 11 and Torrey Kolden 10.

Class B

WHITE RIVER 86, SOUTH CENTRAL 55. ABERDEEN (AP) — White River converted 28 turnovers into 34 points and advanced to its sixth straight championship game with an 86-55 win over South Central Friday at the South Dakota boys Class B basketball tournament.

The defending champion Tigers (24-1) shot 50 percent from the field and made 11 of 27 3-pointers. White River is seeking its fifth state championship.

White River's Nic Wain had 18 points, Gilbert Morrison added 16 and Wyatt Krogman had 15 points and seven assists.

South Central (22-3) trailed 9-0 and 30-9. It shot 47 percent.

Tyler Frank led the Cougars with 18 and nine rebounds. Dakota Votaw added 11 points.

JV CHRISTIAN 86, ARLINGTON 62. ABERDEEN (AP) — The one-two punch of Nathan Wedel and Adam Hofer led James Valley Christian to an 86-62 win over Arlington Friday in the consolation round of the South Dakota boys Class B basketball tournament.

Wedel and Hofer scored 24 points apiece for the Vikings (22-3). Wedel was 9-for-5 from the field and 6-for-9 from the line with 12 rebounds. Hofer made seven of 17 shots and went 9-for-9 from the line.

LANGFORD AREA 71, POTTER COUNTY 56. ABERDEEN (AP) — Michael Erickson had 20 points as Langford beat Potter County 71-56 Friday in the consolation round of the South Dakota boys Class B basketball tournament.

Erickson was 5-for-6 from the field with three three-pointers. He also drained seven of eight free throws, had four steals and dished out three assists. Langford shot 56 percent.

Bo Fries had 17 points and Drew Planteen chipped in 14 points and eight rebounds for the Lions.

their chance," she said. "They're looking up to the girls who were honored to see what they can achieve, and this is awesome to feel like your hard work has finally paid off. This shows that if you work toward something anyone has a chance to be an All-American if you put your mind to it."

Although balancing both schoolwork and athletics can be difficult at times, Scheich said it is possible and helps the athletes become more well rounded.

"A lot of times athletes and colleges get a bad reputation for not being good academic scholars, so it's important to show that we have three members at Mount Marty who are all great academic scholars — that we work hard off the court too," she said.

"It's definitely difficult at times, but being involved in sports also keeps you organized. You need to know when practice times are, when video times are so that makes you schedule when you're going to do your homework and when you're going to attend certain things for class. It makes you a more well-rounded person."

Little knows the chance to step up both academically and athletically will only benefit the athletes in the future.

"Being involved with basketball has really helped with leadership abilities and being able to work as a team to become successful," she said. "It's extremely important knowing you're reaching for a career after college, and you have to put that into perspective with basketball. After college, you're done with basketball so you have to make sure you're getting good grades and having fun playing. It's important to balance everything."

Wausa, Neb. native Brittany Rosberg (Dakota State) and Beresford native Elise Maresh (Dordt) also earned All-America scholar athlete honors.

You can follow Emily Niebrugge on Twitter at twitter.com/ENiebrugge

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