

USD Making Progress On Men's Basketball Coach Position

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

In the search for a head coach, time is of the essence. The University of South Dakota knows all about that in its ongoing search for a new head men's basketball coach. It's been over a week since USD officially announced a nation-wide search, and progress has already been made, athletic director David Herbster said Wednesday. "Be quick, but don't hurry," he said.



Herbster

Even though he did not mention any specific names of candidates, Herbster did say the position leading the Coyotes — who were 12-18 this season and lost in the first round of the Summit League tournament — has attract a "tremendous amount" of interest. "When you can talk to a certain person is a matter in patience, though, he said. "You have to pick and chose when you can talk to them," Herbster said. "We just got done with a whole bunch of conference tourna-

ments, and now you have the NCAA, the NIT, the CIT and the CBI to deal with. "We've got to be patient, continue to do our homework and sift through interested coaches." Confidentiality is key in such a search, the A.D. added, particularly in today's age of social media and names being rumored. "Sometimes you'll see names out there that I don't even know about, and then you have some people who panic because their names are rumored."

tential candidates still coaching in various tournaments, Herbster said. That's where employing Fogler Consulting (a popular nation-wide firm) can really help, he added. "Having a consultant has been invaluable. It offers a whole layer to deal with in people still coaching a team, dealing with agents, doing so much of the background," Herbster said. The consultant — headed by Eddie Fogler who was a successful head coach at Wichita State, Vanderbilt and South Carolina — sat down with the USD administration to determine its desire for the position. From there, the firm will go out and scour the country for potential candidates.

It's a two-way street, though, Herbster said. If the administration likes a certain coach or wants the firm to look into a certain person, it will send out that information. In the case of a coach contacting USD — which has happened, the administration will forward that information on to the firm, Herbster said. Despite the job being a Division I opening and in a Summit League program that will open a new arena in two years, it still has come with hiccups, Herbster pointed out. South Dakota's state policy of only offering 1-year contracts understandably comes up in conversation, the A.D. said, though it may

USD | PAGE 8

YHS Wins Six Titles At Bob Prince

VERMILLION — Yankton athletes won six titles, including five on the girls' side, at the season-opening Bob Prince Early Bird track and field meet on Tuesday in the DakotaDome. Savannah Woods had an individual victory and was part of a relay to lead the Yankton girls. Woods won the 3,000 (11:06.42) and teamed with Whitlee Larson, Tessa Folkers and Rylee Smith to win the 3200 relay in 10:27.74. Larson teamed with Danielle Beckmann, Erin Luken and Lauren Graves to win the 1600 relay (4:14.06). The clocking was a Yankton school record for indoors. Annie Kruse and Allie Murphy were also winners for the Yankton girls. Kruse won the 1,600 in 5:16.61. Murphy won the shot put with a toss of 36-1. Also in the shot put, Susanna Kinsley (31-7) placed fourth, and Josie Saylor and Madison Dangler tied for eighth, each at 29-8. Hailey Luken had four top-eight finishes for Yankton. Individually, she placed second in the 60-meter hurdles (9.43), third in the high jump (4-10) and seventh in the long jump (14-10). She also teamed with Erin Luken, Beckmann and Brenna Fitzsimmons for a third place finish in the 800-meter relay (1:54.22).

Yankton Looks To Keep Dancin'



Yankton Bucks players celebrate after beating Watertown to advance on March 11 at the Summit Center, clinching a berth in the S.D. State Class AA Boys' Basketball Tournament. Yankton will make its first state tournament appearance since 2008 when it faces Sioux Falls Roosevelt tonight (Thursday) at 8:45 p.m. Central time at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center in Rapid City.

P&D FILE PHOTO

Bucks Open 'AA' Tourney Tonight

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

Like any good story of greatness, the story of the 2013-14 Yankton Bucks begins with a bump in the road.

Now the Bucks, sporting a 14-9 record as they enter the S.D. State Class AA Boys' Basketball Tournament, hope that road leads to the top of the mountain in the Black Hills. The Bucks face Sioux Falls Roosevelt in the final first-round game today (Thursday) at 8:45 p.m. Central time in Rapid City, ending a six-year absence from the field. For second-year head coach Chris Haynes, much of the motivation for this year's team can be traced back to how the 2012-13 season ended.

"If there's one moment you can put your finger on, I would go back to the Brookings region game last year," he said. "In the locker room up there, you could see it in the younger kids there that just getting to a region championship game wasn't enough,

"If there's one moment you can put your finger on, I would go back to the Brookings region game last year. In the locker room up there, you could see it in the younger kids there that just getting to a region championship game wasn't enough, that they were very disappointed that they weren't going to the state tournament."
CHRIS HAYNES, YHS BOYS' BASKETBALL COACH

that they were very disappointed that they weren't going to the state tournament." J.J. Hejna remembered that feeling, and said it was motivation for him and the other Bucks this past off-season. "Feeling that loss in that regional championship game, the second year in a row, it hits you hard. You work hard all year and just for it to end like that," he said. "It really motivates you. That led a lot of us to have a really good off-season. That was a big part of what spurred this season." The Bucks' victory over Watertown on March 11 helped ease some of that feeling, said senior guard Ryan Olson. "I think it was a monkey off our back. Yankton hadn't been to the state tournament in six years. It's something special to get there," he

said. "Hopefully we can represent ourselves positively at state." Yankton's improvement this season — going from six wins last year to 14 this season — has helped draw great crowds to the Summit Center, the home of the Bucks. "I don't think you can say enough about our crowd," Lane Sawatzke said, referring specifically to the post-season games at home. "I think that's the funnest I've ever been in, or seen in that gym in a long time." Hejna, who missed the team's first three games due to a football injury, averaged 12.3 points and a team-best 8.0 rebounds per game. He also led the team with 37 steals. Junior Brady Hale scored a team-best 13.5 points per game this season. Sophomore Reid Sawatzke averaged 11 points a contest and hit a team-best 37 three-pointers. Ryan

Olson averaged 9.0 points a contest and hit 32 three-pointers on the season. Seniors Chipper Granflaten (3.2 ppg, 1.9 rpg) and Mitchell Gullikson (2.4 ppg, 1.6 rpg), juniors Evan Greeneway (1.5 ppg, 2.9 rpg, team-best 17 blocked shots) and Austin Johnson, and sophomore Tanner Frick (2.1 ppg) have been the top contributors off the bench. "When we play our best, those four (Hale, Hejna, Reid Sawatzke and Olson) are in double figures or are close," Haynes said. "Lane, Evan, Mitch, Chipper, Gully (Gullikson) and Austin, anyone within our top 10, on any given night, can get in double figures." Haynes noted that most deep tournament runs involve someone outside the top couple players making something happen. "If you want to make a run in March, you need to have a couple of performances that come from people you don't expect," he said. "Hopefully we'll have a couple of those out in Rapid." The Bucks face a Roosevelt (19-3) team that edged them 52-50 on Feb. 18. In that game, Yankton led 29-21 at the half, but the Rough Riders hit six three-pointers in the third quarter to take a 43-35 lead. Yankton rallied, but

BUCKS | PAGE 8

Centerville, Platte-Geddes Set For State 'B'

Tornadoes End 14-Year Tournament Drought

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

A setback in January has helped fuel the fire that powered the Centerville Tornadoes to state. Now coach Kory Muller and the squad hope to create some stormy weather for the rest of the field. The Tornadoes make their first state tournament appearance since 2000 when the S.D. State Class B Boys' Basketball Tournament opens today (Thursday) in Aberdeen. Centerville heads north with a 17-6 record, including a 10-game win streak dating back to a one-point loss to Sanborn Central-Woonsocket in the Hanson Classic. "We were down 13 in the fourth quarter," Muller said of the Jan. 25 contest. "We

had the game won, and we lost it in the final seconds. From that point, we started finding ways to win." The first of those victories was against Viborg-Hurley, which had finished second in the state the past three seasons (1 in A, 2 in B). The Tornadoes would later beat the Cougars in the District 10B championship. "They were a big mental block for us," Muller said. "That win got us motivated to keep battling." Centerville boasts three double-figure scorers, led by the program's all-time scoring leader, senior Seamus O'Malley. The Mount Marty College recruit averages 20.3 points, 8.1 rebounds, 4.4 assists and 2.3 steals per game, and goes into the state tournament with 1,642 career points. Younger brother Rory O'Malley has also been a big offensive weapon, averaging 14.1 points, 2.9 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 2.5 steals per game. Junior Christian Gruschin has been a force inside, averaging 12.5 points and 7.3 rebounds a game. Senior Josh DeRaad (8.3 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 4.0 apg, 1.3 spg) and sophomore Tyrell Martz (5.8 ppg, 1.7 rpg, 2.3 apg, 1.0 spg) round out the first five. "Josh gets some of the toughest assignments night in night out," Muller said. "He's in the trenches with his defensive assignments." Senior Ethan Cunningham (1.1 ppg, 1.2 rpg), junior Trent Sikkink (1.4 rpg) and sophomore Jacob Skotvold (1.8 ppg, 2.0 rpg, 1.5 apg) round out the regular rotation.

CHS | PAGE 8

Black Panthers Make Move To 'B' Tourney

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

Platte-Geddes has been a perennial state boys' basketball tournament team under Frank Cutler, with 11 Class A appearances in Cutler's 25 seasons at the Black Panthers helm. This season, Platte-Geddes is trying something new, competing in Class B. The Black Panthers (17-6), who finished third in Class A a year ago, make their Class B debut in the S.D. State Boys' Basketball Tournament today (Thursday) at the Barnett Center in Aberdeen. "We're excited about the opportunity," Cutler said. "We're looking forward to a great week." Platte-Geddes has just two regulars from a season

ago, Coby Johnson (Jr., 20 ppg, 9.6 rpg, 2.3 apg, 2.3 spg) and Kole Heller (Sr., 6.5 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 3.2 apg, 2.3 spg). "We do not have a lot of playing experience back," Cutler said. "Coby started and Kole came off the bench. Three or four others from this year's squad were on the team. Carter Dykstra (13.3 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 2.0 apg, 1.3 spg) joins Johnson as top scorers for the Black Panthers. Heller, Brady Peterson (Jr., 5.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg) and Tate Wagner (Jr., 3.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 1.5 apg) rounded out the first five. "Kole has done a nice job," Cutler said. "Peterson has had some nice games as well." Heller is the only senior starter for the Black Panthers, joined by four juniors. Seniors Cody Qualm (1.1

ppg, 1.1 rpg) and Sid Holter (1.2 ppg, 2.1 rpg), junior Spencer Miller (1.1 ppg, 1.1 rpg) and sophomore Alex Gerlach (1.2 ppg, 1.0 rpg, 1.0 apg) round out the regular rotation. One thing that has helped the Black Panthers this season, according to Cutler, is their defense. Platte-Geddes has allowed an average of 44 points per game. "Our defense has helped us win," he said. "We have to score more than we have lately." The Black Panthers face second-seeded Langford Area (21-2), a local favorite that has been in the last two state tournaments. "They are right next door, they draw great crowds and have four starters back," Cut-

PG | PAGE 8

TRACK | PAGE 8