

Press&Dakotan DAILY DOSE

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



BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

Pretty much every new coach 'wins' their introductory press conference. That's the first goal: Impress the public. As they say, first impressions are the last impressions. With that in mind, Craig Smith easily won the room Monday at the Muenster University Center in Vermillion. The new head men's basketball coach at the University of South Dakota said what he needed to (we're here to win, to recruit the right kids, etc.), but in so many other ways, he didn't need to say much.

His experience brought enough cache to leave the crowd — of which included USD's basketball players — impressed.

Smith has been alongside Tim Miles at 10 of his 13 seasons as either an assistant coach or a head coach across all levels of college basketball. Smith has been a head coach at the NAIA level, an assistant at the Division II ranks, and has been with Miles at Colorado State and most recently at Nebraska.

Smith Hire Was The Right (And Smart) Move At USD

At each stop along the way, the tandem has helped turn around those programs. I mean, since when was Nebraska a competitive men's basketball team? Smith was also the head coach at Mayville State (N.D.) where he turned a 1-win team into a 17-win squad and a national tournament qualifier in one short season. Two years after that, Mayville State was in the NAIA national title game.

Now, to be fair, nobody expects that out of Smith at USD.

What is expected — and he was the first to point this out Monday — is to compete annually for a Summit League championship. In three seasons in the league, the Coyote men are 16-33, and that includes a slight improvement to 6-8 this season.

Said Smith, "I firmly believe that we'll make a major splash in Division I basketball and in the Summit League in the very near future."

That's why he was hired. That's why he was offered a \$185,000 salary (which, by the way, is more than his athletic director makes). That's why USD wanted a national search. USD needed to make a splashy hire. And with Craig Smith, it did exactly that.

COLLEGE/YHS EVENTS

YHS EVENTS		COLLEGE	
TODAY March 25		SB: at Iowa State (DH, 2 p.m.)	
WEDNESDAY March 26		SB: at Briar Cliff (DH, 3 p.m.) BSS: vs. Dakota State (5 p.m.)	
THURSDAY March 27			
FRIDAY March 28		T&F: at Wildcat Open (10:30 a.m.), and Texas Relays	
SATURDAY March 29		T&F: at Wildcat Open (10:30 a.m.), and Texas Relays (DH, 1 p.m.)	
SUNDAY March 30		BSS: at Midland (DH, 1 p.m.)	SB: at Fort Wayne (1 p.m.)
MONDAY March 31	G-GLF: vs. Brandon Valley/Brookings (2 p.m.)	SB: vs. Dakota State (DH, 3 p.m.)	

SCOREBOARD

BASKETBALL

LITTLE MISSOURI VALLEY CONF. BOYS

ALL-CONFERENCE: Wagner — Noah St. Pierre, Derek Soukup, Dylan Brunson, Ben Homme — Scott Van Winkle, Jon Barrett, Mike Mesman; Avon — Brandon Koomich, Logan Mudder; Parkston — Jalen Hurley, Spencer Lucas, Zach Scott; Tripp-Delmont-Armour — Cody Hrdlicka; Scotland — Shaye Bloch; Andes Central — Darrin Hopkins, Joe Evans

SOUTHEAST SOUTH DAKOTA CONF. BOYS

ALL-CONFERENCE: Chamberlain — Skyler Bergam, Reuben Estes, Hudson Priebe; Platte-Geddes — Coby Johnson, Carter Dykstra; Mount Vernon-Plankinton — Deric Denning; Bon Homme — Scott Van Winkle, Mike Mesman, Jon Barrett; Parkston — Spencer Lucas, Jalen Hurley, Wagner — Noah St. Pierre, Derek Soukup, Gregory — Gavin Thomas, Winner — Nathan Galbraith

NCAA TOURNAMENT

THIRD ROUND EAST REGIONAL

Saturday, March 22
UConn 77, Villanova 65
Michigan State 80, Harvard 73

Sunday, March 23
Virginia 78, Memphis 60
Iowa State 85, North Carolina 83

SOUTH REGIONAL

Saturday, March 22
Dayton 55, Syracuse 53
Florida 61, Pittsburgh 45

Sunday, March 23
Stanford 60, Kansas 57
UCLA 77, Stephen F. Austin 60

MIDWEST REGIONAL

Saturday, March 22
Louisville 66, Saint Louis 51
Michigan 79, Texas 65

Sunday, March 23
Tennessee 83, Mercer 63
Kentucky 78, Wichita State 76

WEST REGIONAL

Saturday, March 22
Wisconsin 85, Oregon 77
San Diego State 63, North Dakota State 44

Sunday, March 23
Baylor 85, Creighton 55
Arizona 84, Gonzaga 61

EAST REGIONAL

At Madison Square Garden, New York, Friday, March 28
UConn (28-8) vs. Iowa State (28-7), 6:27 p.m.

Michigan State (28-8) vs. Virginia (30-6), 8:57 p.m.

SOUTH REGIONAL

At FedExForum, Memphis, Tenn., Thursday, March 27
Dayton (25-10) vs. Stanford (23-12), 6:15 p.m.

Florida (34-2) vs. UCLA (28-8), 8:45 p.m.

MIDWEST REGIONAL

At Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis, Friday, March 28
Michigan (27-8) vs. Tennessee (24-12), 6:15 p.m.

Kentucky (26-10) vs. Louisville (31-5), 8:45 p.m.

WEST REGIONAL

At The Honda Center, Anaheim, Calif., Thursday, March 27
Wisconsin (28-7) vs. Baylor (26-11), 6:47 p.m.

San Diego State (31-4) vs. Arizona (32-4), 9:17 p.m.

OTHER EVENTS

Archery

S.D. STATE INDOOR (MMC): Saturday-Sunday, at Easton Yankton Archery Complex

AREA CALENDAR

Tuesday, March 25
SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S USD at Iowa State (DH, 2 p.m.)
TRACK & FIELD, PREP Dan Lennon Class B Inv. at Vermillion (Bon Homme, Centerville, Freeman, Gayville-Volin, Parker, Scotland, noon)

Wednesday, March 26
BASEBALL, COLLEGE Dakota State at MMC (DH, 3 p.m.)
SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S MMC at Briar Cliff (DH, 3 p.m.)

Thursday, March 27
No activities scheduled

Friday, March 28
BASEBALL, COLLEGE MMC at Morningside (DH)
SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S Concordia at MMC (DH, 3 p.m.)
TRACK & FIELD, COLLEGE OUTDOOR Texas Relays (USD); Wildcat Classic at Wayne (MMC, USD, 10:30 a.m.)

Saturday, March 29
ARCHERY, COLLEGE S.D. State Indoor at Yankton (MMC)
SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S Midland at MMC (DH, 1 p.m.); USD at Fort Wayne (DH, 1 p.m.)

TENNIS, WOMEN'S Bethany Lutheran at MMC (10 a.m.)
TRACK & FIELD, COLLEGE OUTDOOR Texas Relays (USD); Wildcat Classic at Wayne (MMC, USD, 10:30 a.m.)

Sunday, March 30
ARCHERY, COLLEGE S.D. State Indoor at Yankton (MMC)
BASEBALL, COLLEGE MMC at Midland (DH, 1 p.m.)
SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S USD at Fort Wayne (1 p.m.)

Monday, March 31
GOLF, GIRLS' Brandon Valley/Brookings at YHS (2 p.m.)
SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S Dakota State at MMC (DH, 3 p.m.)

SPORTS DIGEST

Hejna, Area Players Named To 3-Class Shoot Out Squads

SALEM — Yankton's J.J. Hejna will be among the eight area basketball players to compete in the 3-Class Shoot Out on Saturday in Salem.

The Class AA girls will play the Class A girls at 2 p.m., followed by that winner against the Class B squad at 3:30 p.m. The boys Class AA team will play the Class A squad at 5:15 p.m., followed by that winner against the B team at 7 p.m.

There will be a dunk contest between the boys' games.

Hejna will play for the Class AA boys squad that will be coached by Matt Wilber of Dakota Wesleyan.

On the Class A girls' roster is Keely Bertram (Elk Point-Jefferson) and Josie Huber (Vermillion). The team will be coached by Todd Schilling of Mount Marty College.

The Class A boys' roster will feature Tyrell Harper (Vermillion), as well as Mount Marty recruits Cody Willett (Canton) and Deric Denning (Mount Vernon-Plankinton).

On the Class B girls' team is Chesney Nagel (Avon). The team will be coached by Brian Ortmeyer of Dakota State.

In Class B boys' action, Jake Anderson (Parker), Seamus O'Malley (Centerville) and Jack Huetner (Viborg-Hurley) will play for Mount Marty coach Andrew Baker.

P&D Star Chart Will Run Wednesday

The Press & Dakotan Star Chart will be published in Wednesday's edition.

MMC Softball DH Moved

The Mount Marty College softball doubleheader against Briar Cliff, originally scheduled for today (Tuesday), has been moved to Wednesday due to weather conditions.

The doubleheader will now start at 3 p.m. in Sioux City, Iowa.

SDSU's Hodges Earns Summit League Pitching Nod

ELMHURST, Ill. — For the second time this season, South Dakota State University right-hander Chad Hodges has been named Summit League Pitcher of the Week.

A junior from Medicine Hat, Alberta, Hodges was the winning pitcher in the Jackrabbits' 2-1 victory over Chicago State (Ill.) in the second game of a doubleheader on March 21. The lone run he allowed in seven innings was unearned as he gave up five hits — all singles — and struck out five while walking two.

Hodges, who improved to 3-2 on the season, also earned the weekly league award on Feb. 24 following a victory at Alabama A&M. The Jackrabbits, 11-11 overall, open Summit League play Friday with a doubleheader at Western Illinois.

Lennon

From Page 9

Also for the Yankton boys, the foursome of Ricky Culver, Ryan Sternhagen, Charlie Stephenson and Derek Brenner placed fifth in the 800 relay.

The Bucks are without several individuals who were a part of the state tournament-qualifying boys' basketball team, including returning state placemanager J.J. Hejna. But their absence did have an upside, according to Youmans.

"It forced some of our younger boys to jump into some races that they weren't accustomed to," he said.

"From a coaching standpoint, we found out some things. And, now that we've seen them, we can work to develop those areas.

"Some kids are going to find full-time roles as the season progresses because they did so well in the early meets."

After two meets in a week, the Bucks and Gazelles will have a rest until April 8, when they open the outdoor season with a triangular against Sioux Falls (Iowa) East and Sioux Falls Washington in Sioux City.

"It's nice for them to have a little time off," Youmans said. "These first couple of meets took their toll. They need some time off to rejuvenate, refresh."

Vermillion had two athletes

earn top-five finishes, both placing third: Nick Jensen in the boys' shot put (50-10 3/4) and Maddie Lavin in the 3200 (11:50.52).

Also for Dakota Valley, Sara Bohan placed fifth in the 60-meter hurdles (9.70).

MVP's in Class A were Roosevelt's Brooke DeVos and Lincoln's Adam Belhaj.

During the meet, former Vermillion coach and SDHSAA official Bob Lowery was recognized as the recipient of the Dan Lennon Award.

The Class B meet will be held today (Tuesday) at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/JCimburek. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

Smith

From Page 8

From his days as a graduate assistant at Northern State (1997-98), an assistant at Minot State (N.D., 1998-2001), an assistant at North Dakota State (2001-04), a head coach at Mayville State (N.D., 2004-07), and stints at Colorado State (2008-12) and Nebraska, Smith has seen every possible level.

"That was attractive to USD, according to athletic director David Herbst — who all along said he believed the position deserved a national search.

"He's seen it from all different angles," Herbst said Monday. "He can be creative. He's had to be in environments where he hasn't been given much and he's been successful with it."

A big reason for Smith's success over his career has been his energy, according to former Yankton standout Colton Iverson, who was at Colorado State for one season with Smith.

"He's a huge part of why Miles has won at every school he's been at, and a big reason I choose to transfer to Colorado State," Iverson told the Press & Dakotan. Iverson spent three seasons at Minnesota before leaving for CSU.

"His passion and understanding of the game is contagious, and he will definitely get the best out of every player he gets the opportunity to coach at USD."

Smith joked Monday about his opportunity to be a head coach at Nebraska for a



James D. Cimburek/P&D
New University of South Dakota men's basketball coach Craig Smith, left, introduces his family during his introductory press conference on Tuesday in Vermillion.

brief time. During last Friday's NCAA Tournament second round game against Baylor, Nebraska head coach Tim Miles was ejected in the second half — leaving Smith in charge of the team.

It was a tricky situation, though, because Smith was by that point all but locked in for the USD job.

"You're doing everything you can to prepare for Baylor; getting your guys ready for that, but at the same time you have the opportunity of a lifetime right in front of you," Smith said.

Given that opportunity, Smith said he plans to begin recruiting immediately. He met with his new players on Monday afternoon and will not wait long before hitting the recruiting trail — April is a big month on the recruiting calendar.

The one thing working in

his favor, Smith said, is that he takes over a program that will return 13 players with eligibility for the 2014-15 season. So it's not like at Colorado State, where he and Miles had to essentially start an "expansion franchise" with so much turnover.

Kasperbauer said the same thing, that USD — which went 12-18 last season — isn't in need of a complete overhaul, just continued progression.

"This program doesn't really need to be turned around; we've been making progress every year," Kasperbauer said. "And I expect even more next season."

"That's really exciting for all of us."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

AM 1450

MORNING COFFEE

WEEKDAYS 7:40AM MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

Yankton's Home Team!

Yankton Transmission Specialists

• Transmissions • Drive Lines • Transfer Cases • Differentials

2 Year/24,000 Guarantee

(605) 665-1175

We Have The Power

Call the professionals at...

L&S ELECTRIC

to handle all your wiring and electrical needs.

- Commercial • Residential
- Farm Wiring
- Quality Work • Prompt Service
- Competitive Pricing

Harry Lane, Electrical Contractor 665-6612