



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
South Dakota State players and fans celebrate after the Jackrabbits beat South Dakota for the championship of the Summit League Women's Basketball Tournament on Tuesday at the Denny Sanford Premier Center in Sioux Falls. SDSU beat the Coyotes 72-57 for its sixth tournament title in seven seasons.

SDSU Beats Coyotes For Sixth Summit League Title In Seven Seasons

BY JEREMY HOECK
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SIOUX FALLS — After a 1-year hiatus, the Jackrabbits are back in the Big Dance. And they beat their rivals again to get there.

In front of a record crowd, South Dakota State dispatched top-seeded University of South Dakota 72-57 in Tuesday afternoon's Summit League tournament championship game in Sioux Falls.

For the sixth time in seven years, the Jackrabbits (25-7) move on to the NCAA Tournament.

"It's a surreal feeling," said freshman guard Macy Miller, who had 19 points and six rebounds and was named to the all-tournament team.

"We're not done yet, we're looking forward to going to March Madness."

Not only was Tuesday's championship game a battle between the top two seeds, it was a rematch of last year's semifinals when USD beat SDSU and eventually went on to the NCAA Tournament.

This time, the Jacks got the job done.

"In 15 years, you really appreciate the difference between winning and losing, it's such a huge void in that feeling," head coach Aaron Johnston said.

Unlike many of their recent meetings, though, the difference between the Coyotes and Jacks ballooned quickly at the Premier Center

— which had a women's championship record crowd of 6,926.

It took the second-seeded Jackrabbits all of six and a half minutes to build a double-digit deficit, and they never let USD get closer than 13.

Part of that was SDSU's defense, but the Coyotes also missed shots they normally make. The No. 1 seed shot 13 percent in the first half and made just 1-of-16 three-pointers in the game.

"Some of those you're thinking, 'They're in' and they just rolled out," senior Nicole Seekamp said. "There's nothing you can do about it, I guess."

Seekamp scored a game-high points 21 and was for the second time named Tournament MVP — again in a losing effort, she did the same in 2013.

"Honestly I'd love to trade that tournament MVP with a championship trophy, for sure," she said.

The native Australian finished her 9-game tournament career averaging 21 points, coming up big on the biggest stage of the season.

"It's amazing to me, she never ceases to amaze me how she raises her level of play in big-time moments," head coach Amy Williams said.

The only problem for USD, though, was that it came out



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
South Dakota's Nicole Seekamp, 35, passes out of the double-team of South Dakota State's Alexis Alexander, left, and Clarissa Ober during the Summit League women's basketball Championship on Tuesday at the Denny Sanford Premier Center in Sioux Falls. Seekamp was named the tournament MVP for the second time in three seasons, both in a losing effort in the championship game.

WNIT Bid Awaits South Dakota

BY JEREMY HOECK
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SIOUX FALLS — As the final buzzer sounded at the Premier Center, it didn't signify the end of the season for the University of South Dakota women's basketball team.

The Coyotes have another tournament to think about.

Though USD lost to South Dakota State 72-57 in Tuesday's Summit League tournament championship game in Sioux Falls, it had already qualified for the Women's National Invitation Tournament (WNIT).

By virtue of capturing the conference's regular season title, the Coyotes (25-7) were already guaranteed a spot, but they would have likely received an invitation anyway.

"You've got potentially six games in you," athletic director David Herbster said during an interview in the Premier Center hallways after the game.

"In some cases, that's a quarter or a fifth of your season that you still have left to play."

The only things left to be determined for USD are rather significant: When and where.

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Pheasants Earn Trip To State B

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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The last time the Parker Pheasants made it to a state game was in 1998, under the direction of their current head coach Dave Fuller.

Seventeen years later, and after Fuller took a couple years off in between, the Pheasants have made their way back with a 67-54 win against the Irene-Wakonda Eagles in the Region 5B final on Tuesday night in Tea.

"We made it," sophomore guard Landon Leberman said following the win. "I like to live in this moment. This was the toughest game of the year."

Parker jumped out to a quick 19-10 lead by the end of the first quarter, keeping their lead until just over five minutes were left in the first half.

With just under four minutes remaining, Irene-Wakonda caught up, till trailing 25-22, but an 11-2 run put Parker largely ahead by the end of the first half.

A previous Jan. 22 matchup between the two teams, where Parker won 75-64, didn't give the Pheasants much confidence, as Irene-Wakonda led most of that game.

"We got an early lead this time and used a diamond and one defense to shut down Gabe King and his brother Trey King," Fuller said. "The defense really set the tone tonight."

The Pheasants lead 45-32 at the end of the third quarter, and closed out the night 67-54.

Arrows Upend Yankton 36-35



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Yankton's Bradey Sorenson goes up for a shot in the lane during the Region 1AA matchup with Watertown on Tuesday at the Summit Center.

Boys' Basketball: Bucks Finish With 14-9 Record

BY ADRIENNE KUSEK
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Watertown's Taylor Lindahl gave the Arrows their only lead of the night, coming with just under 30 seconds left, as the Arrows edged Yankton 36-35 in the Region 1AA boys' basketball qualifier on Tuesday at the Summit Center in Yankton.

"Obviously we are disappointed with coming up short," said Yankton head coach Chris Haynes.

"We couldn't be prouder of our guys. They competed right to the end and unfortunately just came up one play short."

To start the game the Bucks went on an 8-0 run for the first half of the first quarter. They maintained their lead into the second half with a 23-16 score.

Watertown started closing the gap leading into the fourth quarter with the score 29-23.

"We struggled scoring down the stretch," Haynes said. "Watertown's defense was tough."

With the game tied at 33, Yankton's Bradey Sorenson hit a jumper to put the Bucks up two with just over a minute remaining. Both teams had a failed possession, then Lindahl buried a three-pointer from the win to give the Arrows the lead.

Yankton had one last possession, but Watertown stole the ball with two seconds left to ice the victory.

Sorenson totaled 12 points for the Bucks. Keenan LaCroix added nine points. Evan Greenway snatched 10 rebounds, and Matthew Fitzgerald grabbed eight.

For Watertown, Matt Decker tallied 10 points, and Alex Gauer added eight points to the win.

"We did a good job defending and rebounding most of the night," Haynes said.

"It was two good teams, a low scoring game, and a battle, and you got to give them credit for



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Yankton's Keenan LaCroix attacks the basket against Watertown's Nate DeSpiegler during their Region 1AA matchup on Tuesday at the Summit Center.

getting one more play than we did."

Yankton closes its season with a 14-9 record.

"We've said it all year long, we didn't know how many games we were going to win; we didn't know how good we were going to be," Haynes said.

"We thought we had a great group of kids who were really willing to work hard and really cared about each other. That held true throughout the entire year which made it really fun to coach them."

You can follow Adrienne Kusek on twitter at [www.twitter.com/AdrienneKusek](https://twitter.com/AdrienneKusek). Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

YANKTON (14-9)
Keenan LaCroix 4-7 0-0 9; Bradey Sorenson 4-12 2-2 12; Evan Greenway 1-4 1-2 3; Austin Johnson 1-5 0-0 3; Tanner Frick 2-8 1-5 5; Nate Stephenson 0-0 0-1 0; Matthew Fitzgerald 1-1 1-3 3. TOTALS: 13-37 5-13 35.

WATERTOWN (12-11)
Nate Davis 2-10 2-4 7; Taylor Lindahl 2-2 0-0 6; Nate DeSpiegler 2-6 1-3 5; Matt Decker 4-9 1-1 10; Bryce LeBlanc 0-2 0-1 0; Alex Grauer 4-9 0-0 8; Baillet VanSickle 0-2 0-0 0; Spencer Waage 0-1 0-1 0. TOTALS: 14-41 4-10 36.

WATERTOWN 8 16 23 36
YANKTON 13 23 29 35

Three pointers: W 4-14 (Davis 1-6, Lindahl 2-2, Decker 1-1, Gauer 0-3, Baillet 0-2), Y 4-18 (LaCroix 1-1, Sorenson 2-8, Johnson 1-5, Frick 0-4). Rebounds: Y 36 (Greenway 10), W 24 (DeSpiegler 7). Personal Fouls: Y 14, W 12. Fouled Out: LaCroix. Assists: Y 9 (Frick 5), W 3. Turnovers: Y 10, W 6. Blocked Shots: Y 1 (LaCroix 1), W 1 (Baillet 1). Steals W 6 (Decker 3), Y 0.

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