

Summit League Preps For Another Defection

Oakland Headed To Horizon League, Joins Kansas City As Departures After 2012-13 Season

BY JEREMY HOECK

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For the third time in 18 months, the Summit League and its dwindling number of members are left scrambling.

Oakland University (Mich.) officially announced Tuesday that it will leave the Summit League this summer and join the Horizon League, effective July 1.

The news wasn't exactly a surprise, but it was still met with disappointment, according to David Herbster, athletic director at the University of South Dakota.

"It's an odd time, but we knew it was going to happen. It was a matter of timing," Herbster said Tuesday night. "When you lose somebody, now you have to concentrate on who you have left. That's what we need to focus on."

The loss of Oakland brings the Summit League down to eight members for 2013-14: Denver, Fort Wayne, IUPUI, North Dakota State, Omaha, South Dakota, South Dakota State and Western Illinois.

In basketball, for example, the conference would have seven members eligible for the 2014 Summit League Tournament — the minimum to keep an

automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

"Eight is a very workable number, but ideally you'd like to have 10," said Herbster, who pointed out that it's likely the top seeds in the basketball tournament would get a first-round bye.

Baseball is also a sport put in jeopardy by Oakland's departure. The conference will be down to five competing members (including South Dakota State), one fewer than the NCAA minimum to keep its auto bid. A grace period of two years, however, is in place for the Summit League to add members.

Though USD does not sponsor baseball, Herbster said the Summit could look at adding affiliate members for certain sports.

Of all its sports, Oakland was most dominant in swimming and diving. The Golden Grizzlies men's and women's teams have won a Summit record 14 straight titles.

The more immediate concern is scheduling for the upcoming 2013-14 seasons. Summit League schools were issued updated schedules on Tuesday, proof, Herbster said, that "we were prepared as a league."

Where USD is concerned is on facility

constraints with the DakotaDome, Herbster said. During the fall, Vermillion High School and Briar Cliff use the dome for home football games.

Modifying schedules is nothing new for USD and its Summit League counterparts.

Departures from the Summit started when Oral Roberts announced an exit for the Southland Conference in November 2011, but was replaced by the addition of Omaha.

Denver agreed to join the Summit, starting with 2013-14, but that addition was balanced out by Kansas City's announcement in February that it was leaving for the WAC — also beginning with 2013-14.

Naturally, the expansion question returns to the forefront. Who would the Summit League add?

"The commissioner has a long list of potential candidates, but now we have to go back and revisit those talks in earnest," Herbster said. "We don't want to add a team just to add, it has to be the right fit."

"It doesn't do us a lot of good to go get a team in California or North Carolina."

The potential to expand was referenced indirectly in a statement by the Summit League on Tuesday.

"Our current members believe that the league's present core of committed institutions gives us a solid foundation in which to build upon in the future," commissioner Tom Douple said.

Where the present is concerned, though, Charlie Gross of Yankton was caught off guard. The assistant professor of Business at Mount Marty College got his undergraduate degree from Oakland in 1969 and regularly attends Golden Grizzlies games in the area.

"I'm surprised, because I thought they were doing so well in the Summit League," Gross said Tuesday, while reading through an Oakland alumni association email. "I assume the Horizon is closer to where they are, that they would have less travel."

"I'm sorry to see them go, they were great competition for the teams in the Summit."

A Summit League member since 1998, Oakland will pay a \$250,000 exit fee to the Summit League and an entrance fee of \$882,000 to the Horizon League.

Oakland's new conference home,

however, means less travel. The Horizon League membership for 2013-14 includes Cleveland State, Detroit, Green Bay, Milwaukee, Illinois-Chicago, Valparaiso (Ind.), Wright State (Ohio) and Youngstown State (Ohio).

If travel was indeed a top priority, Gross said he could understand the decision. Rather than having to make plane trips to the Dakotas or now Denver, Oakland can hop a bus to Illinois, Indiana or Ohio — its furthest trip would now be Valparaiso.

Of course, the shifting among conferences across the country means travel is necessary, Gross said.

"My little brother (Marty) has coached basketball for over 30 years, and I've always just assumed travel was part of collegiate athletics," he said.

Herbster agreed, calling travel "an excuse."

"We all make it work. Travel's going to be travel," he said. "You either want to be in or you want to be out. There's no ideal travel situation."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck

MMC's Roth Earns GPAC Honors Again

BY JEREMY HOECK

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News that Caitlyn Roth earned All-Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) women's golf honors on Tuesday was met with surprise.



Roth

Mostly by her, however.

"It's a great honor. It was kind of a shock, because I didn't think I do as well," said Roth, who last year was the first-ever Mount Marty College golfer to earn all-conference recognition and now adds another first to her resume.

Roth, a junior from Delmont, earned 16th place in the GPAC Championship race with a four-round score of 369 — her rounds were 94-89-95-91.

Improving her final place by one spot from a year ago, Roth has become a leader in the four-year-old Lancer golf program, according to head coach Tom Schlimgen.

"It's a nice honor, especially for her because she was our pioneer here," Schlimgen said. "She's been with us for a while and has had some success."

Not only did Roth improve her individual play, she helped guide the Lancer women up the GPAC ladder.

Mount Marty finished seventh overall in the final standings, with a team score of 1517 — ahead of four other schools. By comparison, a year ago the Lancer women did not record a total in the GPAC race.

It wasn't easy this year, though, given the frustrating weather conditions, Roth said.

"It was hard to get into a routine; hard to get much of anything going," she said.

Roth, though, was fairly consistent throughout her four rounds, as she was last year when the weather was comparatively easier to deal with, Schlimgen said.

"We never really had much of a chance to get in much practice. It very hit and miss," he said. "We think some of our momentum tapered off with the lack of being out on the course."

Momentum is what the Lancers are trying to build with what is still a new golf program. The coaches, Tom and Todd Schlimgen, have signed four recruits — highlighted by Kellie Winckler (Andes Central) and Logan Wagner (Parkston), two of the top golfers in Class B.

"We have a lot of good athletes coming in next year, which will really help," Roth said. "That was a good job recruiting on the coaches part. It's hard to not get excited."

Dakota Wesleyan won the team title, its fifth straight, by 71 strokes over Northwestern, thanks to the 1-2-3 finish of Lauren Fitts, Chelsea Burback and Jenna Winckler (Andes Central).

As a result, DWU's Adam Anderson was named GPAC Women's Golf Coach of the Year for the five consecutive year.

The Tigers will compete in the 2013 NAIA Women's Golf Championships from May 21-24 in Lincoln, Neb.

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck

TUNING UP FOR REGIONS



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Alcester-Hudson's Jessica Wegh, center, pulls away to win her heat in the girls' 100-meter dash at the Tri-Valley Conference track and field meet on Tuesday in Centerville. Results from the meet were not available at presstime.

Bon Homme Sweeps SESD Titles

GREGORY — It was another strong day for the Bon Homme track teams as they swept the titles at Tuesday's Southeast South Dakota Conference (SESD) meet in Gregory.

Bon Homme was especially dominant on the girls' side, winning eight events and accumulating 188 total points. Mount Vernon-Plankinton, with 127 points, was second.

Caitlin McLouth won three individual titles for the Lady Cavaliers, in the 100-meter hurdles (16.97), long jump (15-10.25) and triple jump (33-0.75). She was joined by double winners Anna Heusinkveld in the 100 (13.06) and 200 (27.57), as well as Maddison Hajek in the 1600 (5:39.34) and 3200 (12:09.16).

For good measure, Bon Homme's Sierra Mesman was first in the 400 (1:02.25).

Scotland's Carley Skorepa won titles in the discus (109-11) and shot put (36-8), while Wagner's Sydney Breen was the champion in the pole vault (8-6).

The Cavaliers won three

events on the boys' side, but had enough depth to roll up 171 total points. Ethan-Parkston edged Chamberlain 119-113 for second place.

For Bon Homme, Kodi Larson was first in the 100-meter dash (11.55) and Scott Van Winkle was first in the 200 (22.96). The Cavs also won the 800 relay in a time of 1:33.98.

Wagner's Sage Zephier was the champion in the 800 (2:04.97), while teammate Tyler Dion won the 1600 (5:00.52) and Spencer Peters was first in the pole vault (11-6). The Red Raiders also won the medley relay.

For Ethan-Parkston, Jace Connor won the triple jump (38-3.75), Camden Myers won the high jump (6-0) and Anthony Huber was first in the discus (171-6.25). The Trojans also won the 3200 relay.

Fort Randall Conference

LAKE ANDES — The South Central girls and

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JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Gayville-Volin's Zane Jensen fires the shot put during the Tri-Valley Conference track and field meet on Tuesday in Centerville.

Ref's Death A Consequence Of Lack Of Sportsmanship

BY NANCY ARMOUR

AP National Writer

The football teams were still on the field, exchanging the traditional postgame handshakes, when Pete McCabe walked by. The veteran referee heard another official call his name and turned, only to be smashed in the face with a helmet by one of the players.

Almost every bone in McCabe's face was broken, his skull fractured in several places and his nose nowhere close to where it belonged. As he lay on the ground in Rochester, N.Y., the semipro player who assaulted him stood over him yelling, "Take that. Take that. This is what I'm all about."

"I have said since this happened to me that it's going to happen again," McCabe said, "and someone is going to get killed." Four years later, someone was. McCabe was sickened when he

heard the news that Ricardo Portillo had died Saturday, a week after the youth soccer referee in Utah had been punched in the head by a 17-year-old player angry over a yellow card. Just as Portillo's family is now pleading for athletes to control their tempers, McCabe has spent the last four years preaching the importance of sportsmanship in and around Rochester.

To limited success. "There's no respect for officials now," McCabe said Monday. "Go look at any game, and they're yelling at the official. Pick a high school event, and go watch a couple of games. I guarantee you, you'll see a coach get out of control on the sideline. Or a parent. Or a kid. It's so rampant."

"What happened in Utah, I knew it was going to happen. It was just a matter of time," he added.

"Whether it was New York state,

Massachusetts, Florida, it was going to happen somewhere in this country."

But the problem isn't limited to this country.

Several Dutch teens are awaiting trial in the beating death late last year of a volunteer linesman who was working his son's youth soccer game. In Brazil last month, a referee was kicked in the chest after the final whistle of a third-division match of the Sao Paulo state championship. A referee in Kenya has filed a lawsuit against the national soccer federation, contending he is impotent after a coach grabbed his testicles in protest over a call. A Spanish soccer player was banned for three months last year after throwing a plastic water bottle at a referee. Also last year, a soccer player in New Zealand was banned indefinitely.

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Tennis: Bucks Swept In Regular Season Finale

MITCHELL — The Yankton Bucks boys' tennis team dropped its final two dual matchups of the season, losing a 9-0 decision to Mitchell and a 5-4 decision to Brandon Valley on Tuesday in Mitchell.

In the Brandon Valley match, Brandon Frick, Jason Shinder and Greg Hauer won in singles play for Yankton. Luke Rockne and Paul Fanta picked up the Bucks' doubles victory.

Yankton, which finished with a 6-9 dual record, travels to the Eastern South Dakota Conference Championships on Friday in Brookings.

MITCHELL 9, YANKTON 0

SINGLES: Jacob Cersosimo M def. Luke Rockne 10-5. Beau Brown M def. Ben Jensen 10-2. Karlin Nelson M def. Brandon Frick 10-2. Tate Crago M def. Jason Shinder 10-3. Alex Hegg M def. Greg Hauer 10-1. Brendon Lehr M def. Paul Fanta 10-2.

DOUBLES: Jacob Cersosimo-Tate Crago M def. Luke Rockne-Paul Fanta 10-4. Beau Brown-Karlin Nelson M def. Ben Jensen-Brandon Frick 10-8. Alex Hegg-Brendon Lehr M def. Jason Shinder-Greg Hauer 10-1.

BRANDON VALLEY 5, YANKTON 4

SINGLES: Billy Trevillyan BV def. Luke Rockne Y 10-2. Drake VanEgdom BV def. Ben Jensen 10-0. Brandon Frick Y def. Tanner Wehrkamp BV 10-6. Jason Shindler Y def. Austin Sodler BV 10-2. Greg Hauer Y def. Cooper Baltzer BV 10-1. Lucas Mutschelknaus BV def. Paul Fanta Y 10-3.

DOUBLES: Luke Rockne-Paul Fanta Y def. Billy Trevillyan-Austin Sodler BV 10-2. Drake VanEgdom-Tanner Wehrkamp def. Ben Jensen-Brandon Frick 10-6. Cooper Baltzer-Lucas Mutschelknaus def. Jason Shindler-Greg Hauer 11-10 (8-6).

Tanagers Tip Dakota Valley

NORTH SIOUX CITY — The Vermillion Tanagers moved to 8-1 on the season with a 7-5 victory Tuesday at Dakota Valley in high school club baseball action.

Collin Bertram pitched five innings and struck out four batters to pick up the win for Vermillion, which rallied with three runs in the top of the fourth.

Seth Heine had three hits for the Tanagers and Bertram added two.

Isaac Faldmo pitched 3 2/3 innings for Dakota Valley, while Brady Dam had two hits and Faldmo drove in two runs.

Gophers Replace UNC On Schedule With TCU

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minnesota's cancellation of two non-conference matchups against North Carolina cost the school \$800,000 and plenty of bad publicity.

The university took a big step on Tuesday toward gaining that back. The Gophers will play a home-and-home series with TCU instead.

"To get somebody with a program at that level, and that brand, is going to be terrific," athletic director Norwood Teague said.

Coach Jerry Kill's desire to protect the confidence of his young players in the developing program prompted the decision to back out of games with the Tar Heels in 2013 and 2014. Instead of traveling to Chapel Hill, N.C., on Sept. 7 this season, the Gophers will play at New Mexico State. The home game in that series against the Aggies isn't until 2016, though, so there was still an opening to fill for 2014.

Minnesota will now get \$500,000 from TCU for going to Fort Worth, Texas, next year. When the Horned Frogs play at TCF Bank Stadium for the 2015 season opener, the Gophers won't owe them anything. Also, TCU assumed the contract Minnesota had to host South Dakota State on that date for a guaranteed \$400,000. Executive associate athletic director David Benedict said TCU will either try to play SDSU or pay the Jackrabbits the buyout if that can't be worked out.