

Mount Marty College Cross Country, Track

# Lancers Ink Crofton's Tramp

BY JEREMY HOECK  
[jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net](mailto:jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net)

Tiffany Tramp found success in high school, to the tune of four state cross country titles. Now, the recently-graduated standout from Crofton (Neb.) High School is ready to take her shots at the next level, and in Yankton, no less.

Tramp, who recorded four individual top-15 finishes at the Nebraska state cross country meet, signed her intent letter Tuesday morning to run cross country and track at Mount Marty College.

"I'm excited to not really start all over, but continue what I've been doing at a new place," she said. "Plus, the competition is better here."

Her new coach was understandably excited as well.

"This is a huge recruit for us," MMC coach Randy Fischer said Tuesday morning, as he waited for Tramp to finish signing her papers in the admissions office with parents Marc and Shawntel.

"She's the kind of person, we'd like to build our program around. We're headed in the right direction."

The results would prove that to be true.

Mount Marty finished eighth in the team race at last fall's Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) Cross Country Championship, a spot that tied for the best finish in school history.

The Lancers, who graduated five runners from that squad, have also improved their team score at the GPAC meet in each of the last five years.

While the program continues to build a team that can continue to climb the GPAC ladder, it has found success sending individual athletes to the NAIA National Meet. That was part of Fischer's recruiting pitch, Tramp said.

"Coach has been talking about nationals a lot, saying that I could help them maybe get to nationals one day," she said.

As evidenced by the resume she gave to Fischer on Tuesday, Tramp will bring to Yankton a rather successful pedigree.

During her high school career, she finished 10th, 3rd, 6th and 14th (last fall) at the Nebraska state cross country meet — help-



JEREMY HOECK/P&D  
ABOVE: Crofton, Neb. standout Tiffany Tramp, second from left, signed her letter of intent Tuesday to run cross country and track at Mount Marty College. She is pictured (from left) with Mount Marty coach Randy Fischer, mother Shawntel and father Mark. (Jeremy Hoeck/P&D)

RIGHT: The Crofton girls, led by senior Tiffany Tramp, second from right, set the early pace in the District D-4 Cross Country Meet last October. (P&D File Photo)

ing extend Crofton's string of seven consecutive team titles.

For good measure, Tramp earned honorable mention All-State basketball recognition as a senior after leading Crofton to its second straight Class C2 basketball championship.

When the time came to pick a college, Tramp said it wasn't easy.

"It came down to a final decision, but it was still pretty tough," she said. "I'm just excited to join the crew here."

Being only 15 miles away from home certainly played into her decision, Tramp said, as did the support of her friends and family.

"It's nice to know that I can go

home if I want to," she said. "I've got four younger siblings to still watch play, and I'm sure they'll come up here to watch me run."

Saying Tramp will be an immediate impact recruit, Fischer pointed to Tramp's work ethic and personality as traits to be excited for — specifically as she pursues a nursing degree.

"Some other schools were interested in her, but we're very excited to have her aboard," Fischer said. "She's very humble and is a team player."

"She's one of those kids you can't help but like."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at [twitter.com/jhoeck](https://twitter.com/jhoeck)



# Former Walk-On Smelker Rises To All-American

Mount Marty College's Katie Smelker, left, runs during the Mount Marty Cross Country Invite last October in Yankton. Smelker, a transfer from Northern Colorado, earned All-American status after finishing seventh in the 10K at the NAIA Outdoor Track & Field Championships last week in Marian, Ind.

P&D FILE PHOTO



BY JEREMY HOECK  
[jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net](mailto:jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net)

Born and raised near the Rocky Mountains, Katie Smelker eventually began her ascent up the athletic ladder further inland, where peaks and valleys refer more to individual accomplishments.

At age 22 and at her third collegiate stop, Smelker has found a home at Mount Marty College in Yankton.

A walk-on to the Lancers cross country team last fall, Smelker capped off her first season in the program with an All-American performance at last week's NAIA Outdoor Track & Field Championships in Marian, Ind.

"Everyone at first knew me as the new girl, but I think eventually people started to see that I could compete at this level," she said Tuesday morning on the Mount Marty campus.

Smelker, a Stratton, Colo., native, finished seventh — despite being seeded 18th — in the women's 10,000-meter run last

week. Her time of 36:57.13 broke the previous Mount Marty record by over two minutes.

In her short time with the Lancers, she now owns all the school's distance outdoor records, in the 5K, 10K, half marathon and marathon.

"She really started to find her potential here this spring," head coach Randy Fischer said. "We've been very fortunate to have her."

Getting Smelker has proven to be an interesting odyssey.

She spent two years at Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colo., before transferring to Northern Colorado in Greeley for one year. She did not run cross country or track at either school.

Instead, she frequently ran in the Boulder Boulder 10K race in Boulder, Colo., with her sister over the Memorial Day holiday week-ends.

Smelker pursued nursing at Northern Colorado, but did not get accepted to the school's program. She then turned her attention to a new college — it was just a matter

of where.

"My mom is from South Dakota and she kept talking about Mount Marty, trying to put that bug in my ear," Smelker said. "So I decided to try it out."

Once in Yankton, the sports bug found her and Smelker contacted Fischer about potentially joining the team. It didn't take long for the coach to start thinking long-term.

"Coach talked all the time about records and how you could go to nationals if you do this or do that," Smelker said. "I just never imagined it. I went out for cross country to meet new people."

"I didn't know my potential."

That all changed after a successful cross country season, when she helped the Lancers finish eighth at the GPAC meet last fall — tying for the best finish in school history.

"All of a sudden I kept breaking times," Smelker said. "It just felt easy."

Having eventually qualified for

SMELKER | PAGE 9

## MMC Golf Classic Champs



Two team champions were crowned at the Mount Marty College Golf Classic. The women's champions were Lori Ibarolle, Yvonne Slowey, Sandy Brandt and Jenny Dietrich. The men's champions were Adam Walsh, Aaron Hansen, Mark Yonke and Jon Cooke.



## Bohn Resigning As Colorado A.D.

BY PAT GRAHAM  
AP Sports Writer

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn is resigning after eight years in charge of a Bufaloes program that struggled on the football field and soared in hoops.

In an email sent to his athletic staff and acquired by The Associated Press, Bohn wrote: "They want to go in a different direction and that is their prerogative. This is a very disappointing, troubling and shocking development as we have made so much progress together over the past 8 years."

His resignation is effective June 3. The university announced late Tuesday night that former CU women's basketball coach Ceal Barry will be the interim director of intercollegiate athletics upon Bohn's departure.

Bohn also wrote in his email to the staff: "I want to ensure you know, as my official separation agreement states, that I have not engaged in any

impropriety, NCAA rule violations, university policy violation or any immoral, dishonest, or other sort of misconduct."

The Denver Post was the first to post the contents of Bohn's email.

Chancellor Philip DiStefano said Tuesday in a written statement that he had accepted Bohn's resignation. Precise reasons for the resignation weren't disclosed.

"Mike Bohn led CU-Boulder athletics in a time of great transition and change," DiStefano said. "We are grateful to him for his vision, passion and commitment, and for his key role in revitalizing men's and women's basketball, helping us to join the Pac-12 Conference, and in taking important steps to upgrade athletic facilities at CU-Boulder. We wish him well."

DiStefano said he will appoint a committee in the coming days to conduct a national search for Bohn's successor.

RESIGNS | PAGE 9

## Baseball: Lakers Split DH

The Yankton Lakers and Vermilion Reds split their season-opening VFW Teener baseball doubleheader on Tuesday at Riverside Field in Yankton.

Vermillion won game one 11-4 but Yankton responded to win game two 4-3.

In the opener, Nathan Hein, Michael Heine, Hunter Cameron, Chase Vogt, Nate Stephenson and Tyler Strahl all had a hit for the Lakers. Jordan Kathol took the loss on the mound.

In the second game, Hein had three hits and drove in three runs. Heine tripled and scored, Kathol scored and Strahl doubled. Stephenson scored twice, including the game-winner. Cameron got the win.

Yankton will compete in a tournament this weekend in Mitchell.

### SCL: Avon 14, Scotland 1

AVON — Joe Sees had three hits and Jesse Hajek drove in three runs to lead the Avon Bards past Scotland 14-1 in South Central League action from last Thursday.

Sees also picked up the win. He allowed two hits and struck out five batters. Jeff Sand added three hits for Avon.

Casey Comstock and Blake Gomer each had two hits for Scotland.



JEREMY HOECK/P&D  
Yankton Lakers centerfielder Justin Leader snags a line drive during Tuesday's VFW Teener doubleheader against the Vermillion Reds at Riverside Field.

## P&D Sports Chat Today

Press & Dakotan sports editor James D. Cimburek and assistant sports editor Jeremy Hoeck will host a live chat on Wednesday afternoons.

The weekly event, which will run from 3:30-4:30 p.m., will cover local and regional high school and college sports, as well as some topics of national interest.

Go online to [http://www.yankton.net/live\\_chat](http://www.yankton.net/live_chat)

## Ex-Div. II Champ QB Found Dead In Mich.

DETROIT (AP) — One of the winningest quarterbacks in college football history was found dead in the woods of northern Michigan Tuesday night, days after disappearing while out fishing near his family's cottage.

Cullen Finnerty, 30, who led Grand Valley State University to three Division II national titles and more than 50 wins during his 4 years as a starter in Allendale, Mich., last decade, went missing Sunday. His body was found about 8 p.m. in woods within a mile of where he disappeared, said Lake County Undersheriff Dennis Robinson.

The cause of death wasn't immediately clear, but Robinson said foul play wasn't suspected. He said the body was not in the water and was found in a wooded area in Webber Township, near the family's cottage. An autopsy would be needed to determine how Finnerty died, the undersheriff said.

The search drew scores of police and volunteers, including staff and players from Grand Valley State.

Finnerty last spoke to a family member that night in a phone call in which he said "he was nervous about something," Sheriff Robert Hilts said earlier Tuesday. Based on that call, the family suspected "he might be having some kind of a mental episode — that he was either afraid or something and ran off into the woods," Hilts said.

The sheriff said authorities had been tracking Finnerty's cellphone "until it went dead." The terrain made the search for the 6-foot-3, 230-pound ex-athlete difficult, Hilts said.

"This is the last river that I'd pick to fish," he said, citing log-jams and dense brush. "And it's a very tough river to navigate."

Searchers from the sheriff's office, state police and area fire departments fanned out Tuesday across a square-mile area of Webber Township, which is about 65 miles north of Grand Rapids.

In addition, dozens of current and former Grand Valley State players, coaches and staff hopped on a bus and headed north to Lake County to lend a hand in the search effort.

Grand Valley coach Matt Mitchell, who was a defensive assistant when Finnerty led the Lakers to national titles in 2005 and 2006, as well as former Grand Valley coach and current Notre Dame offensive coordinator Chuck Martin were among those helping out.

Finnerty, who starred at Brighton High School, originally accepted an offer to play at the University of Toledo but transferred to Grand Valley after redshirting in 2001.

The dual-threat QB played for Grand Valley teams that won Division II titles in 2003, 2005 and 2006, and he briefly was a member of the Baltimore Ravens.

Mitchell said Finnerty was "held in very high regard. He was the starting quarterback on national championship teams. But he's more than that: He's one of the most loyal teammates we've ever had."