



COURTESY PHOTO

The trophy that will be awarded to the winner of the "Showdown Series" between the University of South Dakota and South Dakota State University. The 24 possible points includes 17 sports, as well three points awarded based on academic scores.

SDSU-USD Rivalry Gets Brand New Symbol, Trophy

17 Sports, Academics To Factor In 'Showdown Series Trophy'

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — Beyond wins, losses and standings, the athletic meetings between the University of South Dakota and South Dakota State will now have added significance.

The idea of a "Showdown Series" announced Wednesday was welcome news to the ears of USD head women's track and field coach Lucky Huber, himself a native South Dakota.

"To me, being a South Dakota kid, I think it's great," Huber said. "The rivalry has always been fun, and I like the idea that we're looking at all the sports, recognizing all our kids."

At a press conference Wednesday morning in Sioux Falls, officials from the South Dakota Corn Utilization announced that it will sponsor a new South Dakota



Showdown series between the state's two Division I schools.

The series — which starts during the 2012-13 seasons, with points retroactive — will have a total of 24 possible points, with 21 devoted to athletic victories and three via academic scores.

Using the devised points system, USD leads SDSU 3-2 in matchups already contested this fall. The next head-to-head meeting will be the Nov. 17 football game in Brookings.

For example, the football games will be worth two points, while the two men's and women's basketball contests will be each worth one point. No points will be awarded for post-season action.

Sports like indoor track, outdoor track, cross country, golf, and swimming and diving will award the points to the team that places higher at the Summit League Championship.

The fact that 17 sports, not just one or two, will take part in the Showdown Series was welcome news, Huber said.

"It helps the athletic departments be able to spread their support to all the teams, because now all the teams and all the matches are worth something," he said.

At the end of the school year each spring, the winning school will earn bragging rights to the specially-designed traveling trophy.

"It should give all the fans in South Dakota a good way to follow how both schools are doing, to get them interested in every sport," Huber said.

The multimedia rights holders for each school, Coyote Sports Properties and Jackrabbit Sports Properties, will lead the initiative. Putting equal weight to all sports and academics was important, according to Travis, general manager of Coyote Sports Properties.

"This all-encompassing rivalry series will showcase the talents of both schools' student-athletes with a point system that not only focuses on wins and losses, but also on academics and scholarships," Lee said.

A "philanthropic aspect," as Lee put it, will also allow fans at USD-SDSU games the chance to donate money to Feeding South Dakota when purchasing concessions.

Times have changed since the rivalry became one of the nation's most heated at the Division II level.

"We've had a long and storied tradition; a great history and rivalry. This is an opportunity to recognize that," SDSU athletic director Justin Sell said in a statement. "We'll be respecting that tradition and hopefully some new ones."

While some sports still faced each other after SDSU made the jump to Division I in 2004, high-profile sports like football and basketball saw a long delay in the rivalry. Women's basketball renewed their series in February 2010, men's basketball didn't meet again until last year's Summit League encounters.

"There was all this talk that the rivalry was dead, but all along we've all known it's not dead," Huber said. "We're excited about we're at right now and be able to do this with them."

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Volleyball | Nebraska State Tournament

Lady Trojans Ready For Tourney Run

BY JEREMY HOECK
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HARTINGTON, Neb. — At one point in early September, a string of three losses in five matches didn't sit well with the Hartington Cedar Catholic volleyball team.

The Trojans, the 2010 state runner-up and 2011 state tournament qualifiers, turned their attention toward a late-season surge.

Eighteen wins in 19 matches later, Cedar Catholic is headed to the 2012 Nebraska State Volleyball Tournament. The third-seeded Trojans (28-5) open C2 action today (Thursday) against sixth-seeded Wood River at 4 p.m. in Grand Island, Neb.

In short, it's been nearly a complete 180 for Cedar Catholic since those early struggles.

"We just decided that we didn't want to lose in October, and we didn't," said senior Lexi Steffen, who leads the team in kills (270) and blocks (106).

"We knew if we worked hard and played confident, we can make a run at this thing."

Winners of 12 straight, Cedar Catholic enters state tournament play as one of the hottest teams in Class C2. The Trojans beat Wakefield 3-1 for the sub-district title and beat Neligh-Oakdale 3-1 for the district crown.

"Even when we weren't winning, we were pushing good teams to the brink," head coach Adam Kuntz said. "I don't think we were as confident back in September, but now we're the aggressor and it's paid off for us."

All five of Cedar Catholic's losses have come to state tournament qualifiers, including two to C2 entrant Lutheran High Northeast. The last loss for the Trojans was Sept. 27 at Guardian Angels Central Catholic.

"After that loss, we wanted to make sure we stayed focused in October," Kuntz said. "Our goal was not to lose in October, and we pulled that off and put ourselves in a good position."

Depth has also played a role in Cedar Catholic's winning ways. Five different players have recorded at least 100 kills and at least 40 blocks. Katelyn Dickes is second on the team in kills (269) and digs (208), while Bailey Steffen has added 171 kills and 49 blocks, and Karly Noecker boasts 164 kills and a team-high 35 ace serves.

Emily Schrempp has provided the offensive spark with 937 set assists. The reserves have also given the Trojans assists, according to Kuntz.



P&D FILE PHOTO

Head coach Adam Kuntz, off center in white, and members of the Cedar Catholic volleyball team celebrate a key point during the team's Sub-District C2-7 championship match last week in Ponca, Neb. The Lady Trojans begin play in the Nebraska State Volleyball Tournament today (Thursday) in Grand Island, Neb.

Gazelles To Host Watertown On Friday

Volleyball: S.D. State Pairings Announced In 'A,' 'B'

The Yankton Gazelles will host the Watertown Arrows on Friday in a match to decide a berth in the South Dakota State Class AA Volleyball Tournament. The state tournament is set for Nov. 15-17 at Rapid City Central High School.

Start time is set for 7 p.m. at the Summit Center.

The Gazelles (8-12) are 2-0 against the Arrows this season. Yankton won a 25-20, 27-29, 22-25, 25-21, 17-15 on Sept. 11 in Water-

town. The Gazelles completed the regular season sweep with a 25-21, 25-19, 26-24 victory on Oct. 22 in Yankton.

Yankton advanced by virtue of its runner-up finish in the District 2AA Volleyball Tournament. Watertown beat Brookings 3-1 Tuesday to finish third in District 1AA.

Other Class AA region play-in matches will include Sioux Falls Lincoln at Sioux Falls Roosevelt, Sturgis at Mitchell and Huron at

Rapid City Central. All region matches are 7 p.m. Central time, with the exception of Sturgis-Mitchell (5 p.m.).

Pairings for the Class A Tournament, Nov. 15-17 at the Watertown Civic Arena, and the Class B Tournament, Nov. 15-17 at the Corn Palace in Mitchell, were finalized on Tuesday.

In Class A, Dakota Valley (26-3) and Wagner (30-3) will face each other in the opening round, a 1:45 p.m. start. Wagner was

state runner-up a year ago. Dakota Valley is making its first trip to state since 2005.

In other Class A opening round matchups, top-seeded Belle Fourche (31-1) faces Moberg-Pollock (23-6) at noon, defending champion Sioux Falls Christian (27-4) faces Aberdeen Roncalli (23-5) at 6 p.m., and Pine Ridge (31-1) draws Sioux Valley (23-5) at 7:45 p.m.

Parker will take a 32-0 record and the top seed into the Class B Tournament, drawing Lyman (16-12) in the noon game. Parker fin-

ished third at state a year ago.

Also in Class B, Andes Central (29-3) draws Arlington (30-5) in the 1:45 p.m. contest next Thursday. The Lady Eagles return to the 'B' after a one-year hiatus.

Warner (31-0), top-ranked in the South Dakota Sports Writers Association polls, earned the second seed and will face Timber Lake (24-7) in the late game, a 7:45 p.m. start. The 6 p.m. opening round game will feature Herried-Selby Area (28-2) against James Valley Christian (21-6).

9A Gameday: Unbeaten Monarchs Look To End Hawks' Reign

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VERMILLION — The Canistota Hawks have ruled nine-man football in recent years, dominating the small-school classes with a ruthlessness that hadn't been seen since Freeman won four consecutive nine-man titles back in the 1990s.

The Warner Monarchs, though, hope to end that reign.

Warner makes its first-ever trip to the South Dakota State football finals today (Thursday), drawing the top-ranked and unbeaten Hawks in the DakotaDome's inaugural final of 2012, an 11 a.m. start today.

For the Monarchs, the word "Dome" was not used in team conversations, but the goal of making the state football finals was understood by the team.

"It was definitely a goal to make it to the Dome. We have 13 seniors, a very mature team," said Warner head coach Tom Kulesa. "The word 'dome' was never used, but it's where we expected to be."

The Monarchs steamrolled through their schedule, with only one team playing them within two touchdowns: Wolsey-Wessington. The Warbirds gave Warner a battle twice, in the season opener (22-8) on Aug. 24 and in the opening round of the playoffs (28-18).

"Wolsey-Wessington was the perfect matchup: their size, their defensive speed," Kulesa said. "If we weren't there (in the finals), they would be."

Warner has ground out nearly 3,000 yards on the ground, with Mitchell Boesl recording 1,313 of it. Quarterback Clay Rozell has rushed for nearly 600 yards and

has passed for 850 more. More than a third of his 43 completions (17) have gone for touchdowns.

"Clay has been a mainstay in our offense," Kulesa said. "In years past he's been more of a runner, but he suffered a hip injury before the season started, so he's had to throw it more."

While Warner has not seen the Hawks in person, Kulesa got a good look at Canistota coach Lenny Schroeder's approach when Schroeder coached in Selby.

"I've known Lenny for years," Kulesa said. "Even at Selby they ran the option. They do it extremely well."

"It's a true option, where the quarterback keeps the ball in the fullback's belly then decides whether or not to pull it, so it's tough to defend."

Like Warner, Canistota has only had two close games this

season. For the Hawks, they were the opening two games of the season, at Class 9AA finalist Howard (20-16) and against 2011 Class 9AA champion Bridgewater-Emery-Ethan (16-8). Since then, no team has played the Hawks closer than 29 points and the team went through the last four opponents by a combined score of 210-6.

"Our defense is probably as good as it ever has been. We don't have the speed that we've had in the past, but we start nine seniors on defense," Schroeder said. "Most of our guys played scout team last year, so they understand their roles."

The Hawks sport a pair of 6-4, 225-pound defensive ends in Jason Van Winkle (103 tackles, 14 sacks, 9 TFL) and Tyler Decker



P&D FILE PHOTO

A quartet of Canistota players wrap up Wall's Chavis Shull during the 2011 Class 9A championship game. The Hawks again come into the Class 9A championship game unbeaten, thanks to a defense that has allowed a combined six points in the last four games.