

USD Finally Comes Home, Faces UNI

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — Five weeks. The last time the University of South Dakota football team played a game inside the DakotaDome, the first presidential debate was three days before and the season wasn't even half completed.

In other words, a lot has changed since Oct. 6 for the Coyotes (1-8, 0-6). "It's been different, really different," senior center Tim Ross said this week. "Before, the longest we've been away from here is two weeks."

The Coyotes, losers of seven straight, dropped four games in a row after losing to Western Illinois that Saturday in early October — including a home game played in Sioux Falls.

"You just don't see that at any level, going on the road for that long," senior linebacker Tim Mar-

lette said. "It feels great to be back in here. We can't wait to see our fans for once."

Those fans, in return, will see two teams looking for momentum at the end of a frustrating season.

Northern Iowa (3-6, 2-4), already assured its first non-winning season since 2002, has battled through a tough schedule that saw the Panthers play Wisconsin and Iowa. The Panthers did, however, shut out Western Illinois 40-0 last week.

"They're used to winning. Looking at the film, you can see a team that's not used to losing and that they're hungry," Ross said. "Watching their past few wins, you can tell

they're getting back in a rhythm. "They're hungry for a win, but we've got to be hungrier."

Northern Iowa's rhythm has especially turned a corner on the offensive side of the ball, led by freshman quarterback Sawyer Kollmorgen. He averages 225.2 yards passing per game and has thrown for 2,027 yards with 18 touchdowns.

It's on defense — the Panthers rank 29th nationally — where UNI could cause the Coyotes the biggest problem, Marlette said.

"You can never go by their records, their defense is always tough," he said. "We expect a battle and we're getting ready for one."

The Coyotes, meanwhile, are looking for an offensive spark today after having scored 24 points over the last 13 quarters. USD ranks 114th out of 121 FCS teams in total offense at 274 yards a game.

The rushing game again figures to

be a focal point for the Coyotes today. Marcus Sims, who was limited last week because of injury, leads the team with 563 yards, while quarterback Josh Vander Maten has added 350 yards.

"I don't think you can ever be satisfied and happy with where it is," Ross said of the run game. "Even if you were number one in the nation, you could always want more."

There's that word "want" again. As in, the Coyotes want to move past a 7-game losing streak. Playing at home might just be the intangible to get it done, Marlette said.

"It's familiarity, just like sleeping in your own bed. You just feel more comfortable here," he said. "Teams come in and they don't feel comfortable, and that's a huge advantage for us."

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Winner Tips TV Again

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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VERMILLION — Three years ago, a tipped pass landing in the hands of a Winner player allowed the Warriors to beat Tri-Valley in the DakotaDome.

Friday, it happened again. Winner's Tanner Fritz came up with a tipped ball for an interception in the endzone with 18 seconds left, preserving a 13-6 victory over the Mustangs in the South Dakota Class 11B football championship game.

In 2009, a tipped pass on a jump ball landed right in the hands of a Winner receiver, who took the ball the final five yards for the game-winning score in a 12-6 Warrior victory.

This time Isaiah Old Lodge, who had upped the Warrior lead in the third quarter by returning a fumble 62 yards for a score, tipped the Brett Page pass near the line of scrimmage on Tri-Valley's second-and-goal try in the closing seconds. Tri-Valley had moved the ball from near midfield with a minute and a half to play.

"I saw (Page) roll out," Old Lodge said of the final play. "I tried to intercept the ball but I only tipped it."

From there, Fritz — Winner's quarterback on offense — watched the ball float in his direction.

"Isaiah has the best hands on the team," Fritz said. "He tipped the ball up, and it was just like tip drill in two-a-days. The ball fell right to me."

The ball was not falling in Winner's direction early in the game. After the Warriors got a defensive stop on the game's opening drive, the Dakota Burggraf punt rolled all the way down to the 7-yard line. A penalty and a Logan Koopman sack had the Warriors punting from their own 2-yard line.

On the ensuing possession, Tri-Valley took the ball all the way down to the 1-yard-line before Winner's Scott Assman and Kray Krolikowski corralled Page on a fourth-and-goal play.

The third possession proved the charm for the Mustangs, as Page found a wide open Burggraf in the endzone midway through the second quarter to give the Mustangs the lead. The point-after-touchdown kick hit the upright and bounced out, denying

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Tri-Valley's Logan Otto is tripped up by Winner's Adam Farner during the Class 11B championship game on Friday at the DakotaDome. Winner's Tanner Fritz caught a tipped ball in the endzone for an interception to secure a 13-6 victory.

Coyotes Drop Opener At Cleveland State

CLEVELAND — Despite a strong day on the offensive boards, shooting woes sunk the South Dakota women's basketball team to a 60-46 loss in its season opener against Cleveland State.

Nicole Seekamp led the Coyotes (0-1) with 19 points, while Polly Harrington had 10 second half points to finish with 15. Harrington also led the Yotes with eight rebounds.

The Coyotes grabbed 17 offensive rebounds in the game, but had trouble getting things going offensively. USD shot 33 percent from the field, 3-for-21 behind the three point arc and had 21 turnovers in the game.

Defensively, USD had 12 steals and forced Cleveland State (1-0) into 20 turnovers. The Coyotes also held the Vikings off the boards, ending the game with nine

more total rebounds than CSU did, 38-29.

Cleveland State's Shalonda Winton had 22 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Viking effort. She shot 10-11 from the free-throw line, which helped Cleveland State shoot 18-20 as a team from that spot.

South Dakota led by as many as six with 2:06 left in the first, and entered halftime tied at 21. USD shot 37.5 percent in the opening half with Seekamp leading the way with 10 points.

Despite not shooting as well in the second half (9-for-30), the Coyotes cut down on the turnovers to seven, which was half of their first half total.

South Dakota will next travel to Drake on Sunday for a 2 p.m. tipoff in the Knapp Center.

Cedar Catholic Heads To C2 Final

GRAND ISLAND, Neb. — Two down, one to go for the Hartington Cedar Catholic volleyball team.

But what a big one that will be.

The Trojans advanced to the Nebraska Class C2 volleyball championship match after sweeping top-ranked Hastings St. Cecilia 26-24, 25-20, 25-21 in Friday's semifinals in Grand Island, Neb.

"Everything went well for us, from the time we stepped out of the locker room until the last point," Cedar Catholic head coach Adam Kuntz said.

"We were loose and ready to play."

The victory advances the Trojans, now 30-5, to today's (Sat-

day) 11 a.m. championship match against Lutheran High Northeast. The two teams are very familiar with each other — the Eagles beat the Trojans twice within a span of five days back in September.

"The history between our two schools in volleyball hasn't favored us, but we're a totally different team now than we were in September," Kuntz said. "We're a lot more confident and a lot more aggressive."

"We're straight up hungry." Friday's semifinals, though, gave the Trojans an early test. They were down four points in the opening set and had to fight back.

"When we came back, that was huge," Kuntz said. "I think

they felt like they had us against the ball, but instead, we put them against the wall."

Lexi Steffen, Karly Noecker and Katelyn Dickes all had eight kills for Cedar Catholic, while Emily Schrempf posted 32 set assists.

Blocking was the biggest key for the Trojans, according to Kuntz. Schrempf, Dickes and Siera Becker all had three blocks in the win.

"That's been the story so far, we're very good up front," Kuntz said. "We haven't had any emotional concerns about being down or having to get pumped up. We're playing very loose and energized."

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11A: Quarriers Cruise To Third Consecutive Crown



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Dell Rapids' Riley Schmidt pulls away from the pack for a second quarter touchdown during the Class 11A football championship game on Friday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

BY CHRIS RILEY
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VERMILLION — Dell Rapids used its physical style of play to post a 10-1 record heading into Friday night's Class 11A state championship game at the DakotaDome. The Harrisburg Tigers found out just how dominating Dell Rapids can be as the Quarriers won their fourth state title in four years with a bruising 47-0 victory over the Tigers.

Dell Rapids, who finish the season 11-1, got huge plays seemingly at will and completely overpowered the Tigers, taking a 28-0 halftime lead and outgaining Harrisburg 398-257 in total yardage.

After trading punts to start the game, Dell Rapids took over at their own nine yard-line midway through the first quarter and used a trio of big plays — including a 40-yard pass from senior Matt Kolbeck to senior Jacob Morris on a third down — to set up a two-yard touchdown dive by senior fullback Cole Langer. The successful PAT gave Dell Rapids a 7-0 lead with 1:15 left to play in the first quarter and the Quar-

riers would never look back.

Langer added an 18-yard rushing strike less than three minutes later early in the second quarter.

After immediately forcing a three and out, Dell Rapids sophomore running back Riley Schmidt took the first play from scrimmage 56 yards and the rout was on.

Schmidt would later add a 17-yard score in the third quarter and in the fourth he forced a fumble on a Harrisburg option-pitch deep in Quarriers territory and returned the ball 89 yards for his third score of the game.

"I saw him doing the option play and stuck my hand out and got the ball and just took it to the end zone," Schmidt said of his defensive gem.

For his defensive touchdown and 110 rushing yards and two scores on only four carries, Schmidt was named the Joe Robbie MVP Award winner by the South Dakota Sportswriters.

"We came out looking to put a whooping on them," Schmidt said. "We came out confident and just fought hard."

In addition to Schmidt's

yardage, Langer carried the ball 12 times for 88 yards and had two scores on the ground.

"Everybody just stepped up and played really well," the bruising fullback said.

Not only did Dell Rapids make all of the big plays that they needed to offensively, they were relentless on defense, allowing only 112 rushing yards on 42 Harrisburg carries.

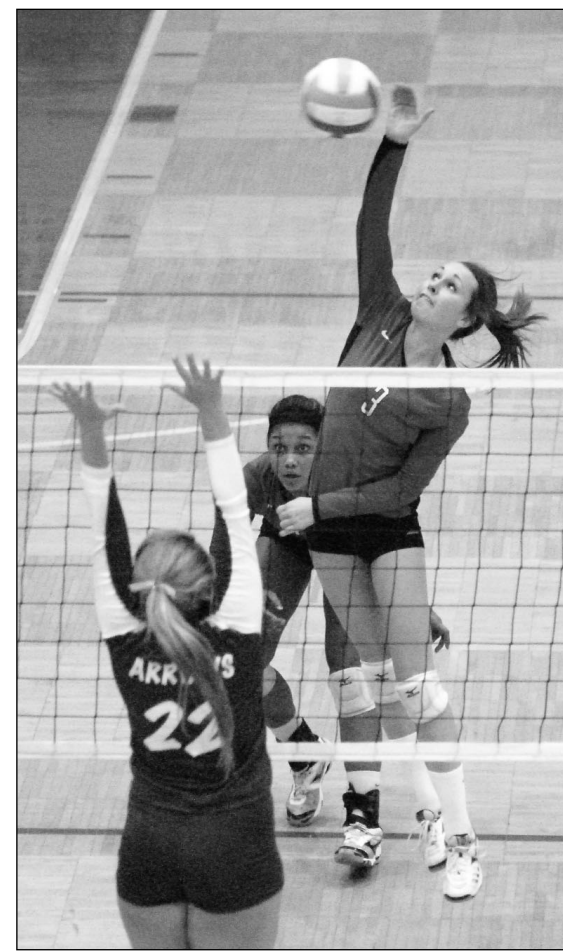
"Defensively we rallied to the football," Quarriers head coach Steven Hansen said. "These senior kids just go to work and do a great job."

Harrisburg was able to gain yardage at times, especially late in the game, but the Tigers were plagued by turnovers, losing two fumbles and throwing an interception.

The Tigers finish their season 9-3.

Most telling perhaps was how successful Dell Rapids was with their one-dimensional offense. The Quarriers only attempted two passes (one completion for

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JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Yankton junior Brooke Wuebben reaches high for a spike over the Watertown defense of Emily Pengilly, 22, during Friday night's Region 1AA volleyball match at the Summit Center.

Arrows Escape YHS For State 'AA' Berth

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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Despite winning twice against Watertown earlier in the season, the Yankton Gazelles fell to the Arrows in five games for a spot in the state tournament.

Watertown defeated Yankton 19-25, 25-19, 25-21, 24-26, 15-5 in Friday night's Region 1AA final at the Summit Center, earning a trip to next week's Class 11AA State Tournament.

Yankton head coach Leasa Woodward said Watertown was in control the entire night, passing being the Gazelles' biggest barrier of the night.

"I never felt like it was tight," she said. "I felt like Watertown dominated us in every aspect of the game, and I felt like we were on our heels all night trying to recover. We got lucky and pulled out a win in set one and set four, but they were in control the entire time."

The Gazelles started out strong in the first game taking the first three points of the game and staying ahead of the Arrows 8-4. Watertown caught up to tie the set at nine, and then took the lead 14-12. The Gazelles were able to regain their lead 18-15 against the Arrows and hung on to win set one 25-19.

Watertown took an early lead in set two 10-2 over Yankton. The Gazelles tightened the gap, Watertown still leading 14-13, but Watertown held out to win set two 25-19.

Watertown jumped ahead again in the third set 9-4 against Yankton, and kept ahead for the rest of the set to win 25-21 over the Gazelles.