



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Mount Marty's Joe Hieb pulls the trigger on a three-point shot during the first half of the Lancers' 81-61 victory over Grace University on Tuesday at Laddie E. Cimpl Arena. MMC, 3-2, opens Great Plains Athletic Conference play at Concordia on Saturday.

## MMC Blasts Past Royals 81-61

BY CHRIS RILEY  
 sports@yankton.net

Mount Marty was successful shooting the long ball on their home court as the Lancers defeated Grace University 81-61 in their home opener Tuesday night at the Cimpl Arena.

The Lancers, who improved to 3-2 with the win, made nine of 19 shots from behind three-point arc (47 percent), led by T.J. Johnson's three for six effort from long-range.

"It is nice to get back home and for the most part we looked pretty good," Lancer coach Jim Thorson said. "We accomplished what we needed to."

After an early 4-4 tie, Mount Marty used a trio of small 4-0 run throughout the first half to gain an edge over the Royals and never looked back. The Lancers closed the first period of play with a six-point scoring outburst for a 38-26 halftime lead and never let Grace back within 10 points.

"We can bring people in off the bench that can score," Thorson added. "As long as we keep moving the ball and keep the pressure on the defense we will be alright."

Lennox-native, senior Austin Harms and sophomore Saladin Smith led the Lancers with 14 points each, while Harms added a game-high eight rebounds.

Johnson, who scored nine of his 11 points via the three, and Joe Hieb (10 points) rounded out Mount Marty's double-digit scoring.

The Lancers, who shot 57 percent from the field, also made 18 of 28 three throws (64 percent).

The one area that Thorson thought his team could improve upon was rebounding, as Grace out-rebounded the Lancers 36-34.

"We are going to have to rebound a little better," Thorson said. "We are kind of small and just need to get in better position."

Midway through the second half, Grace narrowed the margin to 60-48 but the Lancers used a 12-0 run to seal the victory.

Thorson got 13 of his players into the game, with 10 of the Lancers finding the scoring column.

Junior Mike Lovercheck led Grace with 12 points. The Royals shot just 37 percent from the field for the game.

This was just the third ever meeting between the Royals and Lancers, with Mount Marty now leading the series 2-1.

Up next, Mount Marty opens its Great Plains Athletic Conference season on Saturday with a road trip to Seward, Neb. to face Concordia University at 4 p.m.

The Lancers have their next home game on Nov. 28 against Northwestern.

**GRACE (2-4)**  
 Hakeem Stewart 2-6 1-2-5, Mike Lovercheck 6-11 0-0 12, Spencer Plank 4-7 2-2 11, J.J. Harlung 0-6 0-0 0, Lance Evans 4-6 2-3 11, Trenton Mayo 1-7 2-3 5, Aytunde Akinbote 2-9 4-6 8, Venice Washington 2-4 3-7 1. TOTALS: 22-59 14-23 61.

**MOUNT MARTY (3-2)**  
 Saladin Smith 5-7 3-6 14, Chris Richardson 2-3 1-2 6, Scott Odekirik 0-1 0-0 0, Joe Hieb 4-8 0-0 10, Austin Harms 4-6 5-6 14, Scott Sellers 1-4 0-0 3, Tyler Payer 0-0 0-0 0, Jose Pena-Benjamin 2-4 3-5 7, T.J. Johnson 4-7 0-1 11, Jeff Larsen 3-4 1-2 7, Chevy Fischer 1-1 3-4 5, Anthony Rutledge 1-1 2-2 4, Alex Irvine 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS: 27-47 18-28 81.

At the half: MMC 38, GU 26. Three-Pointers: MMC 9-19 (Johnson 3-6, Hieb 2-5, Harms 1-1, Smith 1-2, Richardson 1-2, Sellers 1-3), GU 3-19 (Evans 1-1, Plank 1-2, Mayo 1-5, Hartung 0-4, Stewart 0-2, Akinbote 0-2, Sweatte 0-2, Lovercheck 0-1). Rebounds: GU 36 (Stewart 6, Evans 6), MMC 34 (Harms 8). Assists: MMC 11 (Odekirik 4), GU 4 (Mayo 3). Turnovers: GU 21, MMC 20. Blocks: MMC 3 (Odekirik 1, Hieb 1, Fischer 1), GU 1 (Washington 1). Steals: MMC 11 (Richardson 3), GU 10 (Mayo 3). Fouled Out: None. Attendance: 398.

You can Follow Chris Riley on Twitter at [twitter.com/ChrisCRiley](http://twitter.com/ChrisCRiley)

## USD Set To Begin Boots' 25th Season

BY JEREMY HOECK  
 jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

VERMILLION — Dave Boots made an apparent bold statement in guaranteeing his University of South Dakota men's basketball team will qualify for the 8-team Summit League tournament next March.

"I'll make that promise to you," the 25th-year head coach said at USD's media day, holding for comedic pause to later point out that the league only has nine teams and newcomer Nebraska-Omaha is ineligible.

"How we'll be in November is certainly not going to be how we're going to be in March."

To that end, the Coyotes will certainly be tested in their non-conference season, which begins today (Wednesday) at the 3-day Global Sports Showcase in Laramie, Wyo.

USD, which returns only four of its top 10 players from last season, will also face Gonzaga (Sunday), Iowa (Dec. 4) and Kansas State (Dec. 31).

"Those are the games you definitely look forward to, seeing how you can do on the national level," said Coyote junior guard Steve Tecker. "Hopefully it makes the Summit League seem easier."

The Coyotes, 10-18 a season ago, return only three players who saw significant minutes — juniors Trevor Gruis (C, 11.3 ppg, 6.7 rpg) and Tecker (G,

5.6 ppg, 3.7 rpg), as well as senior reserve Jordan Boots (G, 5.0 ppg).

In a move to bolster the team's depth and overall athleticism, USD brought in four transfers and three freshmen who figure to see quality minutes.

Of the newcomers, Karim Rowson (Jr., G, Western Oklahoma State) is likely to immediately start, while Adam Thoseby (So., G, Utah State) and Trey Norris (So., G, North Texas) will red-shirt. Tyler Larson (Jr., G, Casper College) is out for the season after tearing his ACL.

COYOTES | PAGE 9

## Game Means Different Things For USD, SDSU

BY JEREMY HOECK  
 jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

The outcome of Saturday's resumption of the South Dakota State and University of South Dakota football rivalry will have a drastically different meaning for each side.

That part is yet to be determined. What is certain, however, is how the Jackrabbits and Coyotes are approaching the game. SDSU, for example, has more far-reaching goals than simply beating its rivals to the south.

"We have a lot of stuff going on," SDSU coach John Stiegelmeier said in Tuesday's media teleconference. "We have the rivalry that 98 percent of fans just want to see the game played, to be part of that history."

"And then you have the playoff deal."

That's right, the Jackrabbits (7-3, 5-2), coming off a 20-17 loss at top-ranked North Dakota State, need one more win to crack the FCS post-season field.

"We've chosen to focus on the two things that culminate," Stiegelmeier said. "The rivalry is not the only part of this deal. It's a chance to be in the playoffs and play some more football."

The Coyotes (1-9, 0-7), on the other hand, are embracing the game with full attention and haven't shied away from the magnitude.

A staff led by head coach Joe Glenn — himself a former Coyote player and assistant coach — is fully aware of the rivalry, Glenn said. Offensive coordinator Wes Beschoner and special teams coordinator Tim Triplett (son of former USD coach Dave) have also both experienced State-U games.

"You just have to talk about it, and tell them about how they need to stay focused on the here and now," Glenn said. "Don't get caught up in anything but the game. You have to worry about the job at hand."

In an effort to further drive home the significance of such a game, the program plans to bring in alumni this week to talk to the players. That's not a new concept for the Coyotes, past coaches and players have attended practices, but this week naturally culminates a year-long goal.

"It's been a focus. One of our goals when we started the season is to win this game," Glenn said. "This goes back a long way. It's what it is."

The football series between the two schools dates all the way back to 1889, with USD holding a 51-48-7 edge. SDSU, however, won eight of the final 10 meetings until the rivalry was put on hiatus after 2003.

Since then, debates ranged from when the Coyotes and Jackrabbits would play again, to where the next game would be played, and who would ultimately win.

"The alums are the ones that make the game; it's the talk of the state," Glenn said. "The rivalry will go on for everybody. The teams will have to go play, but they represent their students, their faculty and their fans."

"It makes it a great game." Naturally, the 21st-ranked Jackrabbits are the obvious favorite at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium. SDSU ranks sixth in the Missouri Valley Football Conference in total offense, but sits third in rushing offense (169.3).

That's the area USD has geared up to stop, Glenn said Tuesday.

"Everybody's running on us, and we're doing our darnedest to stop the run. We're probably getting a little bit better at it," he said. "It just seems like every week someone has a great back and a good offensive line."

The Jackrabbits are no different with sophomore running back Zach Zenner, who ranks second nation-

LANCERS | PAGE 9

STATE-U | PAGE 9

## MMC Women Claim Home Opener



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Mount Marty's Brittany Little grabs a loose ball as Grace's Erika Studdendeck dives over her during their women's basketball game on Tuesday at Laddie E. Cimpl Arena. MMC won 74-34 to improve to 2-1 on the season.

## Defense Powers MMC Past Grace

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE  
 sports@yankton.net



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Mount Marty guard Taylor Forsch, 20, attacks the basket against Grace's Hannah Schnell, 30, during the first half of their women's basketball action on Tuesday at Laddie E. Cimpl Arena.

The Mount Marty women's basketball team had one goal for their game Tuesday night — to make a statement. The team did just that as they faced the Grace University Royals.

The Lancers defeated the Royals in Tuesday night basketball action at the Laddie E. Cimpl Arena 74-34.

Senior Taylor Forsch said after losing one of their non-conference games, her and her teammates wanted a win.

"Our goal was to be undefeated in all non-conference games, but we got beat so we wanted to come out here and make a statement right away," she said. "We wanted to come out and play as hard as we can to get ready for the College of St. Mary's on Thursday."

The Lancers were able to take an early lead against Grace 12-7 and stayed ahead 20-15. By the end of the first half Mount Marty led the Royals 39-17.

At the half Forsch led the Lancers with 11 points. Allison De Kam had 10 points.

Mount Marty kept their lead throughout the rest of the game, only allowing Grace to reach a total of 34 points. De Kam put up 14 points and 13 rebounds for the game, while Forsch added 17 points for the night. Raquel Sutura had 16 points by the end of the night, as well as six rebounds, and Alexa Berg made 11 points.

Head coach Tom Schlimgen said his team focused on defense for this game, which paid off.

"We did pretty well on defense," he said. "The first half we did full-court defense and the second half we did half-court defense. Both of them were pretty solid. I don't think we shot as good as we could have, though. We were not very good from the three-point line, so hopefully we're going to start making a lot more of those."

For the Royals, Hannah Schnell had 15 points and seven rebounds, while Erika Studdendeck had nine points and six rebounds. Grace shot just 23 percent against Mount Marty's 37 percent.

After an exhibition game against Augustana on Saturday, Schlimgen said his team learned a lot and was able to prepare for this game.

"They were pretty solid on Saturday, so we were just trying to prepare for this week," he said. "This week is a big week for us. Thursday night we're playing St. Mary's, and they're ranked 23 in the nation, so it's a chance for us to make a statement."

Forsch said her team will continue to focus on defense to prepare for Thursday's home match against St. Mary's.

"Our defensive transition wasn't good

## Red Raiders Head North With Unfinished Business

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK  
 james.cimburek@yankton.net

WAGNER — Even though the Wagner Red Raiders graduated four key players from the 2011 season, the runner-up finish to Sioux Falls Christian left those remaining with a desire to complete some unfinished business.

This year, the Red Raiders back at state, hoping to finish that business.

Wagner takes a 27-3 record into the South Dakota State Class A Volleyball Tournament, which begins Thursday at the Watertown Civic Arena. The Red Raiders draw fourth-seeded Dakota Valley (26-3) in the first round.

For Coach Amy Tyler, the tourney run has been a pleasant surprise.

"I've been impressed with the way this group has developed," she said. "After losing four seniors and losing the height we did, they've sure stepped up and filled roles."

Unlike recent seasons, when the Red Raiders pounded teams into submission, this year's Wagner squad is built more on defense.

"Their defense is a lot quicker than in years past," Tyler said. "The girls know how to win, which is something that's hard to teach."

Veteran defensive specialist Sydney Breen has a team-best 370 digs, with setter Jessa Doom (249), middle hitter Nicole Weber (226), Delanyne Dickerson (163) and Kim Koupal (157) also putting up big passing numbers. Alex Dvorak has a team-best 36 blocks (31 solo), with Ali Kuca (32 blocks) and Doom (26 blocks) not far behind.

The Red Raiders have also recorded 300 ace serves as a team, led by 75 from Doom and 72 from Weber. Dickerson (52) and Koupal (45) also average better than an ace serve a match.

"At the beginning of the season, we knew we would have to serve more aggressively," Tyler said. "We have a couple that can

place the ball well, and Weber has some great top-spin."

Weber has also been a driving force in the offense, recording a team-best 278 kills on the season. Koupal (176), Gina Soukup (158), Dvorak (102) and Kuca (100) have also been offensive weapons.

"We're happy with what Nicole has done this season. She played right-side for a number of years, but moved to the left-side to get more sets. She gets after it, has good top-spin and places it well," Tyler said. "Koupal's been a welcome addition — she always played defense for us. Soukup's another junior hitting well outside. Our middles do a tremendous job, even though they don't get as many sets."

Doom not only has stepped up as the point person on the offense, she has become an offensive weapon herself, recording 133 kills to go with her 696 assists.

WAGNER | PAGE 9

## Veteran Panthers Ready For State Tourney Showcase

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK  
 james.cimburek@yankton.net

NORTH SIOUX CITY — After fielding young lineups each of the past two seasons, the Dakota Valley Panthers were ready to go with their senior-dominated lineup in 2012. Now Don Craig's squad is ready to show the rest of the state what they're capable of.

The Panthers take a 26-3 record into the South Dakota State Class A Volleyball Tournament, which begins Thursday in Watertown. The Panthers draw 2011 state runner-up Wagner (27-3) in the opening round.

For Craig and the Panthers, this season is the culmination of two years of building.

"We've only had one senior each of the past two years," Craig said. "We knew we'd have a lot of experience coming back." Two of those seniors, middle

Kylie Martin (208 kills, 57 ace serves, 46 blocks, 48 digs) and defensive specialist Shyler Funck (67 ace serves, 182 digs) are in their fourth season on varsity for the Panthers. Classmates Karissa Jensen (MB, 140 kills, 49 blocks), Piepre Tweed (DS, 83 digs) and Abby Schmidt (DS) have also been key contributors this season, as have juniors Jayde Bergmann (210 kills, 67 ace serves, 36 blocks), Hannah Bauer (OH, 78 kills, 38 ace serves, 171 digs), Erica Johnson (OH, 164 kills, 25 ace serves, 152 digs) and Morganne Pfaffle (45 kills, 171 digs).

"On any given night, one of our hitters can lead us," Craig said. "That's what makes us tough. We can spread it around, and hit out of the middle, right side and left. It's a good place to be."

Besides attacking at the net, the Panthers have been aggres-

sive on the back line as well, recording 339 ace serves as a team.

"One of our goals this season was to be able to serve tough," Craig said. "We've got a couple who float it, some jump-servers who float it and some jump-servers with some top-spin. We've worked hard and put a lot of effort into that."

Sophomore Lindsey Smith (786 assists, 76 ace serves, 59 kills, 101 digs) has taken over the offense from the setter position.

"Lindsey's done a phenomenal job," Craig said. "She played a little last year, but she put in a ton of work in the off-season. She's just fit in very well, and the upperclassmen have embraced her as well."

Craig knows his team will

PANTHERS | PAGE 9

# Wagner, DV Set To Face Off In 'A' Opener On Thursday