

No. 23 Flames Snuff Out Lancers

BY NICK ROBINSON
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The No. 23-ranked College of Saint Mary Flames came into Yankton and defeated the Mount Marty Lancers 76-65 in non-conference women's basketball action at Laddie E. Cimpr Arena on Thursday night.

The Flames (4-1) boast two NCAA Division I transfers from the University of Nebraska-Omaha: Senior guard Jessica Zaruba and junior guard Amanda Woodring.

The Lancers (2-2) came into the game having the fifth best scoring defense per game, giving up an average of 49 points per game.

"We knew coming in that their starting five would be good," head coach Tom Schlimgen said.

Mount Marty started the contest off on the right foot, playing neck and neck with the Flames. Saint Mary's offense struggled to work past the Lancer full court trap.

In the middle of the first half is when the Lancers started turning the ball over. The Flames worked coast to coast to get easy buckets.

When the Flames would pull away, Mount Marty used a cou-



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Mount Marty's Brittany Little (in white) and College of St. Mary's Karyn Bixler (34) battle for a rebound during non-conference women's college basketball action Thursday night at the Laddie E. Cimpr Arena in Yankton.

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Centerville's O'Malley Signs With MMC

BY JEREMY HOECK
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Mount Marty College hadn't even taken the court yet Thursday night, but its women's basketball program was already celebrating a significant win.

Not on the hardwood, but on the recruiting trail.

Centerville standout guard Kieran O'Malley, a highly sought-after prospect with just shy of 1,900 career points, signed her letter of intent this week to play basketball for the Lancers starting next fall.

"It was a really tough decision for, because there were a lot of good schools that I was thinking about," she said Thursday night. "My friend (and former teammate), Sam Blake is playing there, so I thought it'd be fun to play with her again."

Twice a Class B first team all-state selection, O'Malley averaged 23.2 points and 4.9 assists per game as a junior last season. She already holds the school record for career points (1,887) and steals (284), and naturally

caught the attention of regional colleges.

Ultimately, the Lancers and head coach Tom Schlimgen won out.

"She's been one of our top recruits from the get-go, so that was a 2-year project," Schlimgen said. "We have a nice location for her, and I think she likes our style of play."

"We think she'll have a nice career here."

O'Malley's recruiting stock reached its high point during her time with the Dakota Schools on the summer AAU tour, but admitted that Mount Marty moved to the top of her list after an on-campus visit.

"I really liked the school and the tour was great," she said. "I got to meet some of the girls. They have great coaches, plus it's close enough to home where I can always come back and watch my siblings play."

It's the potential of O'Malley playing, though, that caused the Lancers understandable excitement on the news. O'Malley's offensive style fits the system in place with MMC,



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Centerville senior Kieran O'Malley, center, signs her letter of intent with Mount Marty College on Wednesday in Yankton. She is pictured with parents Pat and Colleen O'Malley.

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State Volleyball

Panthers Top Wagner In 'A' Opener

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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WATERTOWN — The Dakota Valley Panthers pounded their way into the second round, using 52 kills and 15 ace serves to down 2011 runner-up Wagner 25-15, 21-25, 25-18, 25-17 in the opening round of the South Dakota State Class A Volleyball Tournament on Thursday at the Watertown Civic Arena.

The Panthers, making their first trip to state since 2005, got 15 kills and five ace serves from Jayde Bergman, and 12 kills, four ace serves and four assisted blocks from Kylie Martin. Erica Johnson posted 10 kills and 10 digs. Setter Lindsey Smith posted 41 assists, libero Shyler Funck had 18 digs and three ace serves, and Hannah Bauer added 15 digs in the win.

For Wagner, Gina Soukup had 10 kills, with Nicole Weber recording nine kills and 10 digs. Jessa Doom had 25 assists and 11 digs. Sydney Breen had Red Raider bests of 14 digs and three ace serves.

Dakota Valley knocked off the perennial state tournament team by going right at them, according to head coach Don Craig.

"We wanted to pass well and get our offense going," he said. "We

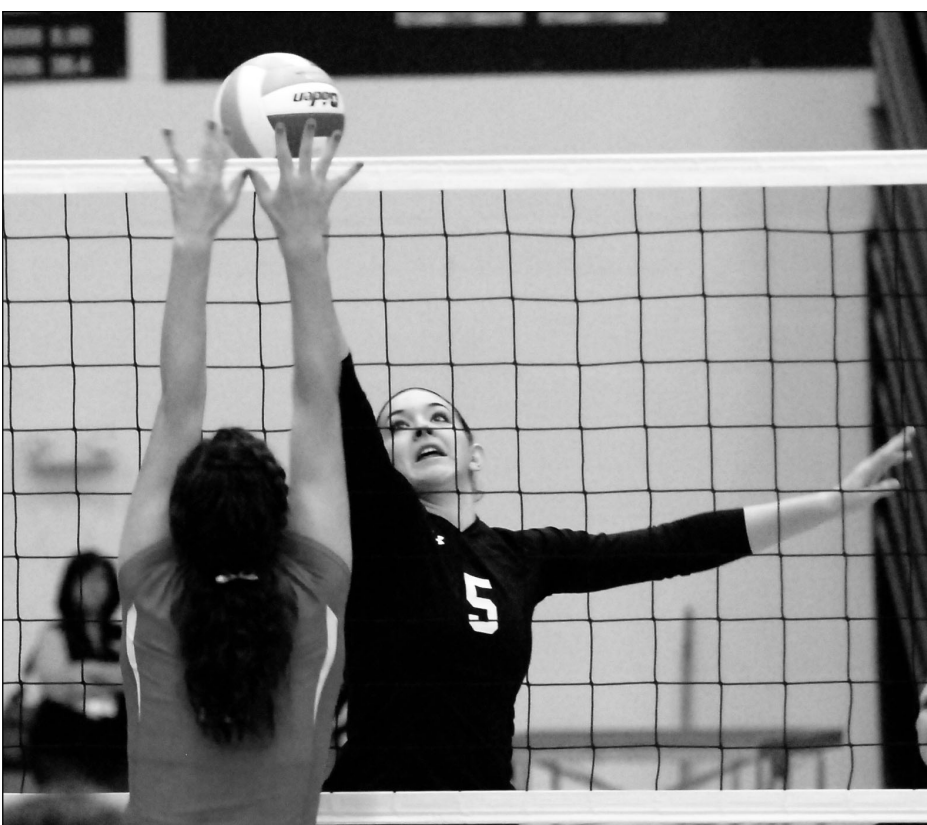
talked about continuing to attack them."

That approach especially worked on the back line, where all six Panther servers notched at least one ace in the match.

"They served us out of our game, especially at the end of the third set and in set four," said Wagner head coach Amy Tyler. "They had some big top-spin on the ball, and they were hitting the back line. The rest of the match we handled their serves. We just had stretches."

The approach allowed the Panthers to take control of the opening stanza. With the set tied 9-9, Dakota Valley outscored the Red Raiders 14-3 on the way to the opening round win. Bergmann had three kills and two ace serves, and Martin had two kills and a block in the rally.

Dakota Valley appeared on the way in the second set when the Red Raiders found their rhythm. Big net plays by Soukup helped Wagner turn an 8-5 deficit into a 13-10 lead. Trailing 21-19, Wagner ran off six straight points — including two kills and a block by Ali Kuca and a



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Dakota Valley's Kylie Martin, 5, tries to get around the block of Wagner's Gina Soukup during their first-round match in the South Dakota State Class A Volleyball Tournament on Thursday at the Watertown Civic Arena.

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State-U: Zenner Gives Jackrabbits 'Threat' In Backfield

BY KEITH A. BROCKBERG
P&D Correspondent

BROOKINGS — When the University of South Dakota Coyotes visit South Dakota State University's Coughlin-Alumni Stadium to play the Jackrabbits for the first time since 2003, they will have to contend with one of the country's most dangerous weapons.

Zach Zenner, a sophomore tailback, ranks second in the NCAA Football Championship Subdivision with 153.9 yards-per-game and is the Jackrabbits' true home-run hitter.

"He gives us a threat at running back we didn't have last year," SDSU head coach John Stiegelmeier said. "In Zach, we have a guy who can score from 99 yards out."

And that Zenner did.

The 215-lb. Zenner planted a foot and bisected the Kansas Jayhawk defense for a 99-yard touchdown sprint in the Jacks' 31-17 opening day loss in Lawrence.

Since then, the Jacks have gone 7-2 while Zenner has continued to reel off lengthy runs.

"It wasn't a fluke with the things he was doing week after week," Stiegelmeier said. "He's a tremendous weapon and a plus for our football team."

"Without a doubt we marvel at what he's doing," Stiegelmeier added. "We knew he was going to have a good year,

but he's been fun to watch."

The long runs have also kept SDSU blockers working — no matter where they are on the field.

"His success motivates you to help him out," Stiegelmeier said. "You know that you have to hold your blocks because there's a chance that he's going to be trailing you with the football."

"The biggest thing is the winning right now," Zenner said of his season. "All that other stuff will be cool looking back."

Zenner, who burst to the forefront of the SDSU plans with a fine all-purpose campaign last season, came into the 2012 determined to meet his own expectations.

"At the beginning of the season, my goal was to play my best in each game; you've got to expect to do well," Zenner

said. "You have to have expectations to be successful."

"He gives us a picture of dedication and hard work every day," Stiegelmeier said of Zenner's habits, which have also helped him achieve a 3.78 GPA as a biology and pre-medicine major at the state university.

The numbers, Zenner has put up — 1,539 yards and 6.87 yards-per-carry — is reminiscent of those put up by Josh Ranek, the Bon Homme Cavalier who became one of the top running backs in NCAA Division II history while playing for Stiegelmeier at SDSU from 1998-2002.

"They both have very similar running styles in that they don't dance; they see the hole and they just hit it," Stiegelmeier said. "Josh Ranek is the best football player I've ever been around, and time will tell if Zach reaches

that level."

According to Zenner, he was not at that level in a 20-17 loss at number-1 North Dakota State last week.

Zenner carried the ball 14 times for 43 yards against the Bison's top-ranked rush defense.

"I definitely did not have my best game," Zenner said. "I am looking to come out this week and play better personally."

"I look for him to bounce back during the game, whether he's had a bad series or a bad play, if you give him the opportunity," Stiegelmeier said.

Bouncing back is what the Jackrabbits need to do as they still hope for a share of the Missouri Valley Football Conference title with a win over USD and

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