

# Denver To Join Summit League In 2013-14



## Summit Bound

Facts about Denver University, which joins the Summit League for the 2013-14 season.

**NAME:** Pioneers  
**ENROLLMENT:** 11,797  
**VITALS:** Western Athletic Conference (WAC), joined in July; also in Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA)  
**SPORTS:** Denver plays men's and women's hockey, men's and women's skiing, men's and women's lacrosse, and women's gymnastics — all sports the Summit League does not offer.  
**NOTE:** Denver's 28 NCAA titles ranks in the top 10 of all schools

## Pioneers Will Leave WAC After One Season

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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From a competition and travel standpoint, the addition of the University of Denver to the Summit League has officials and coaches at the University of South Dakota excited.

Not simply in bringing aboard a 10th member of the league, however, but of what that newest member can bring to the table, according to USD athletic director David Saylor.

"A lot of people at first blush might not think the fit makes sense, but when you do some digging, and see how it fits into our league's profile, there's a lot of similarity between the two sides," Saylor said shortly after Tuesday's official announcement from the conference office.

"It's a real good partnership."

Denver, a private school with an enrollment of 11,797, is currently a member of the Western Athletic Conference (WAC), which it joined last summer after spending 13 years in the Sun Belt Conference.

Primarily known for its successful hockey teams, Denver's athletic programs have combined for five NCAA championships and 18 individual national titles over the past 10 years. The Pioneers will be immediately eligible for all Summit League championships during the 2013-14 season.

"When you can be eligible right away for those (automatic) bids, it helps them on a lot of fronts," Saylor said.

The Summit League would now have 10 schools for the 2013-14 seasons, with Denver joining Fort Wayne, IUPUI, Kansas City, Nebraska-Omaha, North Dakota State, Oakland,

South Dakota, South Dakota State and Western Illinois.

"The university is a tremendous addition with an excellent academic reputation and a history of very successful athletics," commissioner Tom Douple said in a release. "Denver is a renowned metropolitan area and easily accessed through one of the world's leading airports."

Convenience of travel — flying in and out of Denver — will naturally ease potential headaches, Saylor said. Trips to previous Summit League members Oral Roberts and Southern Utah required a drive to Tulsa, Okla., and a flight and short drive to Orem, Utah.

"For us in South Dakota, it's as good of a school as we can hope for, travel-wise," Saylor said of Denver. "From here, it's about

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## Tulane, ECU To Join Big East In '14, Leaving Conf. USA

By RALPH D. RUSSO  
AP College Football Writer

The Big East moved quickly to replace Rutgers and braced for more possible departures, getting Tulane and East Carolina to agree to join the re-invented conference in 2014.

"I would go as far to say as this is a historic day for Tulane University ... the Big East is coming to the Big Easy," school President Scott Cowen said Tuesday.

Tulane, in New Orleans, and East Carolina, in Greenville, N.C., will make it six Conference USA schools to join the Big East in the last two years.

Rutgers announced a week ago that it would leave the Big East for the Big Ten. Cowen and athletic director Rick Dickson said serious talks with the Big East began about a week ago.

"This is an unprecedented opportunity to join a national conference," Dickson said.

ECU athletic director Terry Holland said an offer to join the Big East came Sunday.

"It was a quick turnaround," he said.

Rutgers would like to join the Big Ten by 2014, along with Maryland, but the Scarlet Knights have left their departure date from the Big East ambiguous. Conference bylaws require members to give the league notification of two years and three months before departing, but the Big East has negotiated early exits for Syracuse, Pittsburgh and West Virginia in the past year.

West Virginia joined the Big 12 this year. Syracuse and Pitt will begin play in the Atlantic Coast Conference in September.

With Maryland leaving the ACC, there has been strong speculation that Connecticut or Louisville will be the next to leave the Big East as the Terps' replacement.

If either does, the conference is still on target to have 12 football members in 2014, just not the same ones it will have in 2013 when the new Big East debuts.

"We're not finished," Big East Commissioner Mike Aresco said. "We obviously have some other plans for expansion."

The Big East is also on the open market, trying to negotiate a pivotal new television contract. Aresco said that had to be put on hold for a few days as the conference regrouped after the latest defection.

Boise State and San Diego State, currently in the Mountain West, are set to join for football only starting in 2013, anchoring the Big East's new West Division. Also on schedule to join next season are current C-USA members SMU, Houston, Memphis and Central Florida.

Navy has committed to join the Big East for football in 2015. The conference had planned to find a 14th member to balance out its divisions even before Rutgers left. BYU and Air Force were top targets for that spot.

Aresco said that the Big East could even expand to 16 members, depending on what schools are available.

"We have to let that play out," he said.

Officials from San Diego State and Boise State have said they are still committed to joining the Big East. Boise State President Robert Kustra reiterated that position in a statement Tuesday.

"The Big East is proactively responding to the national changes in conference affiliations, and Boise State remains committed to building and competing in a strong Big East future," he said.

Boise State and SDSU officials have expressed a desire for the conference to add more schools out West.

"We absolutely will be looking at some western schools," Aresco said.

The Big East's membership also includes seven schools, including Georgetown and St. John's, that either do not have football teams or don't compete at the FBS level, but have helped it become a premier basketball conference.

Tulane seems an odd choice based on the school's recent performance in football and men's basketball, the two most prominent sports.

The Green Wave haven't been to a bowl game since 2002 and last made the NCAA men's basketball tournament in 1995. Tulane just completed a 2-10 football season under first-year coach Curtis Johnson.

It hasn't always been this way for Tulane. Cowen said in the decade before Hurricane Katrina devastated the school in 2005, forcing it to shut down for a semester, Tulane won more sports championships than any program in C-USA.

## Football | SDFBCA Class 11AA All-State Team

# Three Bucks Honored

## Champion Washington Leads Elite List

BY STU WHITNEY

Sioux Falls Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS — The Washington Warriors continued their recent football dominance with a perfect season and their school's third state title in the last four years, using a deep and talented roster to overwhelm opponents.

So it was no surprise to see coach Brian Hermanson's team land eight players on the Class 11AA all-state squad, chosen by the South Dakota Football Coaches Association.

"This group set a goal after last season's loss in the finals (to Roosevelt) to do everything they could to win this year's title," said Hermanson, whose team went 12-0 and defeated Brandon Valley 35-20 in the state finals Nov. 10.

"Their leadership, work ethic and desire to compete are characteristics that will be remembered for a long time here at Washington."

The offense had plenty of firepower for Washington, with four players earning all-state honors, led by senior Nate Gerry. The 6-foot-2, 213-pound wide receiver caught 23 passes for 593 yards and 12 touchdowns, rushed for 291 yards and five scores and was also a threat on defense and special teams.

The Nebraska recruit played in four state title games and was named Elite 45 captain by the Argus Leader.

"Nate was the best athlete on our football team, just a great competitor who loves the game," said Hermanson. "He has the ability to score every time he touches the ball."

Also sparking Washington was senior running back Sam Cooke, who rushed for 1,158 yards and 16 touchdowns, including a key 57-yard scoring dash in the state finals that helped spark the victory.

"Sam worked very hard in the offseason to become our feature back," said Hermanson. "He pos-



Yankton seniors Kellen Soulek (left, No. 79), Troy Hunhoff (right, No. 89) and junior J.J. Hejna (above, No. 85) were named to the South Dakota Football Coaches Association Class 11AA All-State Football Team, announced today (Wednesday). Soulek was selected as a guard, Hejna as a defensive back and Hunhoff as a punter.

P&D FILE PHOTOS



## Tigers Tame Bucks In Wrestling Opener

HURON — The Huron Tigers took advantage of eight pins and two Yankton forfeits to top the Bucks 63-15 in Eastern South Dakota Conference wrestling action on Tuesday in Huron.

The match was the season opener for both squads.

"We went into their gym and wrestled their style," said Yankton head coach Ryan Hage after the match. "Huron is an aggressive team, especially at home. They forced us into their style of wrestling, and it cost us."

Wyatt Shillingstad (113), Jesse Mikrut (120), Rick Strubel (126), Nick Christenson (145), Reagan Francom (170), Bailey Schoenfelder (182), Mark Christenson (220) and Josh Waagen (285) each won by pin for Huron.

For Yankton, Casey Skillington (138) and Thomas Kruse (195) won by pin. Mason Strahl earned the other Bucks victory, a tough 4-1 decision at 152 pounds.

Both teams will be at the Watertown Dual Tournament on Saturday. The Bucks will be tested in the tournament, as defending state champion Pierre and perennial powers Aberdeen Central and Canby (Minn.) make up their pool. The other pool consists of Huron, Mitchell, Watertown and Milbank.

"We'll get back in the room and take a look at the mistakes we made. The mistakes we made are not that hard to see," Hage said. "We had a lot of guys who were stepping on the varsity mat for the first time, so we'll use this to build upon and hopefully be better on Saturday."

Yankton wrestled several exhibitions, but not a full JV dual with Huron. Freshman



MIKE CARROLL/HURON PLAINSMAN

Yankton's Casey Skillington works to get the pin against Huron's Tyler Skogstad during their 138-pound match Tuesday at Huron Arena. Skillington got one of three victories for the Bucks. Huron claimed a 63-15 decision in the ESD and season opener for both squads.

Bashir Abd-Al-Kreem earned three victories in exhibition action, with Jamee Bruegman, Zach Hanzlik and Sam Stewart each earning one win.

**HURON 63, YANKTON 15:** 106 — Trent Francom H dec. Noah Vetter 7-0; 113 — Wyatt Shillingstad H pin. Spencer Huber 3-42; 120 — Jesse Mikrut H pin. Gabe Wenzlaff 1-06; 126 — Rick Strubel H pin. Ray Wermers 0-45; 132 — Ryan Chase H by forfeit; 138 — Casey Skillington Y pin. Tyler Skogstad 1-20; 145 — Nick Christenson H pin. Ryan Schiltz 3-50; 152 — Mason Strahl Y dec. Colin Simons 4-1; 160 — Brett John-

son H by forfeit; 170 — Reagan Francom H pin. Cody Hanzlik 0-29; 182 — Bailey Schoenfelder H pin. Talon Nieman 1-34; 195 — Thomas Kruse Y pin. Dustin French 5-07; 220 — Mark Christenson H pin. Kenneth Ohrazda 0-58; 285 — Josh Waagen H pin. Robbie Borgstrom 5-02

**EXHIBITION:** 113 — Abd-Al-Kreem Y pin. Schwartz 3-11; 152 — Hines H dec. Sternhagen 9-8; 138 — Bruegman Y pin. Simons 1-48; 220 — Johnson H pin. Novak 2-32; 113 — Abd-Al-Kreem Y pin. Htoo 4-40; 145 — Stewart Y maj. dec. Hines 15-3; 195 — Hanzlik Y pin. Teoli 0-13; 113 — Abd-Al-Kreem Y. Graff 3-00

## Patriots Top Tanagers

VERMILLION — The Sioux Falls Lincoln Patriots claimed the top three spots in the all-around to earn a gymnastics dual victory over Vermillion on Tuesday in Vermillion.

Lincoln finished at 125.75, led by Sydney Torgrude (32.75), Emma Heckel (29.95) and Alayna Dutcher (29.85). Torgrude also won the bars (8.2) and floor (8.85). Heckel won the balance beam (8.75), while Dutcher claimed top honors on the vault (8.45).

Vermillion scored a 116.5, led by the trio of Cheyenne Mallory (29.75), Morgan Hower (29.7) and Rory Tucker (29.2). Mallory earned a runner-up finish on the beam (8.35), Tucker placed second on the floor (8.65), and Hower finished third on the bars (6.6) and tied for third with teammate Anna Hammond on the vault (8.2).

Vermillion is off until the Wagner Invitational on Dec. 8.

**LINCOLN 125.75, VERMILLION 116.5**  
ALL-AROUND: Sydney Torgrude SFL 32.75; Emma Heckel SFL 29.95; Alayna Dutcher SFL 29.85; Cheyenne Mallory SFL 29.75; Morgan Hower VHS 29.7; Rory Tucker VHS 29.2

**BAR:** Sydney Torgrude SFL 8.2; Ember Newman SFL 7.5; Morgan Hower VHS 6.6; Logan Kiewer SFL 5.7; Cheyenne Mallory VHS 5.65; Alayna Dutcher SFL 5.35

**FLOOR:** Sydney Torgrude SFL 8.85; Rory Tucker VHS 8.65; Emma Heckel SFL 8.3; Julie Teslow SFL 8.2; Triana McCLOUD SFL 7.9; Morgan Hower VHS 7.9

**BEAM:** Emma Heckel SFL 8.75; Cheyenne Mallory VHS 8.35; Alayna Dutcher SFL 8.25; Julie Teslow SFL 7.85; Sydney Torgrude SFL 7.7; Peyton Kiewer SFL 7.65

**VAULT:** Alayna Dutcher SFL 8.45; Ember Newman SFL 8.4; Peyton Kiewer SFL 8.2; Hammond, Anna VHS 8.2; Morgan Hower VHS 8.2; Emma Heckel SFL 8.15; Reich, Alexis VHS 8.15