

OUTDOORS DIGEST

Custer State Park To Hold Annual Bison Auction Nov. 15

CUSTER — The 2014 Custer State Park Fall Classic Bison Auction will be held on Saturday, Nov. 15, at the park corrals where 226 head will be sold.

This year's offerings include seven mature bred cows, 21 open mature cows, eight two-year-old bred heifers, four open two-year-old heifers, 36 yearling heifers, 50 heifer calves, 61 bull calves, 36 yearling bulls, three two-year-old grade bulls, six young burros and a twenty-year-old Appaloosa gelding.

The auction will begin at 10 a.m. MST at the Custer State Park Buffalo corrals, located 15 miles east of Custer on Highway 16A and then nine miles south on the Wildlife Loop Road. Signs will be posted to assist in locating the corrals.

The auction will also be online at www.DVAuction.com.

A buyers' reception will be held prior to the auction on Friday, Nov. 14, from 6-8 p.m. MST at the Creekside Lodge in Custer State Park.

For the past 49 years, the park has made its surplus bison available for sale to the private sector. A significant amount of park revenue comes from the bison sale and goes toward continued operations of the state park system.

For additional information about the upcoming bison auction, contact Custer State Park at 605-255-4515 or email questions to CusterStatePark@state.sd.us.

2015 S.D. Spring Turkey Season Set

PIERRE — The South Dakota Game Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission adopted changes to the 2015 spring turkey season.

Changes include:

1. Reduce resident single tag licenses by 85 and two-tag licenses by 340 for a total net decrease of 765 tags.
2. Nonresident one-tag licenses would be increased by 10 and two-tag licenses decreased by 28 with an overall decrease of 46 tags.
3. The number of access permits for Good Earth State Park would be reduced from 10 to five.
4. Clarify boundary descriptions for BST-BH1 (Black Hills), PST-53A (Perkins County) and PST-49A (Meade County) hunting units. These corrections to administrative rule will not result in any unit boundary changes.
5. Remove the archery restriction west of Interstate 29 in Brookings County.
6. Remove the split seasons in Clay and Union counties.
7. Add Lincoln County to the restricted area where an individual may use only a shotgun using shot shells, muzzleloading shotgun, or bow and arrow.
8. Repeat Unit PST-ZZ1.

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Opening Day For Pheasants

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

GEDDES — It's late fall and throughout the upper Midwest, the fall colors are appearing, the reds of the Maples & Sumacs, the yellows and orange of the Cottonwoods, Ash and Elm.

In South Dakota, during late fall, there is another color you are going to see a lot of, and that is hunter's orange.

It was October 18; I was in Geddes, South Dakota doing some filming for Missouri River Guide Service, filming a pheasant hunt for a video I would be producing for upcoming Safari Club events they would be attending.

As we headed down the road to our first field on the opening day of the South Dakota pheasant hunting season, you did not need to be a Rhodes Scholar to know what was color clothing the majority of those on the road were dressed in as it was hunter's orange.

Arriving at our first field twenty minutes before the noon opener, we had an opportunity to put together the plan for our first push.

Looking over the field, it looked to be excellent habitat, heavy cover including thick drilled milo food plots, meaning it would take good dogs to ferret out the birds and a group of hunters who would be trailing the dogs as they worked through the field.

We had several good dogs, Labs, Spaniels and Pointers, all anxious to hit the ground in search of that first bird of the season.

When noon arrived, we were ready and with our wingmen flanking out on both sides, dogs out in front and blockers on the end; we began our first push through the heavy cover.

In short, order the dogs got "birdie" on a mission zeroing in on a bird, hopefully one of the rooster pheasants, South Dakota's state bird that draws thousands of hunters to South Dakota each season.



PHOTO: TEAM OUTDOORSMEN ADVENTURES
South Dakota pheasant numbers were up again this season and where good habitat existed, excellent bird numbers could be found.



Gary HOWEY

They were working the cover hard, tails high in the air, doing their best to root out the bird. Suddenly the bird erupted from the cover, with Vasek yelling "rooster" as the bird gave itself away, grabbing air, attempting to put as much distance between it and the dogs as possible. In a heartbeat, the left wingman shouldered his shotgun, dropping the long tailed brightly colored bird, the first of the 2014 season.

Reports from the South Dakota Game & Fish and Parks indicated bird numbers were up, in this area, their report appeared to be right, as this would be the first of the dozens of birds the group would put in the air on opening day 2014.

The dogs methodically worked through each field rooting out the birds buried deep in the cover. It was warm for this time of the year, requiring the hunters change dogs regularly to be watered, rested and cooled down.

The fields, shelterbelts and food-plots held birds, with the larger concentrations of birds along the outside edge of the heavily grassed areas. These edges are preferred by not only pheasants, but by all species of wildlife, allowing them to see what's coming, making it easy for them to jump into the next field or make a hasty retreat away from danger.

Hunters pushed through the field while other hunter's shotguns at

ready waited for the final push towards the end of the field. When it happened, it happened quickly as a combination of hens and roosters burst out of the final twenty to twenty-five yards of the field.

Several hens swung to the left with one lone rooster coming up between them, a smart move on his part as he had come up between the two hens not giving the hunters a clean shot.

Without a sound, several roosters forced out by the dogs came out low from the end of the field, hoping to sneak by the blockers, one was lucky while the other was not as he was quickly added to the hunter's game bags.

The area the hunters were working had it all, foodplots, cover that included thick grass, with heavy vegetation between the trees and shrubs and water.

Making our way into the next field edged by an older shelterbelt, the dogs pushed out in front of the hunter's crissed crossed the field as they converged on the end of the field. As we approached the end of the field, the dogs worked their way through the final twenty foot of cover. The black Labs worked the corner feverishly, indicating he was trailing a bird and as the other dogs converged on the corner of the field, it happened. As we neared the end, there was the sound of pounding wings, the

all to familiar cackling of the rooster as the end of the field erupted with four roosters, and two hens thundred out the cover.

The sudden explosion of six birds coming out of the cover startled the two blockers for a moment as they were moving up to cover the corner where the dogs had the birds cornered. The blockers soon regained their composure, and were able to drop one of the roosters while the other three escaped.

In each field, the story was the same, with numerous birds, hens and roosters bursting from the cover. Coming up in front of the hunters, where the hunters quickly shouldered their shotguns; taking aim at the birds as they swung off to the right and left winging their way off into another field.

It was obvious why the bird numbers in the Geddes area were up as the excellent habitat stretched out as far as the eye could see. As this and the other quarters we would hunt were planted to attract and hold birds, allowing them to nest, roost and raise their young, a safe haven, where they would not need to move out of the heavy cover where they would become easy prey for hawks and other predators.

The group of eight hunters we were with bagged their three-bird limit in two hours, culminating another successful opening day hunt in South Dakota.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Nebraska, is a former tournament angler, fishing and hunting guide. He is the Producer/Host of the award winning Outdoorsmen Adventures television series, seen in the Yankton area on local channels 2 & 98 Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday@ 7:00 am and on MIDCO Sports Network Thursday at 5:30 pm and Sunday at 10:00 am. In Northwest Iowa, Southeast South Dakota and Northeast Nebraska it airs on Siouxland CW 4.2 Sunday @ 9:00 am., He and Simon Fuller Co-Host the Outdoor Adventures radio program on Classic Hits 106.3, ESPN Sports Radio 1570 in Southeastern South Dakota and Northeast Nebraska. In Northwest Iowa, it airs on KCHE 92.1 FM. If you are looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

Hoeck

From Page 7

ton second team defense.

Put another way, good luck Brookings.

In talking with a couple Yankton players after Friday's win, the phrase 'Band of Brothers' came up more than once — it's clear, chemistry is not an issue with this team.

"We're a good band of brothers, and we communicate so well," said senior Brady Hale, who kicked two field goals in addition to his defensive back duties.

The key to the Yankton defense has been the off-season workout over the summer, according to players and coaches.

Many of the players woke up at 6 a.m. during the summer to work out with a local trainer, whose brother (Bradey) is a junior for the Bucks.

The key, according to senior lineman Tim Cross, was agility.

"He got us conditioned for a game like this," said Cross, who keyed the Bucks' defense which held Harrisburg

standout running back Jonathan Kabambi to 89 yards on 18 carries.

To be able to consistently produce such outcomes, the Bucks knew extra time in the weight room and in agility drills was necessary — necessary if they were going to compete for a state title.

"We knew we'd have a good defense coming back, but we were only going to get better by working out more," Hale said.

And better might not even do the defense justice.

How about dominating? And again, sound familiar, Yankton fans?

"They're all on the same page, and when they're all clicking like this, it's a good feeling," head coach Arlin Likness said.

"We knew we had some good kids who could really play, but it was going to take them gelling together."

A few small changes during the season really helped the defense turn a corner.

Lightner was moved to the line to provide some more speed, and junior line-backers Colin Muth and Sheldon Gant have emerged as top-flight stoppers. And the rise of senior Colton Diefendler has only made the

Bucks deeper.

Perhaps the high point of the season — at the time — was an overtime win at Sioux Falls O'Gorman on Sept. 26 in which the Bucks stopped the Knights on fourth down at the 1-yard line.

It was the second straight overtime game for Yankton, and it was at that point where you could just sense some 'mo.'

Memories of 2005 came flooding back.

That was the last time the Bucks advanced to the state championship game in Vermillion.

For the 21 seniors this season for Yankton, though, don't have any memories of that 2005 campaign — they were 9 years old, and were probably among the thousands of Yankton fans in the DakotaDome seats.

No, their on-field varsity experiences only go back to 2012, when they were sophomores.

But don't think the players don't remember the 2005 game, when the Bucks were thrashed by Sioux Falls Washington.

"I was there, yeah, but it wasn't the best experience," Hale said with a smile.

With the way this year's

defense is playing, it's probably a safe bet to assume Yankton's speed will enjoy the DakotaDome turf next Friday night.

For now, though, the celebration from Friday's win will linger for at least another day.

"It feels amazing," Lightner said. "I don't think I've had a feeling like this in my lifetime."

"I've been wanting this since I was a little kid," he added, while smiling down at his little brother, Jayden.

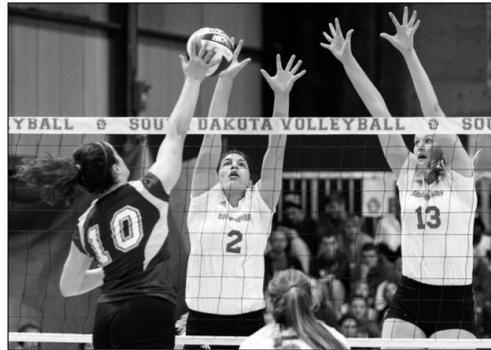
The Bucks are the first ones to admit, though, that their work isn't done.

Next comes the challenge of slowing down Brookings' deep backfield, and it's not made easier by the fact that the two teams didn't play in the regular season.

A little more intrigue, however, isn't exactly a bad thing for a title game.

"We've got a tough one, that's for sure," Likness said, "but at least we get a week to prepare for them."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net



THOMAS HATZENBUHLER/FOR THE PLAIN TALK
South Dakota's Brittany Jessen, 2, and Kelsey Biltoff go up for the block against Denver's Moni Corrujedo during their Summit League volleyball match on Friday at the Coyote Den in the DakotaDome. USD avenged an earlier loss to the Pioneers with a 3-2 decision.

USD Upends Denver 3-2

VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota avenged an earlier loss to Denver, beating the Pioneers 23-25, 25-21, 25-17, 19-25, 15-10 in Summit League volleyball action at the Coyote Den in the DakotaDome on Friday.

Kendall Kritenbrink had 16 kills and 14 digs, and Sydney Dimke had 13 kills and 14 digs to lead a balanced USD attack. Audrey Reeg finished with 10 kills and 26 digs. Brittany Jessen had 51 assists. Melissa Firtko had nine kills and seven blocks (four solo). Riley Haug

added 27 digs in the victory.

For Denver (21-6, 10-3 Summit), Sarah Schmid and Nola Basey had 16 kills each, with Basey recording 13 digs for the Pioneers. Moni Corrujedo had 15 kills. Erica Denney had seven assisted blocks. Bailey Karst posted 46 assists and 14 digs. Cassidy Rooke had 20 digs, Kate Acker had 18 digs and Monique Domme had 14 digs for the Denver floor defense.

USD, 16-10 and 10-3, travels to Western Illinois on Sunday.

Lancers

From Page 7

to win, no matter who we are playing."

With those increased expectations — and the better results that have also followed — the team has seen those outside the program raise their expectations of the Lancers as well.

"It's a different feeling around the school," Climer said. "Everyone's excited for us to go to the playoffs."

The Lancers face a Northwestern (28-3, 15-1 GPAC) team ranked sixth in the nation, a squad that has dominated

MMC in the GPAC era. Mount Marty's last victory over the Orange City, Iowa, school came in 1996, four years before the GPAC began.

This season Northwestern dominated the first meet and much of the second meeting. The Lancers led 18-9 in the third set against the Raiders before Northwestern rallied to complete the sweep.

"Last time, with Allison out and Sierra having probably her worst match of her career, we still got up 18-9 on them," Climer said. "We have seen how they can play, but they have not seen our best yet."

While the team is just 12-20 on the season, it enters tonight just three matches away from a NAAI Tournament berth. That is how the team needs to ap-

proach the match, Ross said. "We don't have anything to lose. They have everything to lose," she said. "We're not done."

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/JCimburek. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

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