

Dakota Valley Setter Headed To Nebraska-Kearney



Dakota Valley High School senior Lindsey Smith, front center, is pictured with her family and coach during a signing ceremony on Wednesday in North Sioux City. Smith, a 5-foot-8 senior, signed to play volleyball at Nebraska-Kearney.

BY JEREMY HOECK
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Lindsey Smith could have ended up at a Division I school. Instead the Dakota Valley High School senior spurned other offers to sign to play volleyball at Nebraska-Kearney, a D-II powerhouse, on Wednesday. "With the coaches and the campus, I could really see myself there," she said Wednesday night. "I had a good feeling when I was there."

Among those other options was a scholarship offer from D-I New Mexico State. Smith, a 5-foot-8 setter, actually visited that campus and "liked it," but the combination of proximity to home and strength of the program led her to Kearney. It's been a notable nine days for Smith, who lives in Dakota Dunes.

On Nov. 5, she was named a 2014 Under Armour AVCA honorable mention All-American — one of two from South Dakota to be recognized. Then, on Tuesday she helped lead Dakota Valley to a region title

and back to the state tournament. And finally on Wednesday, she signed her National Letter of Intent after committing back in May.

To those around her, it was no surprise she vaulted herself onto college radars. "What Lindsey has done and meant to Dakota Valley volleyball over the past three years will be untouched," Panthers head coach Rick Pruett said. "She has put this program on the map in South Dakota."

Smith guided Dakota Valley to a Class A runner-up finish at state in 2012 and a state championship last season. The Panthers (24-7) return to the state tournament next week in Wattertown.

"My coach has helped me a lot," Smith said. "I've been with him since seventh grade, and he's really pushed me along." Smith has, in turn, pushed along a Dakota Valley roster that lost six seniors from last season's title team. She has recorded 1,083 assists (the school record), 170 digs, 83 ace serves and 49 blocks.

"She is the hardest worker I have ever coached," Pruett said. "She loves the game, understands the game and is the best teammate you can have."

Next fall, Smith will join a Nebraska-Kearney program that is consistently among the best in the nation.

This season, the Lopers are 25-3 and ranked No. 6 in the country. Their starting setter is a junior.

"Lindsey is an extremely athletic, skilled and intelligent setter who can do great things at UNK," Lopers coach Rick Squiers said in a release.

But before Smith focuses on her college career, she wants to guide the Panthers to another strong performance at state.

And hopefully another title. "It'd be an awesome way to end my career," Smith said. "We've worked really hard to get back there."

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

Crofton Advances To Class C2 Semifinals

LINCOLN, Neb. — The Crofton Lady Warriors continued their unbeaten season with a 25-21, 25-19, 25-15 victory over Southern Valley in the opening round of the Nebraska State Class C2 Volleyball Tournament held Thursday at Lincoln South-west High School.

The Lady Warriors will take a 28-0 record into a semifinal matchup with Guardian Angels Central Catholic (30-4). The match will be played at Pinnacle Bank Arena with a 1 p.m. start.

The Mid-State Conference foes met earlier this year, with Crofton taking a 3-2 victory Oct. 16.

For Crofton, Wayne State recruit Maria Wortmann led the way with 20 kills and four blocks. University of South Dakota basketball commit Allison Arens had 10 kills, two blocks and 17 digs. Allison Tramp and Brittany Guenther had 17 assists each. Breanna Allen had 15 digs and Kelsey Sanger had seven kills and 11 digs in the victory.

For Southern Valley, Laura McInturf led the way with 12 kills. Savana Quinn had 22 assists and 13 digs. Brooke Hays posted 15 digs. Shalisa Brooks had 13 digs and Cassandra Bose had six kills in the effort.

For Wynot, which finished with a 21-10 mark, Cortney Arkfeld had 11 kills, four blocks and 16 digs to lead the way. Danielle Wieseler posted 20 digs. Jenna Heine had 20 assists and 13 digs. Olivia Wieseler had 18 digs and Kristi Bruening added seven kills for the Lady Blue Devils.

D2: Exeter-Milligan 3, Wynot 0

LINCOLN, Neb. — Exeter-Milligan ended Wynot's post-season run, topping the Lady Blue Devils 25-20, 25-11, 26-24, in the opening round of the Nebraska Class D2 Volleyball Tournament on Thursday at Lincoln Southeast High School.

Amber Pribyl had 13 kills and Madison Home had 11 kills and two ace serves to lead Exeter-Milligan (25-7), which advances them to a semifinal matchup against Giltner (25-4) today (Friday) at 9 a.m. Sydney Hall had 27 assists and 10 digs. Hailey Luzum had nine kills and Marissa Howard had 11 digs in the victory.

S.D. Regions

Huron 3, R.C. Central 0

HURON — The Huron Tigers earned a berth in the South Dakota State Class AA Volleyball Tournament with a 25-16, 25-16, 25-19 victory over Rapid City Central in a region matchup on Thursday at the Huron Arena.

The Tigers take an 18-5 record to state, scheduled for Nov. 20-22 in Yankton. Huron will draw Rapid City Stevens in the opening round.

Sami Zell and Jacey Hubb had 12 kills each, with Hupp also recording 11 digs and three assisted blocks to lead Huron. Lexi Eckmann had 26 assists and three ace serves. Bailey Rathjen had 13 digs and Zenzi Glanzer had 12 digs in the win.

For Rapid City Central, Ashley Solano had 27 digs and Tear Cottier had 13 digs to lead the way. Sydney Stotts had 11 digs, and Rhea Colombe and Audrey Bunge had 10 digs each for the Cobblers.

Roosevelt 3, Brandon Valley 0

SIOUX FALLS — Sioux Falls Roosevelt will face Aberdeen Central after a 25-17, 25-14, 25-15 victory over Brandon Valley in a regional matchup on Thursday at Roosevelt High School.

University of Iowa basketball recruit Tagyn Larson had 26 kills and Kyra Wagner had eight kills to lead Roosevelt. Kalei Wilson had three blocks and Madison Tyler had 12 digs in the victory.

For Brandon Valley, Hannah Paauw had 12 kills and Elsie Zajicek had three blocks to lead the way. Taylor Thorson added 14 digs.

Dells Takes 11A Title

Quarriers Beat Madison 12-7 For Fifth Title In Seven Seasons

BY ALAN DALE
The Plain Talk

VERMILLION — Dell Rapids has the power. Entering Thursday's Class 11A state football finals at the DakotaDome, the Quarriers won all four of the program's titles from 2008-2012.

Riley Schmidt has made it five. Against the state title-less Madison Bulldogs, the senior running back accumulated 242 total yards of offense and both of his team's touchdowns to lead the Quarriers to a 12-7 victory in the final game of day one of three state title dates in Vermillion last night.

Madison (10-2) lost the state title game here last year as well.

Dell Rapids (11-1) avenged an opening weekend 36-33 loss to the same Bulldog squad.

The Schmidt show got under way with a bang when the senior speedster muffed the opening kickoff, picked up the ball, and casually found the sideline with no one in front of him to give the Quarriers a 6-0 lead on a 79-yard kickoff return only 11 seconds into the game.

The rest of the opening quarter saw Madison dictate play without putting points on the board. Dell Rapids was held without a first down in the first 12 minutes as the Quarriers still held the lead.

A Matthew Palli interception in the first minute of the second quarter set the Bulldogs up at the Dell Rapids 20, but a failed field goal attempt kept Madison off the board.

The Quarriers responded with their first legit drive, marching 72 yards to the Madison 8-yard line before a



Riley Schmidt, right, of Dell Rapids returns the opening kickoff 81 yards for a touchdown during Thursday night's Class 11A championship game against Madison at the DakotaDome in Vermillion. Dell Rapids won 12-7 for the Quarriers' fifth title in seven seasons. Madison lost in the state final for a second straight season.

fourth-and-goal pass fell incomplete in the end zone with just over four minutes left before the half.

The Bulldogs returned the favor by moving 79 yards down the field and had a chance to even the game, but a potential touchdown pass was dropped. Then a 29-yard field goal was blocked and Schmidt's opening return held going into the break.

Madison out gained 159-137 in total first half offensive yardage.

Schmidt struck again two-plus minutes after halftime after the Quarriers forced a Madison fumble. The first play after that Schmidt took the handoff and blazed a trail 54-yards down the left sideline put his team up 12-0 up at the 9:39 mark.

Things looked bleak on the next Bulldog drive before something finally went their way. Mitch Hansen hit Carter

Kasuske on a 71-yard timing pattern and the hook up led to a score at the 7:01 mark of the third quarter to pull within 12-7.

Madison caught Dell Rapids napping on the following kickoff and the successful outside attempt put the Bulldogs back in business. A nice drive got them inside the Quarrier 20, but Hansen was tackled for a loss on fourth down to turn Madison over on downs. Hansen was injured on the play and did not return.

Dell Rapids led 12-7 at the end of the third quarter.

Josh Giles took over at quarterback for Madison and the Quarriers teed off as the Madison offense struggled after a solid three quarters of production.

One drive later Dell Rapids intercepted a pass on a Bulldog trick play to set up shop at the Madison six.

They killed some more time of the clock but Schmidt was stopped a yard short of the goal line to give Madison new life.

They drove to near mid-field in short time and faced a fourth-and-three but we're called for a false start penalty and then Giles was sacked on a scramble to essentially sew up the Quarriers' newest title.

Madison had one last chance as they got the ball back with 11 seconds left at their own five-yard line, but they made no progress and the game was over.

Schmidt finished with 111 yards rushing and 52 yards receiving to go along with his scoring return.

Before exiting the game Hansen threw for 170 and rushed for 83 yards. Kasuske finished with four catches for 136 yards.

11AA

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Schmidt said. "This group of seniors have played at the varsity level for three years now. They've been through the tough seasons and this season they were ready to change the tide."

After suffering two straight losses, Schmidt and his team went back to the drawing board and turned the ship in the right direction.

"We have had high expectations all season and battled every time we went out there," he said. "We noticed after the Sioux Falls Lincoln game is when we turned the corner and figured ourselves out."

The Yankton defense, which only gives up 10 points a game, will have its hands full. This season, Brookings has found great success with the running game, with almost 3,000 rushing yards as a team.

Senior Mikey Daniel leads the pack of 'Cats with 1,481 total yards and 20 touchdowns. Carter Gordon leads the passing attack with 869 passing yards and seven touchdowns.

"We have had three backs excel for us," Schmidt said. "Last week, Pierre was able to

CLASS 11AA CHAMPIONSHIP											
Yankton (10-0) vs. Brookings (8-2)											
7:30 p.m. • Radio: KKQQ-FM, KVTK-AM, KYNT-AM • TV: SDPB											
BUCKS OFFENSE						BOBCATS OFFENSE					
Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr	Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
SE	16	Brady Hale	6-4	195	Sr.	TE	46	R.J. Helsper	6-3	200	Sr.
C	54	Landon Binder	6-0	270	Jr.	LT	73	Zach Schultz	6-2	190	Jr.
RG	66	Alex Withrow	6-1	230	Jr.	or	63	Kurt Reed	6-1	225	Jr.
RT	78	Tyler Kaiser	6-1	250	Sr.	LG	66	Brady Alberts	6-0	210	Sr.
LT	62	Nick LaFave	6-0	225	Sr.	C	50	Eddie Miller	6-5	250	So.
LT	65	Bradley Sorenson	6-1	225	Jr.	RG	52	Adam Pharis	6-1	210	Sr.
WR	83	Matt Fitzgerald	6-5	195	Sr.	RT	55	Josh Nelson	6-0	270	Sr.
TE	87	Evan Greeneway	6-8	225	Sr.	WR	18	Mitchell McKibben	5-9	170	Jr.
FB	34	Sheldon Gant	6-1	195	Jr.	FL	7	Dayton Bird	5-7	165	Sr.
QB	22	Parker Kuchta	6-1	155	Sr.	RB	28	Gerald Maxwell	5-10	205	Jr.
HB	15	Mason Strahl	6-1	165	Sr.	RB	2	Mikey Daniel	5-11	215	Sr.
						QB	12	Carter Gordon	6-1	180	Sr.
BUCKS DEFENSE						BOBCATS DEFENSE					
Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr	Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
LB	45	Colin Muth	6-0	195	Jr.	DE	52	Adam Pharis	6-1	210	Sr.
DE	44	Tim Cross	6-0	210	Sr.	NG	68	Aaron Eggebrecht	5-11	260	Jr.
DT	87	Evan Greeneway	6-8	225	Sr.	DE	46	R.J. Helsper	6-3	200	Sr.
LB	43	Colton Diefenderfer	6-1	210	Sr.	OLB	10	Wyatt Resmen	5-9	200	Sr.
NG	72	Brent Gilberly	5-11	245	Sr.	ILB	44	Preston Tetzlaff	6-0	200	Jr.
SS	16	Brady Hale	6-4	195	Sr.	ILB	56	Tyler Priest	5-10	190	Sr.
LB	83	Matt Fitzgerald	6-5	195	Sr.	OLB	28	Gerald Maxwell	5-10	205	Jr.
FS	81	Charlie Stephenson	6-1	165	Sr.	CB	4	Carter Mathlum	5-10	175	Sr.
LB	34	Sheldon Gant	6-1	195	Jr.	CB	7	Dayton Bird	5-7	165	Sr.
CB	30	Ryan Sternhagen	6-1	180	Sr.	S	82	Mack Burns	6-0	170	Sr.
CB	15	Mason Strahl	6-1	165	Sr.	S	18	Mitchell McKibben	5-9	170	Jr.
TEAM LEADERS						TEAM LEADERS					
RUSHING: Parker Kuchta 41-252 yards, 3 TD; Jordan Lightner 62-232, 9 TD; Sheldon Gant 51-194, 2 TD; Mason Strahl 65-129, 6 TD						RUSHING: Mikey Daniel 177-1,350 yards, 19 TD; Gerald Maxwell 99-841, 13 TD; Dayton Bird 35-479, 6 TD					
PASSING: Mason Strahl 99-155, 1,361 yards, 9 TD, 3 INT						PASSING: Carter Gordon 60-117, 869 yards, 7 TD, 8 INT					
RECEIVING: Brady Hale 32-406 yards, 3 TD; Evan Greeneway 21-366, 1 TD; Parker Kuchta 21-193; Sheldon Gant 10-196, 2 TD						RECEIVING: Dayton Bird 18-237 yards, 1 TD; Mitchell McKibben 12-192, 3 TD; Mikey Daniel 11-131					
DEFENSE: Colin Muth 48.5 tackles, 5.5 TFL; Sheldon Gant 41 tackles, 4 TFL; Matt Fitzgerald 35.5 tackles, 11.5 TFL, 2.5 sacks; Evan Greeneway 32.5 tackles, 11 TFL, 2.5 sacks; Tim Cross 30.5 tackles, 4 sacks						DEFENSE: R.J. Helsper 52 tackles, 20 TFL; Wyatt Resmen 52 tackles, 6 TFL; Carter Mathlum 3 INT; Mikey Daniel 6 TFL; Preston Tetzlaff 46 tackles					

keep Daniel in check. So, Gerald Maxwell was able to get looks and put up 200 yards for us. Having a guy like Mikey Daniel back with us is huge. He brought confidence back and accepted every challenge we had for him. But something we haven't had to do of late is pass the ball. (Gordon) can manage a game great and does a good job for us."

Stopping a Yankton team

that averages 33 points a game will be tough on Schmidt's defense.

"Yankton has a lot of weapons," he said. "It will be tough to cover every one of them. The big difference is in their line play, they've gotten so much better. We have seen a lot of formations this season. But I don't think we've seen anything like what Likness could throw at us."

The Bucks are heading

into the contest with the same mentality they have all season. They want to put points up (and) win the turnover and possession battles.

"We cannot afford to give the ball away," Likness said. "Against an explosive team like Brookings, it's just something we really cannot do if we want to put ourselves in a situation to win the football game."

Unofficially, the Bucks offense has been led by Strahl, who has 1,472 yards and 10 touchdowns. Jordan Lightner leads the team in rushing with 402 yards. Brady Hale leads the team in receiving with 36 catches for 445 yards, while Parker Kuchta added 547 all purpose yards.

"It's been an even spread all season," Likness said. "We have had guys step up for us with injuries. The running game has worked of late, but we need to see what formations they get into."

Likness also has expectations that his team will know the blitzes Brookings will attack with.

"We need to see what front they get into," he said. "They can do both a three down or four down set, so it is something our offensive unit is going to need to adjust to all game."

Defensively, Yankton will key in on the backfield for Brookings.

"They can run the ball

very well and can also throw it around as well," Likness said. "There is a reason they're in the Dome right now. They are a really good team, so we need to be able to take on all of their weapons. It's going to be a situation where we can bend, but not break."

The Yankton coaching staff is also taking the temperature in the DakotaDome into factor as well.

"Fatigue will be a big factor," Likness said. "All of a sudden it's 60 to 70 degrees now. No matter how hard we condition, we still have to hydrate right and be able to take care of our bodies. How we substitute and rotate our guys in will be huge."

Yankton would also have a 'home field' advantage, but Likness knows Brookings has advantages in other aspects of the game.

"We'd like to think it'll be a home game for us," he said. "But, they're the team that is practicing at SDSU and getting used to the turf element with their new indoor facility. They have a good advantage, but hopefully we have a big crowd there."

Schmidt cannot wait for what the atmosphere brings, but when kickoff is ready, he wants his team to be focused.

"It's going to be a great environment and something both teams have never seen before," he said. "I know our community is excited and

Yankton hasn't been there in a while, so I'm sure a lot of fans will be there."

For Likness, a victory in the DakotaDome would be a step in the right direction.

"These kids deserve it," he said. "It would be good for the community and this program. We won't hang our heads on one game, but a lot rides on this game. We need to get out there and play the best football game we possibly can play."

You can follow Nick Robinson on Twitter at twitter.com/RobinsonNick2013. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.



AM 1450

MORNING COFFEE

WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY

Friday, November 14

7:40 am SD Magazine (Bernie Hunhoff)

8:35 am Yankton Parks & Rec (Tracey Grotenhuis)