

# Freeman's Schmidt Headed To USD

Class B 400 Champ To Run Track For Coyotes

BY JEREMY HOECK

[jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net](mailto:jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net)

Once Brennan Schmidt focused on track, his high school athletic career found a second gear and he developed into a Division I recruit.

It just took some time, said the Freeman High School senior.

Schmidt, a state champion 400-meter runner for the Flyers, signed last week to run track at the University of South Dakota starting with the 2015-16 school year.

Just four years ago, though, track wasn't even on his radar.

"Honestly, I stumbled on to it by accident," Schmidt said by phone last week.

Originally a golfer for the Marion, Schmidt transferred to Freeman where he was eventually coaxed to go out for track to spend more time with friends — a trend he says is common at smaller schools.

"I didn't really work too hard at it at first," he said.

But by his third meet, when Schmidt clocked a 52.0 in the 400-meter run, that was the first inkling he might have a career in track, he said. His time in the event got down to 51 as a sophomore and 49 last season as a junior.

Schmidt won a state Class B title in the 400 last season with a time of 50.02, and also ran in Freeman's champion 1600 relay, and in the third-place 400 relay.

That performance caught the attention of the USD coaching staff, according to men's head coach Dave Gottsleben — who called Schmidt a "team player."

"He's really mature for his age, and I think he's coming into his own right now," Gottsleben said Monday.

Schmidt said he had scholarship offers from South Dakota State, Augustana and the University of Sioux Falls, while some other schools — Division I included — had talked with him.

The opportunity, though, to utilize USD's upcoming academic laboratory additions inside the new arena was attractive to Schmidt, who wants to eventually attend medical school.

The prospect of being a Division I athlete was also certainly enticing for Schmidt, he said, but there were other positives he saw in the Coyote program.

"I saw some of their practices, and the coaches are very technical," he said. "I really liked that aspect of it."

"The coaches seem like a great group of guys."

Schmidt's 6-foot-4 frame — yes, he plays basketball — also lends Gottsleben to think Schmidt could be a nice D-I runner.

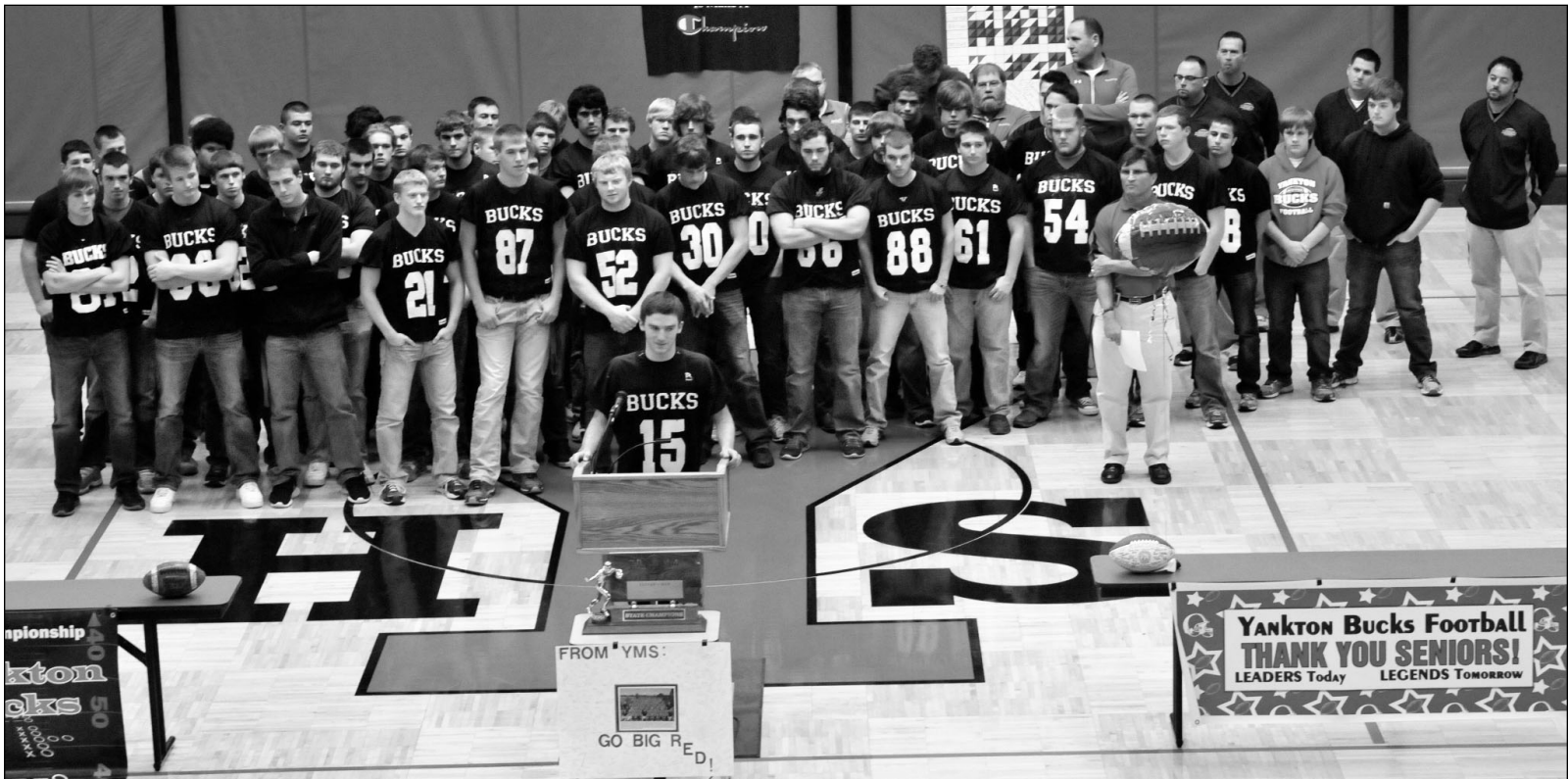
"I've had a few tall kids that are fast, and it seems like that's a pretty good combination for the Division I level," Gottsleben said.

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at [twitter.com/jhoeck](https://twitter.com/jhoeck). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).



P&D FILE PHOTO

Freeman's Brennan Schmidt celebrates after anchoring the Flyers to victory in the Class B boys' 1600-meter relay at the 2014 South Dakota State Track and Field Meet. Schmidt has signed a national letter of intent to compete for the University of South Dakota.



## View From The Top

Yankton held a 'Welcome Home' celebration on Monday for the football team's Class 11AA championship victory. The Bucks beat Brookings 34-33 in overtime on Friday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion. Photos from the celebration, as well as the championship game, are available on [spotted.yankton.net](http://spotted.yankton.net). Video from the celebration is available at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).

ABOVE: Yankton senior Mason Strahl addresses the crowd during Monday's welcome home celebration for the Bucks' Class 11AA football championship. Strahl was named the Joe Robbie Most Valuable Player and the Outstanding Back of the championship game.

RIGHT: Yankton head coach Arlin Likness addresses the crowd. Friday's championship was Likness' third at the helm of the Bucks, adding to titles in 1999 and 2002, and his sixth as a head coach. Prior to joining the Yankton staff, Likness coached Hamlin to three Class 11B titles.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D



# Soccer: Four From MMC Recognized With HM Nods

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

[james.cimburek@yankton.net](mailto:james.cimburek@yankton.net)

Four Mount Marty College players, two each from the men's and women's side, received honorable mention all-Great Plains Athletic Conference honors, as the league announced its post-season awards on Monday.

Honored from the Mount Marty Men were seniors midfielder James Elliott and forward Adan Garcia Marquez. For the Mount Marty women, junior goalkeeper Courtney True and senior defender Alexandra Rojas were recognized.

True and Rojas helped anchor a tested defense. True finished with 152 saves on



True

when the Lancers made the GPAC Tournament.

"This year was a very defensive mindset, and both were a main part of our defense," said head coach Nathan Epp, who left the program after the 2014 season. "Our defense has gotten better every year. We had so many one-goal games this year, and our defense kept us in a lot of those games."

The Mount Marty women



Rojas

finished 3-14-1 and 0-10 in the conference. Half of those 14 losses were by one goal, including three losses in double overtime.

While Epp felt that True's play was worthy of at least a second-team recognition, he was happy to see the Yankton native honored. "Courtney has shown that she is one of the top goalkeepers in the conference," he said. "She didn't have as many saves as last year, but that was because our defense has gotten better."

One of the main reasons



Garcia-Marquez

the Lancer defense was better was Rojas, who was converted to a defender as a sophomore. "When she came in, she was not a defender. She was a midfielder," Epp said. "Her sophomore year she switched to a defensive role, and has taken it on well."

Garcia-Marquez finished with five goals and two assists on the season, tying for second on the team in goals scored.

"Nobody works harder than him," Epp said. "He's not the fastest player, or the strongest, but the combina-



Elliott

tion of the two make him tough to handle on the outside." Elliott recorded one goal and one assist on the season.

"Over the past two years, James has been our most consistent player," Epp said. "He's been fantastic on ball control and being to mark up the other team's better players."

The Lancer men went 3-15, 1-9 in the GPAC.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at [twitter.com/JCimburek](https://twitter.com/JCimburek). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net)

## Olaseni, Uthoff Lead Iowa Past NDSU 87-56

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Gabe Olaseni had 14 points and 11 rebounds as Iowa rolled to an 87-56 win over North Dakota State on Monday night.

Jarrold Uthoff added 12 points for Iowa (2-0).

Lawrence Alexander scored 21 points on 6 of 10 3-point shooting to lead the Bison (0-2).

The Hawkeyes used a 27-2 run in the middle of the game to pull away from NDSU.

The Bison shot only 26.9 percent from the floor, including a six-minute scoreless stretch to open the second half.

Iowa's Adam Woodbury had 10 points and tied a career

# Pelini: Nebraska Moving In Right Direction

BY ERIC OLSON

AP College Football Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Two days after another humiliating loss on the national stage, Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said he had nothing to apologize for and that his program has not hit a ceiling in his seventh year on the job.

"Every game is high stakes," he said Monday. "We've won a lot of football games since I've been here. A lot of programs across the country would have died to have won the amount of football games we've won."

Pelini is 66-26 at Nebraska but hasn't lost fewer than four games in a season. At least one of those losses each year has been by such a wide margin, or so unexpected,

that it unsettled a fan base that became accustomed to, and perhaps still expects, the astounding success of the Tom Osborne-coached teams.

Wisconsin's 59-24 dismantling of the Cornhuskers on Saturday — featuring Melvin Gordon's FBS-record 408 yards rushing — was the first awful loss of 2014. It also marked the seventh time since 2011 that Nebraska, when ranked, had lost by 17 or more points. No other ranked team has lost so many games by so lopsidedly over that span, according to STATS.

The Huskers led Wisconsin 17-3 early in the second quarter and then gave up 56 straight points. Predictably, the performance brought Pelini's critics to the fore.

"Since I've been head football coach, we've been very consistent," Pelini said. "I'm not looking here to defend our program or where we are right now. What I came here to do was win a conference championship and win a national championship, and we're going to keep fighting tooth and nail to get that done."

Pelini has taken Nebraska to conference championship games three times — twice in the Big 12 and once in the Big Ten, all losses. The Huskers haven't won a league title since 1999, the longest drought since 1941-63.

"The time I'll start apologizing is the time I stop working," said Pelini, who earns \$3.1 million a year and is under contract through Feb-

ruary 2018. "I believe the program is on a good track, the right track."

Pelini was at a loss, though, to explain why his team does a face plant in the biggest games.

"I don't want to make an excuse — because I'm not making an excuse; what happened happened — but sometimes our guys put so much pressure on themselves to win that they're not playing to win, they're playing not to lose," he said. "That's a bad recipe. These kids want to win in the worst way. They want to have success. You try to think back as a coach — did you handle it the right way, did you put too much pressure on them?"

The 21st-ranked Huskers (8-2, 4-2 Big Ten) host Min-

nesota (7-3, 4-2) on Saturday. The Gophers bring in an offense committed to the run similar to Wisconsin.

To reach the Big Ten championship game, Nebraska would have to win out against Minnesota and Iowa and have Wisconsin lose its last two, against Iowa and Minnesota.

Offensive lineman and captain Jake Cotton said he and his teammates need to block out the noise this week as they prepare for the Gophers.

"We're still brothers. The approach can't change. The attitude of this team can't change," Cotton said. "We still have a lot left to play for. You just play for each other and block everything else out and just do it for each other."