

Dakota Valley Back To Defend Class A Volleyball Title

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

The more things change, the more things stay the same for the Dakota Valley Panthers.

Rick Pruett's squad graduated a ton of talent from its 2013 Class A championship roster, but the Panthers head to state with a 27-4 record and losses to only one South Dakota opponent. The Class A Tournament begins Thursday at the Watertown Civic Arena.

"Our expectation was always to get back here, but we knew it would be a different route," said Pruett. "We still have some key players, and we started some young kids who had experience at the club level."

coming up

■ Previews Of All 8 Teams In The AA Tournament In Yankton. **Thursday**

Among those young kids are the Lammer twins, freshmen Meredith (313 kills, .355 hitting percentage, 54 ace serves, 198 digs, 36 blocks) and Elizabeth (230 kills, .221 hitting percentage, 45 ace serves, 243 digs, 44 blocks). Sophomore Shayla Johnson (162 kills, .350 hitting percentage) is also among the team leaders for a squad that has five players with over 150 kills.

"They play much older than they are," Pruett said of the Lammer twins, both 5-11 outside hitters. "They've

played at the Junior Olympic level since they were 11, and were on a team that made it to the Junior Olympic national tournament."

Senior Emma Tuttle (184 kills, .310 hitting percentage, 32 ace serves) is the lone hitter back from a year ago. Junior middle Anne McCabe (162 kills, .317 hitting percentage, 35 ace serves, 50 blocks) has also stepped into the offensive rotation.

Leading the way, as she did a year ago, is setter Lindsey Smith. The senior and Nebraska-Kearney recruit has been an all-around force for the Panthers, posting 1,018 assists (11.3 per set), 98 kills, 83 ace serves, 54 blocks (29 solo) and 190 digs.

"She is such a leader by example. Her emotion is always the same. She

is a great leader that way," Pruett said. "Her calming force has been a huge factor."

Also for Dakota Valley, sophomore Jordyn Younger has 166 digs. Senior Alyssa Hughes has 139 digs and 52 ace serves on the season. Senior Madisen Payne has 23 ace serves in limited time on the season.

As a team, Dakota Valley has 337 ace serves on the season, scoring aces on 17.5 percent of their attempts.

The Panthers open with the 1:45 p.m. contest against Redfield-Doland (24-4). The Panthers and Pheasants had one common opponent, state qualifier Sisseton, a team they both swept.

PANTHERS | PAGE 8

Parker Back In 'B' Field After One Year Away

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
james.cimburek@yankton.net

Seeing a four-year run of state tournament appearances did not sit well with the Parker Pheasants, especially veterans Allison Sanner and Jenny Smith.

That motivation has Parker back in the South Dakota State Class B Volleyball Tournament.

Parker takes a 29-3 record into state, which begins Thursday in Aberdeen.

"It was a huge motivation for us," said Parker head coach Jill Christensen, the state's all-time leader in volleyball coaching victories. "Our two returning girls that had been to state, Allison and Jenny, were big motivators to push the girls to get them there. Between the experience at regions last year, and this year with two seniors leading us, it was a big deal."

Sanner has been a force on offense, with 385 kills and 55 ace serves, as well as 296 digs.

"This year we have a go-to player, but everyone else plays a big role," Christensen said. "They can't sit on one hitter because we have other weapons, too."

Contessa Harold, a 6-3 junior middle, has 216 kills and 111 blocks (67 solo) for Parker. Junior outside hitter Hannah Herlyn (196 kills) and sophomore middle Rylie Christensen (195 kills, 35 blocks) have also been key offensive weapons.

Smith has team-highs of 1,020 assists and 320 digs, and has 22 ace serves on the season despite playing through injury.

"She's done it all this season with bone chips in her ankle. She's scheduled to have surgery next Tuesday," Christensen said. "I think teams have been trying to take her out of our offense (referring to teams hitting at her so she can't set), but we have some right-sides that are great setters as well."

Sophomore Lexi Olson (215 digs, 30 ace serves), senior Brittany Olson (215 digs, 30 ace serves), sophomore Makenzie Dean (170 digs, 21 ace serves) and sophomore Lauren Hunstad (103 digs, 14 ace serves) have all played big roles in the passing game.

"We haven't had as many kills as we've had in the past, but that's because we have been killing the ball more efficiently, in terms of putting the ball down sooner," Christensen said.

The Pheasants also boast 192 ace serves on the season, a rare high number in that category for Parker.

"It's one of those things where we walk a fine line," Christensen said. "I don't want a lot of missed serves, but we have been more aggressive this year."

The Pheasants don't have an easy road if they want to improve on the third place finishes Parker earned in its last two state tournament appearances, in 2011 and 2012.

PARKER | PAGE 8

Basketball | Crofton To Coyote Connection Continues

Allison Arens Headed To USD

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

The Crofton-to-Vermillion pipeline has officially added another drop.

And the latest addition has a special connection.

Allison Arens, a 5-foot-9 senior guard at Crofton (Nebraska) High School, signed Monday to play basketball at the University of South Dakota, where her sister Bridget is a sophomore reserve.

In the case of Allison, she had always liked the idea of following her sister — wherever that took them.

"We talked about it before. As she would go from college to college, she would say, 'Allison, did you like that one?'" Allison said Tuesday.

"We thought about maybe wanting to stay together."

Even when Bridget left for USD a year ago, Allison hasn't missed a beat.

She averaged 16 points and 5.4 assists per game last season for the Warriors, who won their third consecutive Class C2 state title under head coach Aaron Losing.

In addition to her exploits on the basketball court, Arens helped Crofton to a state track title in May and last weekend, guided the Warriors to a runner-up finish at the state volleyball tournament.



Crofton's Allison Arens, 10, listens to head coach Aaron Losing during a break in the action of the 2014 Class C2 championship game against Hastings St. Cecilia at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln, Nebraska. The senior will continue her basketball playing career at the University of South Dakota.

P&D FILE PHOTO

ARENS | PAGE 8

Glenn: Coyotes 'Need A Win'

Coyotes Prepare For Field Conditions, Jacks

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

If you ask Joe Glenn, records have to be thrown out the record for Saturday's rivalry game in Brookings.

The football coach at the University of South Dakota is familiar enough with these games — as both a former player and now a third-year head coach for the Coyotes — to know what can happen.

"It makes no difference," Glenn said during Tuesday's Missouri Valley teleconference, previewing Saturday's showdown with South Dakota State. "I've seen it both ways. I've seen their team not having such a great year and the Coyotes having a great year, and the Jacks win."

"Anything can happen in a State-U game."

What needs to happen for the Coyotes (2-9, 0-7), at least, is something positive. They've lost their last 11 league games dating back to last season, and are in danger of going winless in conference play for the second time in three years.

"In perfect order, number one, we're looking for a win," Glenn said. "That's the most important thing right now for us. We need a win."

"To close our season down with a victory is exactly what we need to springboard us on and give us a little hope."

Doing so won't be easy against the No. 16-ranked Jackrabbits (7-4, 4-3), who themselves need a win, but for different reasons — they're still in the FCS playoff hunt.

That point was again driven home by SDSU head coach John Stiegelmeier, who repeated Tuesday that his team is looking forward to the game but has long-term goals.

As to the game with the Coyotes, though, Stiegelmeier said USD's record probably doesn't do the team justice.

"They've been in position to win games, and coach Glenn's answered the question, they haven't gotten it done," Stiegelmeier said. "It's not because they're not a good football team not because they're not well-coached, it's the cards they've been dealt."

One of the cards USD will be dealt Saturday will be cold conditions, as the afternoon temperature is forecasted in

the mid-30s.

Is the weather a concern? No, said Glenn, whose team will practice outside all week.

"We're all guys from Nebraska, South Dakota, Iowa or Minnesota, we don't have many guys that are silver spooners," he said.

The only concern — a mystery, really — is the field conditions at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium, which is always an issue this time of the year.

"It's hard to tell what kind of footing we'll have," said Glenn, who referenced uncertainty about what cleats his players will wear. "It was a mess for last Saturday's game, we watched that over and over, and thought the Rabbits did a great job maneuvering around on that."

If there would be an advantage SDSU has, it would be that, Stiegelmeier said: The Jacks played — and won — in those conditions.

"There's no doubt, the fact that we won on this very field, I think psychologically gets rid of that 'what if' type of deal," he said.

Snow or not, the Coyotes are faced with another psychological battle Saturday: They haven't won a game played outdoors since 2010.

"I don't attribute it to anything," Glenn said. "We don't win outdoors because we're not playing good enough, that's why."

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

PARKER | PAGE 8

Home Winning Streak Ends For SDSU Women

BROOKINGS — Creighton ended South Dakota State's school record-tying home win streak at 22 games with an 88-81 decision in women's basketball action at Frost Arena on Tuesday.

Creighton's Marissa Janning scored 18 of her 21 points in the first half to lead the Bluejays (1-1). Brianna Rollerson and M.C. McGrory had 13 points each in the win.

For SDSU, Mariah Clarin scored a career-high 21 points and had a game-high nine rebounds. Megan Waytashek had 17 points. Kerri Young scored 15 points and Macy Miller had 11 points for the Jackrabbits. (1-1).

Men
NO. 21 NEBRASKA 82, CENTRAL ARKANSAS 56; LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Terran Petteway scored 23 points, Shavon Shields added 16 and No. 21 Nebraska shook off a sloppy first half to beat Central Arkansas 82-56 on Tuesday night.
Tai Webster had 11 of his 13 points in the second half for the Comhuskers (2-0), who turned the game into a rout after leading their opponent from the Southland Conference by only five points shortly after halftime.
Jake Zullhof led Central Arkansas (0-3) with

HOOPS | PAGE 7

Tri-Star Winners



Here are the winners of the Yankton Morning Optimist Tri-Star basketball competition, held earlier this month. (No individual names were supplied.) About 45 individuals participated in the event.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Alabama Rolls To No. 1 In Playoff Rankings

(AP) — Alabama is the new No. 1 in the College Football Playoff rankings and Mississippi State is still in the top four after losing to the Crimson Tide.

Alabama jumped from fifth to first after handing previously undefeated and top-ranked Mississippi State its

first loss on Saturday. Oregon was bumped down to second and unbeaten Florida State is now third. The Seminoles are the only undefeated team left in a Big Five conference.

TCU slipped to No. 5 while Ohio State moved up to No. 6, ahead of TCU's Big 12 rival

Baylor and Mississippi.

UCLA and Georgia rounded out the top 10.

Selection committee chairman Jeff Long said Alabama controlled the game in its 25-20 victory against Mississippi State enough to earn the big promotion this week.

USD Sweeps Summit League Swimming, Diving Honors

ELMHURST, Ill. — The University of South Dakota swimming and diving team swept the Summit League pool honors for the week.

Sophomore Greysen Hertting claimed her fifth Summit League Women's Diver of the Week honor in six weeks with her performance at the Border Battle over the weekend. Teammate Dustin Gens won men's honors.

Hertting won the one-meter dive with a league-best and NCAA Zone qualifying score of 281.20. She also finished first in the three-meter with 280.10 points.

It is the 15th time in her career that she has earned Summit League honors.

Gens, a junior, earned his third career honor and first of the season after winning the one- (275.20) and three-meter (303.90) diving events at the Border Battle. Both scores rank fourth in the league this season.

Sophomores Jacob

Knowles and Sam Schutt took home the Swimmer of the Week honors.

Knowles acquired his second career Swimmer of the Week award and first of the season by recording a trio of top-four finishes and an event win at the Border Battle. The Lockport, Ill., native was victorious in the 200 breaststroke with a time of 2:13.19 and finished runner-up in the 100 breast in 1:00.47. He also placed fourth in the 50 free with a time of 22.18 seconds.

Schutt earns her fifth career and second-straight Swimmer of the Week honors after winning three events at the Border Battle. The Columbus, Ohio, native clocked a new league-best and winning time of 5:01.55 for the 500 freestyle, while also winning the 200 freestyle in 1:54.38 and the 200 backstroke in 2:09.18.

South Dakota duals St. Cloud State in St. Cloud, Minn., on Friday at 5 p.m.