

SDSU Rolls Past Coyotes, Earns FCS Playoff Berth

USD Finishes 2-10, Winless In MVFC

BY JEREMY HOECK
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BROOKINGS — Another State-U meeting. Another lopsided win for the program with playoff aspirations.

And for the third consecutive year, a game South Dakota State needed for its FCS post-season hopes.

Mission accomplished. The No. 15-ranked Jackrabbits beat rival South Dakota 37-14 on Saturday afternoon in Brookings to lock up their eighth win of the season — and, as it turns out, their third straight playoff bid.

“We did what we were supposed to do, and hopefully with an explanation point,” said head coach John Stiegelmeier, whose team

learned Sunday that it received an at-large selection.

The Jackrabbits (8-4), one of five Missouri Valley teams to get playoff bids, will travel to Montana State for next Saturday’s first-round playoff matchup.

The Coyotes (2-10, 0-8), meanwhile, finish their second winless league season in three years, and are 3-21 in conference games since joining the Missouri Valley — losers in their last 12.

“This one really hurts, more than all the others,” head coach Joe Glenn said, “just because it is what it is, they’re the Jackrabbits and we’re the Coyotes.”

The Coyotes, who still rolled up 438 yards of total offense, were kept off the score-

board until the 10:34 mark of the fourth quarter. That was after quarterback Kevin Earl hit Eric Shufford for a 10-yard touchdown play.

It wasn’t like the Coyotes were struggling to move the ball against the Jackrabbits’ defense, they just stalled out on prime opportunities. USD had six drives inside the SDSU 25-yard line, but had a missed field goal, an interception at the goal line and a pair of turnovers on downs.

“We were able to move the ball. It took us a little bit to get a feel for the field,” said Earl, who passed for 226 yards and a touchdown.

“We started putting some plays together, just couldn’t punch the ball in the end zone to get six points.”

The opening half was controlled by SDSU, which scored

on its first five drives and used 320 yards to build a 31-0 lead at the break — thanks in large part to big plays from Sumner.

Facing the league’s worst defense (in terms of yardage and points allowed), SDSU senior quarterback Austin Sumner had pass completions of 27, 41, 28 and 37 yards in the first quarter, and later had a 50-yard touchdown pass in the second quarter.

The Brandon native finished with a career-high 395 yards passing, with three touchdowns.

“As an offense, you want to try to find an advantage, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn’t,” Stiegelmeier said. “It wasn’t easy, but it worked.”

South Dakota kicker Miles Bergner missed a 25-yard field



SHAUNA MARLETTE/P&D

South Dakota quarterback Kevin Earl, 14, fires the ball to teammate Eric Shufford during the Coyotes’ matchup at South Dakota State on Saturday. SDSU won 37-17, securing a FCS playoff berth.

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S.D. State Class AA Volleyball



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Sioux Falls O’Gorman celebrates after clinching a 3-0 victory over Sioux Falls Roosevelt in the championship match of the South Dakota State Class AA Volleyball Tournament on Saturday at the Summit Center in Yankton. It was the Knights’ second straight state title.

Knights To Remember

O’Gorman Repeats As Class AA Champions

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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The Sioux Falls O’Gorman Knights completed their sweep of the South Dakota State Class AA Volleyball Tournament with a 25-11, 25-12, 28-26 victory over Sioux Falls Roosevelt in the championship match on Saturday at the Summit Center.

The victory earned the O’Gorman (33-5) its second straight title and sixth title overall, the last three under coach Julie Kolbeck. Roosevelt finished with a 20-19 record after playing for the title in a fifth consecutive season.

“This was a perfect way to end my high school career,” said O’Gorman senior Taryn Kloth, who will play volleyball at Creighton University beginning next fall. “I couldn’t think of anything better.”

Kloth finished with 23 kills and 22 digs

for O’Gorman. Her three-match effort of 62 kills set a state tournament record of 6.9 kills per set, breaking the old standard of 6.4 kills per set by Huron’s Katelyn Allerdings in 2012.

Also for O’Gorman, Jessica Mieras finished with 11 kills and four solo blocks. Katie Messler had four blocks, and Alex Anderson and Kate Cartwright had three blocks each as the Knights recorded 14 blocks in the three-set victory. Katie Kunkel added 15 digs and five ace serves for the O’Gorman floor defense.

“Our back row did an amazing job,” said Mieras, a South Dakota State basketball recruit. “If our back row wasn’t behind us doing their job, we wouldn’t have the offense we have.”

Dalee Stene cemented her career cre-



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

O’Gorman’s Katie Kunkel gets low to dig out a ball during championship match of the South Dakota State Class AA Volleyball Tournament on Saturday at the Summit Center in Yankton.

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Cedar Ready For Rematch With Aquinas In C2 Final

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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HARTINGTON, Neb. — The Hartington Cedar Catholic Trojans football team will end their season how it began: on the road facing a tough Aquinas Catholic program.

The difference is, this meeting will not be in David City, but in Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Nebraska, with a state championship trophy on the line.

The Trojans and Monarchs face off at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday in the Nebraska Class C2 championship game.

“They are all excited. This has been a goal since we lost to Lutheran High (Northeast) last year,” said Cedar Catholic head coach Chad Cattau. “But our ultimate goal isn’t just to get here. They are very serious about what they are doing. They have the right mindset to go down there and win it.”

The contest comes three months after the teams first meet, Aug. 29 in David City, a 7-0 Monarchs victory. Cattau said that the late-season Trojans are nothing like the team Aquinas faced to open the season.

“It starts with experience. James Kaiser went from wide receiver to quarterback. We had receivers who hadn’t played a lot having to step up. We’re now on our third center because of injury,” he said. “The kids have developed and the team has gotten closer. That is part of why we are here.”

Another part of why the Trojans are headed to Lincoln is defense. Only one opponent scored more than two touchdowns on Cedar Catholic this season, the top-ranked Battle Creek team Aquinas beat in the semifinals.

“Our defense has played very well, and they’ve tackled extremely well,” Cattau said. “Coach (Mike) Johnson and our coaching staff has done a great job of putting schemes together, and our kids have bought into the basic fundamentals.”

Defensively, Ryan Becker (71 tackles, 4 fumble recoveries, 1 INT), Jared Wiebelhaus (58 tackles, 1 INT) and Tristan Steffen (55 tackles, 1 INT, 1 blocked kick, 2 fumble recoveries) have lead the way. Ty Becker (5.5 sacks) and Alexander Fischer (5 sacks) have led the up-front pressure. Kaiser (4 INT) and Stephen Hillis (3 INT) have anchored a ball-hawking secondary.

Offensively, Ryan Becker has again been a force, rushing for 1,479 yards and 12 scores. Kaiser has rushed for 532 yards and a team-best 14 touchdowns, and has thrown for 1,245 yards and 20 scores. Steffen has been the primary receiving threat, with 21

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