

USD Seeks Win In ‘Statement Game’ Against NDSU

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VERMILLION — Statement game. Plain and simple.

The mission for the University of South Dakota tonight in Sioux Falls: Re-establish some positive vibes while at the same time doing so against the heavily-favored defending national champions.

Is it possible? Can the Coyotes, at 1-5 and 0-3 in the Missouri Valley Conference, take down North Dakota State, winners in 21 of its last 24 games?

“We’re looking at it as a season-changer for us,” USD senior receiver Will Powell said. “If we win this game, our whole season will be turned around.

“We have greatly underachieved so far, so we feel like this could change everything.”

Change is what the Coyotes seek after last week’s deflating loss at unbeaten Missouri State, when they led by 17 points

with less than six minutes to play. USD — playing its first game in Sioux Falls since 2007 — has lost its three league games by a combined 16 points.

Of course, the biggest challenge looms today (Saturday) at Howard Wood Field. Fourth-ranked North Dakota State, at 5-1 overall and 2-1 in league play, has won eight straight road games and figures to bring a large contingent of fans to Sioux Falls.

In short, that’s what the Coyotes are hoping to build toward.

“They’re one of the top programs in the country, so they’ve obviously done things right,” Powell said. “And we’re going to get there. It’s a growing process with the transition, but it takes some growing up to do.”

The model established by the Bison is, unquestionably, one USD wants to emulate.

Upon joining the Missouri Valley in 2008, the Bison were 10-14 in league play in their first three seasons. The 2010 squad, how-

ever, went 4-4 but earned a playoff berth and advanced to the FCS quarterfinals.

“We’re a whole different team in a brand new league, and we want to make our own path,” USD freshman linebacker Keyen Lage said. “Obviously we want to do what they did, but we want to follow our own path.”

To start that journey, however, the Coyotes would certainly relish a victory over the Bison. Doing so won’t be easy, as NDSU boasts the league’s top offense (423.8 yards and 39.2 points a game) and top defense (204, 9.8).

The Bison, though, are coming off a loss last week to Indiana State in which they scored just one offensive touchdown and threw three interceptions. The NDSU secondary — led by All-American Marcus Williams — will present a significant challenge to the Coyotes and quarterback Josh Vander Maten.

“It’s something we, as receivers, like to use as a challenge,” Powell said. “You just

have to make plays. Josh is going to be have to very accurate; we can’t afford to miss. They’ll try to shut us down, but hopefully we can open things up a little bit with our run.”

Doing so won’t be easy, however. NDSU allowed 88 yards on the ground last week, which is actually higher than their season average of 71 yards.

“As good a defense as I’ve seen,” USD coach Joe Glenn said this week. “Their strength is their defense; play with a real attitude. I have a lot of respect for their defense.”

The Bison will be without their top two receivers (Zach Vraa and Ryan Smith) today, but still boast weapons in the run game with John Crockett (482 yards, 6 TD) and Sam Ojuri (284 yards, 3 TD).

“They have some really hard-hitting fullbacks,” Lage said. “Those guys will lay the wood on you; run right through you. Their power is really good, right up the middle.

“They’re a really fundamental, well-sound offense,” he added. “They make their blocks for the running backs.”

USD’s offense, on the other hand, will see some changes of its own. Center Tim Ross was shifted to left guard and former guard Cody O’Neill was moved to center.

That, in a nutshell, is what the Coyotes have been focused on all week: Themselves.

“We thought about it as just another game, regardless of who we’re playing,” Lage said. “It’s about doing our thing; not worrying about them. We’re feeling really good right now; we’re ready to go.”

Will it result in a win in Sioux Falls?

“It’s been a couple frustrating losses in the past, so we’ve been correcting the little things,” Powell said. “It’ll be tough to move on them, but we have a solid game plan to go up and win the thing.”

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at [twitter.com/jhoeck](#)

Brookings Battles Past Yankton 3-1

BROOKINGS — The Brookings Bobcats used a combined 33 kills from Mack Reif, Amelia Miller and Kenzie Thuringer in a 25-20, 20-25, 25-15, 25-13 victory over Yankton in Eastern South Dakota Conference volleyball action on Friday in Brookings.

Reif had 13 kills and three assisted blocks, and Miller had 11 kills, four ace serves and four assisted blocks to lead Brookings. Thuringer finished with nine kills and two assisted blocks. Alyssa Tvedt finished with seven kills and four assisted blocks for the Bobcats.

Also for Brookings, Marisa Milton had 39 assists and 12 digs, and Emily Johnson had a team-best 16 digs in the win.

For Yankton, Kelsey Fitzgerald posted 12 kills, 12 digs and two assisted blocks. Mikala Hora finished with 11 kills, 16 digs and three solo blocks. Maria Binder had 23 assists and 10 digs, and Brooke Wuebben had 13 digs for the Gazelles.

Yankton bounced back after letting the opening stanza slip away to take the second set, according to head coach Leasa Woodward.

“I thought that we played well at the start of the match,” she said. “We had a 17-14 lead, and all of a sudden we’re calling a time out at 17-17. We came back and played a nice set in set two.

“Set three was competitive. Four got away from us in a hurry.”

Brookings had seven total blocks and 53 digs on the night.

“Brookings played great team defense,” Woodward said.

Yankton struggled to find a balance between being aggressive and not making errors.

“We’ve talked about being aggressive but, in the process, made way too many errors,” Woodward said. “We need to sustain good play. We’ve got a couple more opportunities to try.”

The next opportunity for Yankton is Monday at home against Watertown, the ESD finale for the Gazelles.

“We need to go out, play aggressively and get everyone involved,” Woodward said. “We were lacking that.”

Brookings edged the Gazelles 25-21, 23-25, 25-23 in the JV match. For Yankton, Ellison Fedders had 21 assists and three ace serves, and Emily Bos had a team-best nine kills. Jessi Anderson and Becky Frick had 10 digs apiece.

Brookings won the sophomore match 25-15, 25-20.

Yankton took the freshmen ‘A’ match 25-22, 17-25, 25-22. For Yankton, Julie Soto led the way with 19 assists, four kills and seven digs. Darian Miller had six kills, Danielle Salvatori had four ace serves and Amy Doering had eight digs in the win.

The Gazelles also took the freshmen ‘B’ match 25-20, 25-11. Danielle Dvorak had six ace serves and Sydney Ingalls had five kills for Yankton. Kate Weinandt added eight assists in the victory.

Freeman 3, Centerville 1

FREEMAN — Freeman defeated Centerville 26-24, 26-24, 23-25, 25-20 Friday night in Freeman.

Dina Soulek recorded 21 digs, 10 kills and one ace for the night, while Shelby Bauer made 18 digs, eight kills and one ace. Grace Gering had 33 assists, 11 digs, three aces and two kills.

For Centerville, Brittany Ausha had 29 digs and nine aces, Gabby Larson made 17 assists, nine digs and three aces and Kieran O’Malley had 10 digs, nine kills and three aces.

Freeman will host Marion on Monday, and Centerville will

CENTERVILLE (4-19).....	24	24	25	20
FREEMAN (8-11).....	26	26	23	25

Canton 3, Alcester-Hudson 1

ALCESTER — A pair of double-doubles by seniors Atlanta Lundstrom and Janet Van De Stroet led the Canton C-Hawks to their fifth win of the season with a 26-24, 25-23, 14-25, 25-22 victory over Alcester-Hudson on Friday night in Alcester.

Lundstrom recorded 19 digs and 14 kills while Van De Stroet notched 21 assists and 14 digs in the victory, which improves Canton to 5-19 this year.

The Cubs, 17-8, got 18 assists and 14 digs from Courtney McKee while Skylar McConnell added 14 digs.

Alcester-Hudson won the JV Match while Canton swept the C-Match.

Canton travels to Lennox on Tuesday while Alcester Hudson plays Viborg-Hurley in Viborg on Monday.

CANTON (5-19).....	26	25	14	25
ALCESTER-HUDSON (17-8).....	24	23	25	22

Avon 3, Menno 0

MENNO — Alyson Roth led Avon in a win against Menno in Friday night volleyball action 25-22, 25-19, 25-14 in Menno.

Roth recorded 11 assists, eight kills, one block and one ace. Chesney Nagel made eight kills, seven assists, one block and one ace, and Ariana Dorlog had five digs, four kills, two blocks and one assist.

For Menno, Abby Herrboldt made 12 digs, Brittany Haberman had nine digs, one ace and one kill, and Courtney Schaeffer had six assists and five digs.

Menno will host Scotland on Monday, and Avon will host Gayville-Volin.

AVON (14-10).....	25	25	
MENNO (1-23).....	22	19	14

Viborg-Hurley 3, Bon Homme 0

TYNDALL — Viborg-Hurley defeated Bon Homme 25-8, 25-21, 25-22 Friday night in Bon Homme.

For Viborg-Hurley Leacadia Christensen put up 14 assists for the night, while Megan Knock had 12 assusts. Katelyn Graber made 10 kills, and Danielle Voss had nine kills.

For Bon Homme, Alie Adam had 13 assists, Emily Pechous had eight digs, and Jody Kriz made 26 digs.

Bon Homme will participate in the Southeast South Dakota Tourney and Viborg-Hurley will face Alcester-Hudson.

VIBORG-HURLEY (12-1).....	25	25	
BON HOMME (19-6).....	8	21	22

Elk Point-Jefferson 3, Ponca 0

ELK POINT — The Elk Point-Jefferson Huskies swept Ponca, Neb., 25-19, 25-9, 25-14 an interstate volleyball showdown on Friday in Elk Point.

Skylore Curry had 10 kills and three blocks, and Keely Bertram had eight kills, five ace serves, two blocks and seven digs to lead EPJ. Hope Erickson had 13 assists and seven digs, Haylee Erickson had two ace serves and Amy Zeller had nine digs in the win.

For Ponca, Megan Pollard posted eight kills and 14 digs to



Wausa quarterback Marcus Claussen, right, prepares for a tackle from Wynot's Jackson Sudbeck during their game Friday night in Wausa, Neb. Wausa outgunned Wynot 58-50 to finish the regular season at 7-1. Playoff pairings will be announced today (Saturday).

Becker Powers Cedar Catholic Past W-P

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Ryan Becker rushed for 195 yards and four touchdowns to lead Cedar Catholic in a victory against Wisner-Pilger 34-12 Thursday night in Hartington.

Taylor Kathol rushed for 77 yards and one touchdown, and Noah Miller had 8.5 tackles for the night.

For Wisner Pilger, Kalib Mauch rushed for a total of 54

yards, and Jakob Kielbach rushed for 44 yards.

Nebraska playoff pairings will be announced Saturday.

WISNER-PILGER (2-7).....	0	0	6	—	13
HARTINGTON CEDAR CATHOLIC (5-4).....	12	8	8	—	34

Coyotes Win At Oakland 3-1

ROCHESTER, Mich. — South Dakota volleyball topped the Oakland Golden Grizzlies 3-1 (23-25, 25-16, 25-19, 25-19) in Summit League action behind 20 kills from Kendall Krittenbrin and 24 digs by Riley Haug.

It was a solid effort all-around as five Coyotes reached (9-13, 3-7) double-digit digs and three reached double-digit kills. The Coyotes split the season series with the Golden Grizzlies (12-10, 5-5) as the away team won both matches.

Krittenbrink led the Coyote attack that consistently put pressure on the Oakland defense. Natalie Walseth and Kim Bulaga both recorded 10 kills, and Sydney Dimke had nine kills. Tori Kroll had a strong showing in setting up the attack with 50 assists.

South Dakota didn’t have more than six attack errors in a set, and finished the match with 19. The team averaged 25 attack errors per conference match entering the night.

Haug and the Coyotes kept the second best offense in the conference at bay after the first set. Only the conference’s leading scorer Meghan Bray recorded more than 10 kills with 17.

Bulaga and Krittenbrink both also recorded at least 10 digs for double-doubles. Bulaga had 16 digs to record her fifth double-double in seven matches, and Krittenbrink had 11 digs for her fifth double-double of the season. Katie Bunkers had 14 digs and Kroll had 12 digs for her 12th double-double this season.

South Dakota also had a strong day at the net with 11 blocks. Kelsey Billoft had a solo block and five assists and Krittenbrink had six block assists.

The Coyotes will continue their road trip by playing conference leader Fort Wayne (19-4, 8-2) today (Saturday) at 7 p.m.

Giants Blank Cards To Stay Alive

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Barry Zito pitched the San Francisco Giants back into the NL championship series, dominating into the eighth inning of a 5-0 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals on Friday night that narrowed their deficit to 3-2.

The defending champion Cardinals might have thrown away a chance to clinch a second straight World Series trip. Pitcher Lance Lynn’s toss on a possible forceout deflected off the second-

base bag, paving the way for the Giants’ four-run fourth.

Pablo Sandoval homered for the second straight night and Zito made an extremely rare offensive contribution with a perfectly executed bunt for an RBI single.

Game 6 will be in San Francisco on Sunday, with Ryan Vogelsong pitching for the Giants against Chris Carpenter.

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