

Numbers Don't Lie In USD's Slow MVFC Start

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

The numbers don't lie. Not much is going right for the University of South Dakota football team this season, especially following a second-half letdown at Missouri State and a 54-0 thrashing last week by North Dakota State. Both sides of the ball have struggled for USD (1-6, 0-4), which travels to 15th-ranked Indiana State, tied for first place in the Missouri Valley Football Conference, on Saturday in Terre Haute, Ind. The Sycamores, at 6-2 and 4-1, are well aware of what can happen, though. "It's like every week, it doesn't matter who you play, you better bring your 'A' game or you'll be embarrassed," ISU head coach Trent Miles said Tuesday during the league media call. In the case of the Coyotes, however, it's

been five straight weeks of defeats. Over its last six quarters of action, for example, USD has mustered 186 yards and 12 first downs. When asked Tuesday what has been the biggest struggle on offense, USD coach Joe Glenn joked, "North Dakota State's defense." "We've played really good teams with excellent defenses," Glenn added. "We have four new starters on the line and a couple new tight ends that are new at it. I just have so much respect for the defenses we're seeing." Glenn said the defenses he's seen so far through four league games have been "cookie cutter," in that most of the formations and schemes are similar. "Everybody has a little different wrinkle," he added. "When it's good, it's good. People play good gap-cancel defense up front and their safeties all tackle pretty darn well. If you can't make something

shake open for the pass, then they got you, and that's exactly what North Dakota State did to us." On the other hand, USD's defense hasn't fared quite that well. Among 121 FCS teams, the Coyotes rank 48th in pass defense, 96th in rushing defense and 82nd in total defense. Opposing quarterback pass efficiency ratings are also the 100th-worst in the country. The Coyotes managed 76 yards of total offense against NDSU, including four first downs and 17 yards on the ground. Part of that, Glenn said, was who they were playing. "We've been able to score some points and get some things going, but it's tough sledding when there are so many strong players and senior-laden teams," Glenn said. "That's great senior leadership, and that's when you have good defenses; veterans at the peak of their strength and experience."

Indiana State, winners of four straight, has the fifth-best defense in the country with an average of 289.89 yards per game. The Sycamores — who figure to start five seniors on that side Saturday — also rank No. 2 in scoring defense (12.38) and pass efficiency defense (90.15). Its total offense, however, ranks 95th nationally (312.5), led by a strong rushing game with Shakir Bell (144.5). Bell, a 5-foot-8, 185-pound junior, has rushed 206 times for 1,156 yards and nine touchdowns this season. His workload has become a topic of conversation after consecutive games of 33, 25, 26 and 28 carries. "I see one of the best running backs in the country. He plays like a giant. He has the strongest set of legs I've ever seen, pound for pound, on a running back," Glenn said. "They know how to use him. They're doing a good job giving the guy the ball as much as he can stand it."

"He must be just as strong as you can be." About his top offensive threat, Miles said Bell squats over 600 pounds and is "very explosive in the legs and hips." "When you see him, he's a walking muscle," Miles added. "He's probably about four percent body fat. He's a tough, physical kid." Already with as many wins as they had the previous two seasons, the Sycamores are firmly past rebuilding mode. Miles took over prior to 2008 and two years later guided ISU to the school's first winning season since 1996. "I credit Trent and his staff," Glenn said. "A couple years ago I talked to him, and he was down in the dumps, trying to find athletes, and he's done a great job getting it going there."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck

Bucks Bounce Eagles To Advance

BY CHRIS RILEY
sports@yankton.net

A constant through all six of Yankton's regular season wins this season was an ability to make their opponents pay dearly for any turnovers and miscues throughout the game. The Bucks (7-3) used that recipe once again on Tuesday night at Crane-Youngworth Field to defeat a pesky Aberdeen Central squad, 44-20, to advance to the second round of the Class 11AA football playoffs. The Golden Eagles, who finish their season 2-8, appeared ready to make an upset bid after battling through a scoreless first period and only trailing 10-6 less than a minute before halftime. That is when Aberdeen was once again plagued by penalties. After Golden Eagles senior quarterback scored on a one-yard dive with 33 seconds left in the half, Aberdeen was set to kick off and hopefully shut down the Bucks for the final few plays of the half while entering the locker room with the majority of momentum on their side. Instead, a host of offsides penalties backed up the Golden Eagles kickoff and allowed Yankton to take over at their opponents 28-yard line with less than half a minute of time on the clock. "Every time we had a couple good plays it seems like a nasty penalty or a turnover hurt us," Golden Eagles coach Mike Flakus said. That excellent field position would prove to be huge as Bucks senior Michael Rucker found fellow senior Evan Schroeder in the back corner of the end zone for a high-light-reel 14-yard scoring strike with eight seconds left in the first half. Brady Hale's PAT sent Yankton into the locker room with a 17-6 advantage, which would be the clos-



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

A trio of Yankton defenders get to Aberdeen Central quarterback Jake Carrico during their Class 11AA playoff game on Tuesday at Crane-Youngworth Field. Yankton won 44-20, and will face Sioux Falls O'Gorman on Monday in Sioux Falls.

Top-Ranked KWL, Canistota Win Openers

WHITE LAKE — Kimball-White Lake continued their undefeated season with a victory over Parker 41-14 in the opening round of the 9AA playoffs. Jacob Kirsh rushed for 226 yards with 21 carries and three touchdowns for KWL. Trevor Reinesch contributed 137 yards rushing and two touchdowns for KWL. Jesse Taylor passed the ball for 62 yards and a touchdown. Reinesch caught six passes for 55 yards and one touchdown. Reinesch led the KWL defense with nine tackles. Turner Blasius added seven tackles and a sack. Parker rushed the ball for 144 yards on 39 carries. Seth Dykstra completed three passes for 17 yards. Alec Dangel had 10 tackles on the night. Eric Hunstad added a 90 yard kickoff return for a touchdown. Kimball-White Lake will host 7-2 Howard on Monday in the quarterfinals of the 9AA playoffs. Parker has ended their season with a 6-3 record.

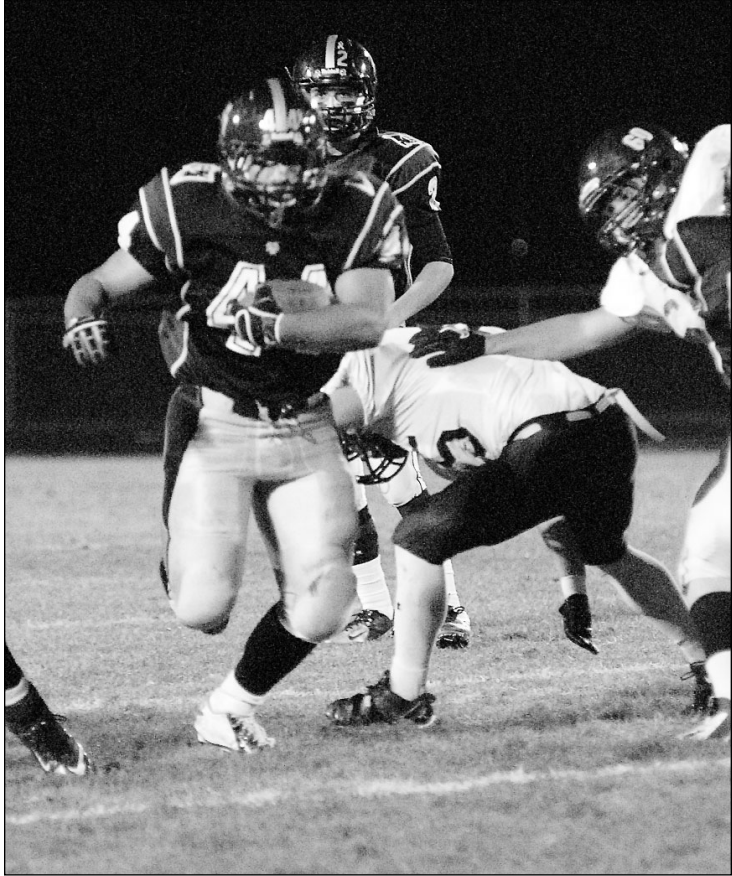
KIMBALL-WHITE LAKE (9-0)	14	14	7	6	41
PARKER (6-3)	0	0	0	14	14

Winner 51, Bon Homme 6

WINNER — Winner defeated Bon Homme 51-6 in the opening round of the 11B playoffs Tuesday night in Winner. Trace Meyer posted 103 yards on 11 carries with five touchdowns for Winner. Kyle Bertram led the Winner offense with 191 yards on the ground and two touchdowns. Meyer also contributed 11 tackles, a sack, a forced fumble, and an interception. Adam Farner had 11 tackles.

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Panthers Survive Titans In Overtime



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Dakota Valley's Tanner Lambert carries the ball for a big game against Tea Area during their Class 11A first-round playoff game Tuesday night in North Sioux City.

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

NORTH SIOUX CITY — Though there was a thick layer of fog covering the field, Andrew Reiff realized clearly what his goal was. Get to the end zone and get his team to the next round. The Dakota Valley senior receiver did exactly that, catching an 8-yard touchdown pass to lead his Panthers past Tea Area 40-37 in a Class 11A first-round playoff thriller Tuesday night in North Sioux City. "I knew I had to get in," said Reiff, who caught two touchdown passes and intercepted a pass on defense. "I had to do everything I could. There couldn't be any other ending; we had to get it done." Things looked bleak for the Panthers, however, after the Titans (5-4) tied the game at 34 with 1:13 left in the fourth quarter on a 10-yard touchdown play. After Dakota Valley missed a field goal with 10.6 seconds left, Tea Area got the ball first in overtime and capitalized with a 27-yard field goal. The Panthers ran two plays to get to the 8-yard line, and on the next play, quarterback Aaron Likness rolled out to his right and found Reiff over the middle. Reiff made a valiant push to the end zone and snuck past the goal line.

"It was a battle to see who had the ball last," said Dakota Valley coach Jason Jund, who estimates that his Panthers (7-2) will make the trip West River for the quarterfinals. "Andrew made a heck of a play and Aaron stepped up good for us," Jund added. "It was a phenomenal team effort." The Titans, despite taking a 27-20 lead early in the third quarter and later tying the game before overtime, were hampered by turnovers all night. Tea Area fumbled a punt and a kickoff, missed two kicks, and quarterback Taylor Roemen threw three interceptions. Despite all those issues, it was a nail-biter from start to finish — when the fog started rolling across the field. "I don't want to play Tea Area again until next year," Jund said. "That's the unfortunate thing. Two really good teams had to play in the first round." After each team traded touchdowns early in the first quarter, Dakota Valley's Colton Mahler returned the ensuing kick-off 93 yards for a score. Down 14-13, the Titans responded with a 27-yard touchdown run from Gunnar Ensz — his first of three on the night — and followed

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SHAUNA MARLETTE/P&D

Irene-Wakonda's Dustin Livingston breaks up a pass to Wilmot's Landon Hammer in the endzone during their Class 9A playoff football game on Tuesday in Irene.

Wolves Escape Irene-Wakonda

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
sports@yankton.net

IRENE — After a tough loss last week, the Irene-Wakonda Eagles feared they had fallen apart. Their performance Tuesday night proved they were still a tough team, although they came away defeated by the Wilmot Wolves. The Eagles faced the Wolves in playoff football action Tuesday night in Irene, with Wilmot winning by a score of 40-34. Wilmot started off the night less than two minutes into the first quarter with a 44 yard touchdown pass from Austin Hulscher from Austin Hooth taking Wilmot 6-0 over the Eagles. The Eagles would come back to tie the game on a 25

yard touchdown pass from Dustin Livingston to Trevor Hansen. Chris Bronson of Wilmot would make the Wolves' next four touchdowns, while Irene-Wakonda's Ashur Wiedrich and Chris Heirigs would each score for the Eagles in the first half, making it a 32-20 game with Wilmot still in the lead. After a scoreless third quarter, Irene-Wakonda's Dusting Livingston scored on a one yard run five seconds into the fourth quarter. The two-point conversion was good to close the gap 32-28, Wilmot still leading. With five minutes left in the game, Livingston scored another touchdown for the Eagles, this time

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Viborg-Hurley Pounds Marion In 9B Opener

BY ANDREW ATWAL
andrew.atwal@yankton.net

HURLEY — Missed opportunities. That was the phrase that Marion Bears' head coach Todd Obele had to say about his team coming up short Tuesday night against the Viborg-Hurley Cougars. On the first drive of the game, the Bears methodically moved the ball into scoring position, but ended up coming up just short on a 4th down inside the Cougars' five yard line and came up with no points on a drive that lasted for nearly half of the first quarter.

After that, it was all Viborg-Hurley who went on to defeat Marion 64-14. "Sometimes things like that happen, and football is a game of inches," Obele said. "Punching it in there would have given us a boost, but we came back and scored on the next drive." Viborg-Hurley head coach Erik Sommervold said that stop gave the team momentum they used to carry them the rest of the game. "That stop there right at the beginning set the tone for us for the rest of the game," he said. "They drove the ball on us and ate up a lot of time but we were able to stop them and

score relatively quickly after that." Sommervold added that the win is bitter-sweet for him. "It's step one in the process that hopefully continues, but it's still a big deal," he said. "It's the first time I've been a head coach and been in the playoffs, so it's my first playoff win as a head coach." The Cougars were paced by senior Tyler Gerdes who had nine carries for 142 yards and a touchdown. Junior Jack Huether was 6 for 9 passing the ball for 254 yards and three touch-

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