

Basketball | USD Media Day

Seekamp Set To Make Debut

Aussie Guard Ready To Play For Coyote Women After Sitting Out In 2011-12

BY JEREMY HOECK
jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

VERMILLION — For 12 months, Nicole Seekamp has been a kind of urban legend. People, mostly including coaches and teammates, have come forward with claims of her ability, but not much tangible proof exists of what she can do on a basketball court.

Next week, however, that will all change.



Seekamp

The 5-foot-10 sophomore guard from Australia will make her long-awaited University of South Dakota debut in the starting lineup after sitting out last season as a redshirt, when she — according to witnesses — continually wreaked havoc in practice.

“It’s been a long time coming, that’s for sure,” Seekamp said Tuesday during USD’s basketball media day gathering in Vermillion. “I’m definitely looking forward to next week.”

There has been a lot of anticipation for Seekamp since signed with USD in May 2011 and joined the program that fall, practicing for former head coach Ryun Williams. The things she could do and did in scrimmages were, at the same time, frustrating, for a team that eventually earned a WNIT berth.

Seekamp was relegated to the sidelines in a kind of cheerleader role during that 23-8 campaign last season.

“I feel her pain, I had to redshirt one year too (at Iowa State),” senior guard Alexis Yackley said. “I know how it is to go crazy wanting to see the court.”

A 20-year-old native of Renmark, South Australia, Seekamp captained the South Australia team in the U20 Championships in February 2011 and averaged 12.6 points, 5.1 rebounds and 6.1 assists. Her career also includes stints with the U19 national team in 2010 and the U18 Australia Championships in 2009.

Suddenly, in a whole other continent, she had to sit and watch.

“It was hard, but I’ve done it before when I was in Australia, having to sit out like that,” Seekamp said. “I think it probably helped having a successful team just because we had so many girls to help out, and who knows how much I would have played.

“Luckily it flew by.”

Watching former players like Amber Hegge, Annie Roche and Jodie Boss experience year one in the Summit League naturally helped Seekamp, she said, especially when it came to learning schemes and techniques.

“She’s one of the most intelligent, if not



video

■ For full press conference videos, go to Jeremy Hoeck’s YouTube page at: youtube.com/jerhoeck

the most intelligent, players I’ve been around,” first-year head coach Amy Williams said Tuesday. “It’s kind of crazy in practice, sometimes she’ll finish my sentences before I even finish. And we’ve never worked together before.”

With the Coyotes already struggling to overcome the losses of five players to season-ending injuries, Seekamp will be looked to for a scoring role, Williams said. In what figures to be a fast-paced tempo, her impact in that system is already making an impact.

“We play well together and feed off each other,” Yackley said. “We’re a little bit thin at the post right now, and she can step in and play there if we need her to. She’s a great passer, and she’s really fun to play with.”

Graduation losses from last season mean the Coyote women will have to replace a combined 36 points, 18 rebounds and 6 assists per game. Will Seekamp be

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ABOVE: Two USD cheerleaders look on as USD women’s basketball coach Amy Williams addresses the media during USD’s preseason basketball media day, held on Tuesday at the Muenster University Center in Vermillion. Williams, in her first season at the helm of the Coyotes, will return two starters from a squad that went 23-8 a year ago. The Coyote women will have just 10 players available this season because of injuries. USD opens its 20-12-13 season Nov. 9 at Cleveland State. The Coyotes’ home opener is set for Nov. 20 against Creighton.

LEFT: USD men’s basketball coach Dave Boots addresses the media. The Coyote men return one starter, Trevor Gruis, from a team that went 10-18 last season. Boots is entering his 25th season at the helm of the Coyotes, who open the season Nov. 14 at Wyoming’s Global Sports Showcase. The home opener for the Coyotes is Nov. 23 against Culver-Stockton.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

EPJ, Dakota Valley On To 8A Finals; Wagner Wins In 10A

NORTH SIOUX CITY — Haylee Erickson had 14 kills and Keeley Bertram added 10 as Elk Point-Jefferson swept Beresford 25-23, 25-13, 25-16 in the first round Tuesday of the District 8A Tournament in North Sioux City.

Kelsey Abbey added 20 digs in the win, while Hope Erickson had 20 set assists and Amy Zeller posted 10 digs.

For Beresford, Hayley Hansen had 11 blocks, Hannah Carnes had 10 blocks and Ashleigh Ochnser added five digs.

Elk Point-Jefferson and Dakota Valley will meet in the 8A championship Thursday night in North Sioux City.

BERESFORD	23	13	16
ELK POINT-JEFFERSON	25	25	25

Dakota Valley 3, Vermillion 0

NORTH SIOUX CITY — Jayde Bergmann posted eight kills and seven ace serves as Dakota Valley swept Vermillion 25-20, 25-11, 25-8 in District 8A action Tuesday in North Sioux City.

Hannah Bauer had seven digs for the Panthers (24-3), while Karissa Jensen had five kills and Lindsey Smith posted 22 set assists.

In the season-ending loss for the Tanagers (5-15), Sarah Hughes-Berheim had two aces and 11 digs, MacKenzie Huber had four kills, and Megan Olson and Josie Huber each added two aces.

VERMILLION (5-15).....	20	11	8
DAKOTA VALLEY (24-3).....	25	25	25

District 10A

Wagner 3, Parkston 1

WAGNER — Top-ranked Wagner got 12 kills from Kim Koupal in a 25-23, 25-14, 10-25, 25-23 first round District

10A victory over Parkston on Tuesday night in Wagner.

Nicole Weber added nine kills for the Red Raiders (28-3), while Sydney Breen had 21 digs and Jessa Doom posted 30 set assists.

For Parkston (12-16), Laura Weiss had eight kills, Sadie Dvorak added seven kills, Kenzie Lee posted 15 digs and Krista Radke keyed the offense with 10 set assists.

Wagner will host Platte-Geddes for the District 10A title on Thursday night.

PARKSTON (12-16).....	23	14	25	23
WAGNER (28-3).....	25	25	10	25

District 7B

Freeman 3, Canistota 0

FREEMAN — Freeman defeated Canistota in the opening round of the District 7B tournament in Freeman. The scores were 25-23, 25-21, 27-25.

Dina Soulek led the Freeman surge with 12 kills, six digs, and an ace. Grace Gering totaled 26 assists, two digs,

and two aces. Shelby Bauer contributed seven digs, four kills, and two aces. Shelby Jansen added six digs, five kills, and three aces.

There were no stats available for Canistota.

Freeman will advance in the District 7B to play Parker on Thursday at Freeman Academy.

FREEMAN	25	25	27
CANISTOTA	23	21	25

District 11B

Avon 3, Menno 0

AVON — Avon defeated Menno in three sets in the first round of the 11B Districts. The scores were 25-16, 25-21, 25-19.

The Lady Pirates were led by Chesney Nagel with six kills, six assists, two blocks, and two aces. Amanda Reiff

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VB: Wynot, Allen Win Sub-Districts

WISNER, Neb. — The Wynot Lady Blue Devils moved one win closer to the state tournament thanks to a 25-15, 25-22, 25-18 victory over Winside in the Sub-District D2-4 finals on Tuesday.

Maggie Schulte had eight kills and six blocks for Wynot (18-6), while Sam Wieseler added eight kills. Jenna Heine had 18 set assists, Erica Burbach posted 13 set assists and 20 digs, while Zoey Heimes recorded 23 digs.

Wynot will play Humphrey in the District D2-2 final on Thursday.

WINSIDE (16-13).....	15	22	18
WYNOT (18-6).....	25	25	25

Sub-District D1-6

Allen 3, Hartington 1

WAYNE, Neb. — The Allen Lady Eagles rallied to beat Hartington 21-25, 25-16, 25-23, 25-14 in the championship Tuesday of the Sub-District D1-6 Tournament in Wayne, Neb.

For Allen, Brittany Sullivan had 15 kills, while Lindsey Jones and Vanessa Klug each added 10 kills.

For Hartington, Michaela Dendinger had 15 kills, Shelby Hochstein posted 10 kills and 23 digs, while Courtney Hochstein added 28 set assists.

Allen improves to 19-12 and will face Howells-Dodge in the District D1-3 final. Hartington ends its season at 22-6.

Cedar Catholic Tops Wakefield For C2-7 Title

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

PONCA, Neb. — Hartington Cedar Catholic coach Adam Kuntz knew his squad would have its hands full as it took on Wakefield for the third time this season.

Wakefield did not disappoint, battling HCC hard before the top-seeded Cedar Catholic Trojans claimed a 25-17, 25-21, 26-28, 25-19 victory over the second-seeded Wakefield Trojans in the championship match of the Sub-District C2-7 Volleyball Tournament on Tuesday at Ponca High School.

Lexi Steffen led Cedar Catholic with a team-high 15 kills. Bailey Steffen, Katelyn Dickes and Siera Becker each had 10 kills. Karly Noecker added seven kills and Emily Schrempp had 51 assists for the balanced offensive attack.

With the number and level of talent on their offense, Cedar Catholic kept Wakefield at bay for much of the match.

“One of the things we’re very proud of is how many weapons we have,” Kuntz said. “During timeouts, we’ll tell (setter) Emily Schrempp who needs more sets. That way we keep their (opponents’) block off balance.”

Also for Cedar Catholic, Becker had 18 digs and Schrempp had 17 digs to lead the defense. Dickes finished with 13 digs and Kallie Leise



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Hartington Cedar Catholic players celebrate their Sub-District C2-7 title Thursday night with a 3-1 victory over Wakefield in a match played in Ponca, Neb.

added 10 digs in the win.

Lauren Lehmkuhl powered Wakefield, as the junior recorded 24 kills and 15 digs. Emily Puls finished with 10 kills. Sydney Rose recorded 33 assists and 12 digs. Tianna Gnat had three ace serves and Whitney Echtenkamp added a team-best 20 digs.

Cedar Catholic had won both previous meetings with the maroon-and-white Trojans, a 2-0 sweep in the Wakefield Invitational on Sept. 8 and a 2-1 win during a home triangular two weeks ago. But Kuntz knew it would be a tough test the third time around.

“They took a set off us last

time,” he said “I knew we had to come in and play well.”

Cedar Catholic got off to a fast start, taking the match’s first six points with strong net play from Lexi Steffen and Becker. A 6-0 run

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Summit League Hoops Tourney To Stay In S.F. Through 2017

SIOUX FALLS — The Summit League and the Sioux Falls Sports Authority have reached a long-term agreement that will keep The Summit League Basketball Championships in Sioux Falls through 2017. A new five-year contract, beginning in 2013, was approved by The Summit League’s Presidents Council. The agreement includes an option for five additional years that would keep the league’s premier event in South Dakota’s largest city from 2018-22.

Sioux Falls Arena will host The Summit League Championships for two more seasons before the event moves into the new 12,000-seat Denny Sanford Events Center in 2015.

The Summit League has held its marquee event in Sioux Falls since 2009 and attendance records have been set in each of the four years at the site. The top four total attendance figures, which combine the men’s and women’s tournament totals, have all been achieved in Sioux Falls. The 2012 Summit League Basketball Championships drew 40,269 spectators, topping the previous record, set in 2009, by nearly six thousand.

The 2013 tournament makes Sioux Falls the longest-running continuous host for The Summit League Basketball Championships. Springfield, Mo., hosted five consecutive men’s tournaments from 1984-87 and again in 1989 after the tournament was on a one-year hiatus.

Since moving to Sioux Falls in 2009, The Summit League Basketball Championships have set marks for tickets sales and corporate sponsorships and provided unprecedented television coverage. In all four years, every men’s and women’s game has been televised live, including the men’s championship games on ESPN2 and women’s title games on ESPNU. The 2009 championship games marked the first time that sporting events originating from South Dakota were televised live to a national audience.