

Zenner, Jackrabbits Look To Figure Out No. 1 Bison

BY JEREMY HOECK
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Evidence of how North Dakota State has dominated the Dakota Marker series of late with South Dakota State can be found in the output of Jackrabbit standout running back Zach Zenner.

In four games against the Bison, the senior All-American has carried the ball 44 times for 127 yards — an average of 2.9 yards per touch — with one touchdown.

How exactly has top-ranked North Dakota State (8-0, 4-0), which hosts the Jackrabbits on Saturday, been able to shut down the FCS active rushing leader?

For starters, the three-time de-

fending national champion Bison previously boasted seniors on the defensive line, according to head coach Chris Klieman.

"What we've done in the past isn't going to be a factor in what we do this week," Klieman said Tuesday when asked about NDSU's recent success with Zenner.

"He can take it the distance at any time on us."

It hasn't been just against Zenner that the Bison have controlled the Jackrabbits (5-3, 2-2) in winning the last five Dakota Marker showdowns.

No, NDSU has done that to many opposing stars during its 32-game winning streak.

And yet, the Bison don't talk

about the streak, Klieman said.

"Credit our seniors and upperclassmen for not letting our guys get caught up on all the hype on the street," he said, echoing the statements he made after last Saturday's win at the University of South Dakota. "We never talk about it up here."

"It gets brought up by the media more than it does anywhere around our locker room or practice field."

North Dakota State began its string of wins against SDSU back in 2011, with a 38-14 victory in Brookings. Then came two wins in 2012, including the FCS playoffs. And then last season, the Bison shut out the Jacks 20-0 in Brookings.

No matter the location of the Dakota Marker game, the Jacks can't be awed by their opponent, head coach John Stiegelmeier said Tuesday.

"They bring a confidence and a tradition," he said. "When they walk on the field, you're bred and you have this confidence; this spirit, and then the Fargodome adds to that."

"We're going to have to eliminate the static."

The Jackrabbits will again be without the services of wide receiver Jason Schneider, as well as quarterback Austin Sumner — Stiegelmeier said Sumner will make the trip, but will be a "spectator."

"You focus on what you talk about, what you emphasize," Stiegelmeier said. "We don't even talk about who we don't have, we talk about what we can control, and that's our preparation."

The challenge for SDSU is not simply to upset the top-ranked team in the nation, but to keep its playoff hopes alive — four losses is unlikely to send the Jacks to the post-season.

"We're going to rise up to the challenge and see if we can play our best football," Stiegelmeier said.

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

Pirates Roll To Open Title Defense



Avon's Devin Tolsma, left, breaks away for one of his seven touchdown runs on the night as the Pirates rolled past Burke-South Central 68-30. Tolsma finished with 448 yards and seven touchdowns.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Gazelles Down Washington To End Regular Season At 8-12

SIOUX FALLS — After struggling to win five-set matches all season long, the Yankton Gazelles put one together at the right time — against a District 2AA opponent in the final match of the regular season.

Yankton held off Sioux Falls Washington 25-22, 25-15, 21-25, 19-25, 15-13, in prep volleyball action on Tuesday in Sioux Falls. Yankton finished the regular season with an 8-12 record, and will likely travel to Brandon Valley (9-11) to open the District 2AA Tournament on Tuesday, Nov. 4. Official district pairings will be announced later this week.

"We hadn't been overly successful in the fifth set," said Yankton head coach Tiffany Beste. The Gazelles had been 1-7 in five-set matches entering Tuesday's match. "This one was a big one tonight. Getting one here in our last match will hopefully carry over into the post-season."

Beste said the difference for the Gazelles was confidence.

"Before the fifth set started, we talked about what we did to win two sets and what we did to lose two. They were playing not to lose," she said. "We told them they needed to be aggressive and stay confident. They continued to play to win throughout the fifth set, even when they were down."

Becky Frick had 27 kills, 16 digs and four blocks to lead Yankton. Sophie Drotzmann and Josie Saylor had five kills each, with Drotzmann recording five blocks and Saylor four. Paige Thiemann had 23 assists, Haley Mines had 23 digs and Charlotte Ekeren had 10 digs and three ace serves in the victory.

Yankton now waits for the final district pairings to be announced, which could happen as early as today (Wednesday), since all five teams have completed their regular seasons. The Gazelles entered the evening as the third seed, and all four other teams in the tightly-contested district lost on Tuesday.

"We've been watching the points all year. The girls were well aware of where we were at," Beste said. "We know what tonight meant, that we should have to play in the play-in match. The play-in is a challenging game, because

Tolsma, Avon Torches B-SC

BY VANCE JANAK
P&D Correspondent

AVON — The Avon Pirates used a strong first quarter and an eight-touchdown performance from Devin Tolsma to defeat Burke-South Central 68-30 in the opening round of the Class 9B playoffs.

The defending 9B state champion Pirates (7-2) advance to Monday's quarterfinal round while the Cougars, who fell to Avon 76-27 on Aug. 29, finish the season 4-5.

On a chilly Tuesday night, Avon took advantage of several short fields in the first quarter to outscore Burke-South Central 30-6 in the opening period. That early advantage helped the Pirates hold off a resilient S-BC squad. Although the Cougars lacked size, they countered with a speedy spread offense — featuring elusive quarterback Zach Sebern — that didn't allow Avon to completely put the game out of reach until midway through the third quarter.

The Cougars' biggest issue, though, was stopping Tolsma. The 5-foot-9, 185-pound senior was impressive

throughout, finishing with seven rushing touchdowns and 468 yards on 30 carries while also hauling in a 59-yard touchdown reception from senior quarterback Logan Mudder.

"He's been playing great all year long," Avon coach Tom Culver said of Tolsma. "He's probably over 1,600 or 1,700 yards for the season. He's really come on this year."

"And our offensive line has done a great job, and he just explodes through holes. If there's a little crack, he's gone."

Tolsma scored on runs of 35, 2, 32 and 25-yards in the first quarter. Then came a 59-yard touchdown pass from Mudder before Tolsma ended the opening half with scoring runs of 59 and 54-yards.

His final touchdown was a 58-yard run that answered the Cougars' score to start the second half.

"That's our bread-and-butter, running the ball," Tolsma said. "The line was working on make a hole for me, and I've just got to run the ball hard. If they block for me, the

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Parkston Rolls Past Lead-Deadwood 56-0



Parkston's Wes Dvorak runs untouched into the endzone during their Class 11B football playoff game on Tuesday in Parkston. Dvorak found the endzone on all six of his carries, finishing with 119 yards in a 56-0 rout of the Goldiggers.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

BY BEN HEGGE
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PARKSTON — The top ranked Parkston Trojans opened up the 2014 Class 11B playoffs in styling fashion Tuesday night.

The Trojans defeated the Lead-Deadwood Goldiggers by a score of 56-0. Defensively, Parkston held the Goldiggers to just 34 total yards.

Offensively for Parkston, it was the Weslee Dvorak show. Dvorak ran for 119 yards and scored touchdowns on all six of his carries.

"I just wanted to run hard and follow my blockers," said Dvorak. "I give all the credit to my offensive line. They created huge wholes for me to run through."

Parkston finished the game with 260 yards of total offense. The Trojans ran just 15 plays, eight of them resulting in touchdowns.

"I though we played hard and did the little things right tonight," said Parkston head coach Eric Norden. "We are just taking things one game at a time and focus on what is coming up next."

The Trojans (9-0) were looking to use the momentum created in Tuesday's game to make another playoff push this season.

"As a team, we could not be more ex-

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Class 9A: Unbeaten Cubs Overpowers Gayville-Volin

BY JEREMY HOECK
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ALCESTER — With the game still very much in question, the undefeated Alcester-Hudson Cubs converted what would eventually be the turning point.

Up 12-7 late in the second quarter, the Cubs scored on an 8-yard touchdown with zero seconds on the clock to take a 20-7 lead into the half-time break.

From there, Alcester-Hudson dominated Gayville-Volin on the way to a 48-7 rout in Class 9A first-round playoff action Tuesday night in Alcester.

As the dust settled on the one-sided affair, the Cubs (9-0) looked back on that play like their season depended on it.

"That really sparked us," said senior back Colin Walth, who rushed for 283 yards and three touchdowns.

"We knew if we stopped

them and scored, we could take control of the game."

And that's exactly what Alcester-Hudson did.

Following a Raiders punt to start the third quarter, Walth scored on a 50-yard run and the Cubs kept it rolling — scoring the game's final 36 points.

The biggest, though, may have been that 8-yard touchdown from quarterback Grant Johnson to Zach Ronning just before halftime.

"With us running spread, we can go no huddle, and that's something we practice, trying to score quickly before half," Cubs coach Brian Haak said.

"If we have some time, we always want to do that."

The Raiders, who finish the season 7-2 with their first playoff appearance since 2008, got within 12-7 late in the second quarter on a 9-yard touchdown pass from Grant Rice to C.J. Lee.

They couldn't, however,

take that lead into halftime.

"That was a nice swing of momentum for them," Gayville-Volin coach Patrick Beeman said. "We talked with the kids at half about it, about not letting it trickle into the second (half)."

"But give them (A-H) credit, they let it."

Early in the fourth quarter, up 28-7, the Cubs got a 27-yard touchdown run from Johnson. Logan McConnell later scored on a 19-yard run and Ronning closed the scoring with an interception return for a touchdown with 2:37 remaining.

From there, the Cubs could officially celebrate their first-round victory for a second consecutive season.

"It feels good," Walth said. "We've come up short a few years now, but last year was a learning year for us."

"It helped us prepare."

The seven seniors for the

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Alcester-Hudson defender Grant Johnson, right, tries to bring down Gayville-Volin running back Alec Barta during their Class 9A first-round game Tuesday night in Alcester.

JEREMY HOECK/P&D