

# Chargers Claim Region 2A Title

## Golf: Dakota Valley's Williams Takes Medalist Honors

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DAKOTA DUNES — In a region in which the top teams have battled back and forth all season, the region championship fittingly came down to a playoff.

Sioux Falls Christian beat Harrisburg in a one-hole team playoff to claim the Region 2A Boys' Golf Tournament, held on Monday at Two Rivers Golf Course in Dakota Dunes.

Both the Chargers and Tigers shot 316 on the day, but Sioux Falls Christian held the edge when the teams stepped back on the course to play Hole No. 1 to break the tie.

"Every one of our kids played extremely well," said Chargers head coach Mike Schouten. "We knew it would be tight, but our guys stepped up their play."

West Central earned the third automatic qualifying spot from the region, finishing just two strokes off the pace at 318. Dakota Valley, which finished fourth at 326, qualified four golfers and will compete as a team on Oct. 1-2 at Spearfish Canyon Golf Course.

Individual honors were equally close, as Dakota Valley sophomore Ben Williams shot a 2-over 72 to finish one stroke ahead of Christian's Lee Wynja and two shots up on West Central's Riley Danielson.

Williams felt his mid-range game helped spur him on to the title.

"I was hitting my irons really well today," he said. "I was driving the ball fairly well. My putting wasn't the best, but it was decent."

Williams was excited about the big victory on his home course.

"It was nice to win this one," he said. "I knew there would be a lot of competition here."

The sophomore hopes his performance Monday will help spur him on to success next week at state.

"I think it helps with state, when there will be more competition," he said. "It gives me some confidence for it."

Schouten was pleased with his sophomore golfer, Wynja, as well.

### Trojans Win 3A

MITCHELL — The Parkston Trojans ran away with the team title at the Region 3A Boys' Golf Tournament, held Monday at Mitchell's Lakeview Golf Course.

Parkston finished at 321, 25 strokes better than Chamberlain. Mitchell Christian claimed the third team spot from the region, finishing at 359.

Chamberlain's Coleman Caldwell shot a 72 to earn medalist honors, one stroke better than Parkston's Jake Weber. Mitchell Christian's Adam Bleeker finished third at 75.

Among the players earning state berths in the event were Bon Homme's Alec Johnson (90) and Lincoln Stoeber (93).

"I'm happy for Lee," the Chargers coach said. "He would tell you that he's been a bit disappointed with his play, but we haven't been. He shot a very good score today."

Schouten hopes the high-pressure victory Monday will help the Chargers make another run at state. The Chargers finished fourth last year, but won the previous three state titles.

"I expect this will be a big confidence boost," he said. "When you compete with teams like West Central and Harrisburg, to win gives you that much more confidence. It will be huge going into next week."

Elk Point-Jefferson will send two golfers to Spearfish, senior Sam Viereck (83) and sophomore Brandon Koupal (82). Vermillion sophomore Carter Andre (82) and Beresford junior Kory Diefendorf (83) are also qualified for state.

The 28 individual qualifiers, counting the five each from Christian, Harrisburg and West Central, make up a decidedly young group. The only senior in the top 12 was the Chargers' Brett Korn, who tied for tenth. Only four other seniors will represent Region 2A at state.

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JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Dakota Valley's Ben Williams chips onto the green on Hole No. 18 during the Region 2A Boys' Golf Tournament on Monday at Two Rivers Golf Course at Dakota Dunes. Williams shot a 2-over 72 to earn individual medalist honors, one stroke better than Sioux Falls Christian's Lee Wynja. Wynja helped lead the Chargers to a team victory, beating Harrisburg in a playoff.

## Martinez Leads Big Ten In Passing Efficiency

BY ERIC OLSON  
AP Sports Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Wisconsin figures to see a much different Taylor Martinez on Saturday than the guy they saw a year ago.

Martinez will go into the No. 22 Cornhuskers' Big Ten opener first in the conference and 10th in the nation in passing efficiency. Last October, Martinez's three mid-game interceptions turned a close game into a Wisconsin rout.

Martinez said Monday that the long night in Madison was the low point of his career. He spent the off-season trying to become a sharper passer, focusing on his footwork, his throwing motion — and his decision-making. Through four games, the third-year starter has completed 71 percent of his passes for an average of 220 yards a game, and he's thrown nine touchdowns and one interception.

"The receivers and tight ends and running backs, pretty much the whole offense, have done a great job for me," Martinez said. "I've been getting them the ball and they've made some yards."

At a comparable point last season, Martinez was hitting 51 percent, with four TDs and two interceptions. He finished the year at 56 percent, with 13 TDs and eight interceptions.

Coach Bo Pelini said Martinez's

improvement in the Huskers' spread-option offense is no surprise.

"People snickered when I said I think Taylor is going to make a huge jump this year, and he has," Pelini said. "I saw it through the spring. I saw it in practice through fall camp, and he just needs to stay on the same track. If he keeps playing the way he is — and we expect him to — it makes our offense pretty hard to stop."

The true measure of Martinez's improvement is his efficiency rating. The rating is based on an NCAA formula that attempts to objectively evaluate passers, regardless of their team's style of offense, by taking into account completion percentage, yards per pass, touchdowns per pass and interceptions per pass.

For Martinez, the computer spit out a rating of 180.9, well ahead of his 126.5 last season. When the formula was established in the 1970s, a rating of 100 was considered average. With the more sophisticated passing offenses of the 21st century, a 100 is something less than mediocre.

Martinez's passing numbers have been put up against less-than-stellar defenses. He struggled in the second half in the Huskers' biggest game to date, the 36-30 loss at UCLA. Martinez was 13 for 17 in the first half against the Bruins, but he tried to force plays in the second half and was 4 for 14 with an inter-

ception.

Martinez occasionally has slipped back into his old habit of throwing off his back foot and behind receivers. Mostly, his accuracy has been spot-on on short and intermediate passes, and his throws have more zip.

"I've said numerous times before that I don't really care about the throwing motion," running back Rex Burkhead said. "As long as he's getting it to the receiver, that's fine with me. He's having a great start to the year. Hopefully that will continue, and I think it will."

Wisconsin is 10th in the Big Ten and 83rd nationally in pass defense. The Badgers have given up a league-high eight touchdown passes and are the only defense in the conference without an interception.

Still, the level of competition and the stakes start going up this week, so it won't be easy for Martinez to keep his passing numbers as high. If he does, he'll have a shot to break the school-record passer rating of 177.3 set by Gerry Gdowski in Tom Osborne's triple-option offense in 1989.

Pelini said Martinez's numbers could be even better than what they are.

"We've actually pulled back the reins on him in a few games," Pelini said. "I don't think we've seen the best of Taylor yet."

## Rustlers Outgun Menno 3-0

ETHAN — The Ethan Rustlers moved to 11-7 on the season by sweeping Menno 25-14, 25-11, 25-13 in high school volleyball action Monday night in Ethan.

Rachel Hawkins and Aliea Kretschmer-Webster each had five kills in the win, while Anna Mueller added four kills and Holly Lindeman posted 18 set assists.

In the loss for Menno (1-11), Kylee Kessler and Brittany Haberman both pounded home three kills, while Courtney Schaeffer added four set assists and five digs. Christina Herrboldt led the defense with six digs.

On Thursday, Ethan visits Freeman and Menno hosts Bon Homme.

Menno (1-11)	14	11	13
Ethan (11-7)	25	25	25

### Niobrara-Verdigre 3, Santee 0

NIORBARA, Neb. — Keyed by 27 ace serves and 19 kills, the Niobrara-Verdigre Cougars swept Santee 25-11, 25-7, 25-5 in volleyball action Monday night.

McKayla Eisenhauer recorded three kills and eight aces, while Brittany Eisenhauer added three kills, and Shelby McCardle posted eight set assists and six

aces. Reagan Larsen led the defense with six digs.

No stats were reported for Santee (1-11), which hosts Omaha Nation on Thursday.

Niobrara-Verdigre (2-8) plays Wausa and Clearwater-Orchard in a triangular Thursday at Clearwater-Orchard.

Santee (1-11)	11	7	5
Niobrara-Verdigre (2-8)	25	25	25

### Mt. Vernon-Plankinton 3, Dakota Christian 2

CORSICA — Mount Vernon-Plankinton survived a surge from Dakota Christian, beating the Cadets 25-20, 17-25, 26-24, 17-25, 15-13 in prep volleyball action on Monday.

Jordan Achteberg and Megan Bultsma had 10 kills each, and Mikayla Weiss and Dani Stolz had nine kills each for MVP. Achteberg and Stolz had three blocks each. Weiss had 32 assists, Alisha Northrup had five ace serves and Kallyn Prangley had 20 digs in the win.

For Dakota Christian, Amber Baan Hofman led the way with nine kills and 12 digs. Jessica Raeningk posted seven kills and 15 digs. Brooklyn Vander Pol had

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# Softball: Gazelles Split With Sioux Falls O'Gorman

The Yankton Gazelles earned a double-header split with Sioux Falls O'Gorman in girls' softball action on Monday at Sertoma Park, dropping the opener 3-1 before winning the nightcap 6-5.

O'Gorman rallied from an early 1-0 deficit to take the opener.

McKynze Hansen went 2-3 with a double and two runs scored to lead O'Gorman.

Jessica Wirth had a triple, Andi Sprakel doubled and Abby Schulte had a hit and a RBI to lead Yankton. Karlee Kozak scored the lone Yankton run. Kayln Peterka and Courtney Erickson added hits for Yankton.

Liby Koob picked up the win. Jaclyn Arens took the loss.

Yankton jumped out to a 6-2 lead and held on to win the nightcap.

Wirth and Schulte each went 2-3 with a triple, a RBI and a run scored for Yankton. Sprakel also had a triple, a RBI and a run scored. Tayler Hutchison had a triple and two RBI in the win.

Savannah Penning went 2-3 for O'Gorman. Arens struck out four to pick up the win. Haley Herberger took the loss.

Yankton plays in the Eastern South Dakota Conference Tournament on Saturday in Watertown.

### Junior Varsity

#### Yankton 7-11, O'Gorman 1-3

The Yankton Gazelles swept Sioux Falls O'Gorman in junior varsity girls' softball action on Monday at Sertoma Park.

The wins marked the end of the regular season for the junior Gazelles. Yankton plays in the state JV tournament, beginning Friday in Sioux Falls.

In the opener, Madison Dangler struck out 11 batters as Yankton won the opener 7-1.

Bailey Kortan and Danielle Schmidt had two hits each, and Makayla Trenhaile had a double to lead Yankton. Ellen Anderson, Alysia Ruzicka and Darian Tramp added hits in the win.

In the nightcap, Yankton rolled to an 11-3 decision.

Kortan and Schmidt had two hits apiece for Yankton. Dangler, Trenhaile and Ruzicka had doubles. Anderson and Tramp added hits.

Anderson struck out six in the five-inning contest for the win.



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Yankton's Jessica Wirth lines a triple to center field during the first game of Monday night's girls' club softball doubleheader against Sioux Falls O'Gorman at Sertoma Park.

## USD Volleyball Team Happy With 'The Den'

BY JEREMY HOECK  
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VERMILLION — With the football team on the road, the focus of the DakotaDome last weekend centered around something called "The Den."

In full, it is the new home for the University of South Dakota volleyball team.

Dome maintenance and operations personnel spent the summer transforming the west balcony of the dome from a basketball practice court to a fully-functioning, NCAA-approved Division I volleyball court. And following matches Friday night and Sunday afternoon, the report card is in.

"This setup is fantastic. The crowd is close and they're more involved," USD coach Matt Houk said Sunday after his team lost to Oakland in four sets. "That's what we wanted; it's really important."

"We couldn't be happier with having our own place."

There were multiple obstacles to overcome in moving volleyball matches from the dome football field to the upstairs balcony, however, according to James Bandy, USD's associate athletic director for Internal Operations.

First was ensuring that there would be space for spectators, students, both teams, an official's scoring table, not to mention other necessities like a new sound system and a scoreboard. The goal all along, Bandy said Monday, was to make that area more fan friendly.

"Obviously it's a much tighter fit than the old court on the football field, but I think it creates a much more competitive environment for both teams," Bandy said. "You could hear the noise and the sound. It just makes for a better experience."

Last Friday night's Summit League match against Fort Wayne — won by visitors 3-1 — brought with it a loud and involved crowd, specifically on the student bleachers behind the north end of the court. A smaller set of bleachers on the south end were nearly full, as were the three-row bleachers along the west sideline.

"It was louder than we've ever played in front of at home," USD sophomore Kendall Kritenbrink said. "We wanted our fans to be able to come support us up close."

"When you can actually practice on your game court, it's awesome, too."

Beyond simply wanting to involve the students, the move brought with it other logistical hurdles, Bandy said.

To comply with building and fire codes, the maximum number of people who can be upstairs for matches is 350. That means ticket officials at the front entrances literally have to use a counter to keep track of spectators, fans and parents — and that number includes both teams, players, officials and gameday workers.

There also needed to be a six-foot wide path between the two exits to the main DakotaDome floor level, and that area happened to be behind the team benches and scorer's table.

"It's not a perfect setup for everybody. We'd like a little more space for media and bleacher seating on the one side, but we've got certain requirements we have to satisfy," Bandy said. "It's a good fix; a much better one than last year."

Last year provided a good example of what USD officials will have to prepare for in the biggest home match of the year. Rival South Dakota State comes to the DakotaDome on Nov. 2, a match Bandy said will take "advance planning" to ensure that the 350 number satisfies everyone.

Whoever shows up at "The Den" will find out quickly that a confined space means volleyballs fly into the stands on all four sides, Bandy joked.

"For good or bad, it forces the spectators to be more intuned with the game," he said. "You want to make sure you don't get smoked by a ball."

"And really, there's not a bad seat in the house."

Having fans closer to the action means the USD marketing and promotions staff, led by Neal Bendesky, can plan accordingly, Bandy said.

"It's much easier for Neal to execute his ideas with music and contests, with that compact environment," Bandy said. "Sometimes they would play the fight song and the students got into it."

The Coyotes, now 7-8 overall and 1-3 in the Summit League, return home Saturday for a 7 p.m. conference match against Kansas City.

"The fans are so close to you, it helps us build off their energy, when they're into the matches," USD junior setter Tori Kroll said. "And I love that we can actually hear them now. Before, we'd have to squint to see them way up there."

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