

Coyotes ‘Excited’ To Prove Themselves In MVFC

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — Does beginning Missouri Valley Football Conference action mean the season unofficially starts today (Saturday) for USD?

In the sense that league teams are now on a relatively even playing field, yes, said USD head coach Joe Glenn

“What’s nice about it is teams quit playing Little Sisters of the Poor, teams quit playing Big Ten or Big 12 teams,” said Glenn, whose team plays at 2-2 Western Illinois today at 3 p.m. in Macomb, Ill.

“Now we’re all playing against somebody with the same amount of scholarships. You’re playing like schools.”

also

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Conference games, though, weren’t kind last year to the Coyotes (1-2), who were winless in eight MVFC contests a year ago.

Picked last in the pre-season poll for 2013, USD has all the motivation it needs, according to senior tight end Tyler Wilhelm.

“This is the Mo Valley, the biggest conference in the FCS; it’s why we all came here,” Wilhelm said after a practice this week.

“The fact that we were picked last again, we’re just that much more ex-

cited to get in and prove ourselves.”

By every measurable factor aside from wins, the Coyotes at least showed they could compete in the MVFC. Five of those eight losses a year ago came by a touchdown or less — four by a field goal.

Calling it “getting the monkey off our back,” USD sophomore receiver Nick Meyer pointed out that the Coyotes are tired of talking about close losses.

“We’ve been waiting for that first win for a while now, and we’re ready to get that one this weekend,” Meyer said. “Hopefully it happens.”

Aside from simply starting MVFC action, the Coyotes were concerned this week with offensive consistency, Glenn said.

In last Saturday’s 22-16 loss at nationally-ranked Northern Arizona, USD was held to seven yards of offense in the first half, without a first down until the third quarter and scoreless until the fourth.

Among the concerns in Arizona was a 84-yard rushing performance by the Coyotes. Yes there will be some “tweaks” to today’s gameplan, but the bread and butter remains the same, Glenn said.

“But we still want to run the ball,” he said. “We can’t just throw everything we’ve worked on under the bus, but we can’t wait a half to get going.”

USD’s passing game, which ranks

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No. 1 Bison, No. 6 Jacks Ready For Showdown

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

BROOKINGS (AP) — The annual Dakota Marker game between North Dakota State and South Dakota State typically shows up on the October or November schedule with conference titles and playoff berths on the line.

This year’s battle arrives early and the timing couldn’t be better for South Dakota State (3-1) after the Jackrabbits’ 59-20 loss last week to Nebraska.

“For us, it’s great medicine right now because we got our tails whipped at Nebraska,” said South Dakota State coach John Stiegelmeier. “But we can’t dwell on that with the No. 1 team in America coming to town.”

The top-ranked Bison (3-0) are coming off a 51-0 win over Delaware State during a whirlwind week dominated by a visit from ESPN’s College GameDay. The two-time defending FCS champion Bison have won 13 straight on the road, but North Dakota State coach Craig Bohl said leaving Coughlan Field with a W is always a “tough task.”

The sixth-ranked Jackrabbits are on a nine-game home winning streak, with the last loss coming to the Bison in October 2011.

“Our guys are going to need to be ready to handle adversity,” said Bohl, who became North Dakota State’s all-time winningest coach with his 92nd career victory last Saturday. “Their fans are rowdy and they draw well, so we’ll need to be ready to control the things we can control to play well.”

North Dakota State leads the Dakota Marker series 5-4, holding on to the traveling trophy for the past four years. The Bison edged South Dakota State 20-17 in Fargo on Nov. 10, 2012, then beat the Jackrabbits again three weeks later in the second round of the FCS playoffs 28-3.

Stiegelmeier said for the Jackrabbits to have a chance in the teams’ Missouri Valley Football Conference opener, they’ll need to stop the run and limit mistakes.

“You need to be patient and not make mistakes, because they are very, very good,” Stiegelmeier said. “They’re very fast. You can’t get them out of position.”

Here are five things to watch in Saturday’s game:

ZZ TOPS: South Dakota State running back Zach Zenner has been barreling over defenses so far this year, leading the FCS through four games with 742 rushing yards and averaging 185.5 per game. Stiegelmeier said Zenner’s been getting his yards and a maturing offensive line has been doing a great job up front. Bohl said containing the Zenner will be a “tall order.”

MANY HAPPY RETURNS:

Bucks Conquer Knights

Yankton Beats O’G For First Time Since 2000

BY JEREMY HOECK
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In fell swoop, the Yankton Bucks bounced back from consecutive losses, picked up a much-needed win for post-season and successfully unveiled a new — but old — offensive look.

The fact that the victim was long-time rival Sioux Falls O’Gorman made Friday night’s 24-14 homecoming win at Crane-Youngworth Field even sweeter.

“That’s huge for us,” said Yankton’s junior quarterback Brady Hale. “Hopefully this starts the momentum; starts the standard again of winning.”

Added head coach Arlin Likness, after making his way through the post-game celebration on the field, “This is a great win for us.”

Yankton (2-3), facing close to a must-win to keep its playoff hopes alive, went back to an old offensive trick — last used in 2002 — with immediate results.

The look: All three quarterbacks on the field at the same time, Hale in the shotgun. Running back behind him. Three-man line, with a tackle and receiver split out wide. Other quarterback behind them.

The output: Touchdowns on the first three drives.

“We were just trying to spread them out, they’re



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton's Reid Sawatzke escapes an O'Gorman defender for a touchdown in the first minute of their game on Friday at Yankton's Crane-Youngworth Field.

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Pheasants Stay Unbeaten; Cubs, Razorbacks Fall

Football: Lightning Sidelines Several Area Teams

PARKER — Eric Hunstad rushed for 125 yards and three touchdowns Friday night, leading the Parker Pheasants in a 26-14 prep football win against the Corsica-Stickney Jaguars in Parker.

Hunstad also passed for 30 yards in the win, with Jake Anderson rushing for 113 yards. Payton Jensen had 8.5 tackles.

Eli Van Roekel rushed for 86 yards for the Jaguars, while Brian Joachim had 8.5 tackles and Kardell Boomsma had eight tackles.

Corisca hosts Platte-Geddes-Dakota Christian in Stick-

ney Friday, while the Pheasants host Baltic.

CORSICA-STICKNEY (3-1) 0 0 0 14 — 14
PARKER (4-0) 6 8 6 6 — 26

Garretson 42, Alcester-Hudson 20

ALCESTER — Austin Matthiesen rushed for 183 yards and three touchdowns Friday night to lead the Garretson Blue Dragons in a 42-20 victory against Alcester-Hudson Cubs in Alcester.

Mattiesen also had 20 yards receiving, while Jesse Brookhouse rushed for 130 yards and two touchdowns. Brookhouse also had 20 yards passing in the win. Matt Johnson had six tackles.

Colin Walth had 81 yards receiving for the Cubs, as well as 11.5 touchdowns. Grant Johnson rushed for 66 yards and one touchdown, with Zachary Ronning rushing for 40 yards. Erik Barnes had

eight tackles on the night.

Alcester-Hudson hits the road to face Viborg-Hurley Friday, while the Blue Dragons host Parker.

GARRETSON (4-0) 6 14 6 16 — 42
ALCESTER-HUDSON (4-1) 0 0 6 14 — 20

Cedar Catholic 26, Crofton 13

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Cedar Catholic defeated Crofton 26-13 behind 351 total yards of offense.

There were no individual stats in the contest for Cedar Catholic (4-0).

Crofton (3-1) put up a total of 122 yards, behind 40 of them from Evan Woodman. Woodman added nine tackles in the contest.

Cedar Catholic will host undefeated Lutheran High North-East on Friday. Crofton will host Homer on Friday as well.

CEDAR CATHOLIC (4-0) 7 6 7 7 — 26
CROFTON (3-1) 0 0 7 7 — 13

Bloomfield 36, Neligh Oakdale 6

NELIGH, Neb. — The Bloomfield Bees beat the Neligh Oakdale Warriors 36-6 in football action Friday.

In the win for the Bees, Cody Beckmann had 29 carries for 148 yards and made three touchdowns. Trent Johnson had 10 carries for 31 yards making one touchdown and had 10 tackles.

BLOOMFIELD (4-0) 8 6 14 8 — 36
NELIGH OAKDALE (1-3) 0 0 6 — 6

Viborg-Hurley 43, Centerville 14

CENTERVILLE — Rusten Anderson rushed for 201 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Viborg-Hurley Cougars in a 43-14 win against the Centerville Tornados Friday night in Centerville.

Jack Heuther added 94 rushing yards and 84 yards passing in the win, while Dakota Flint had 48 yards receiving. An-

dersen also had 30 yards receiving.

Walker Kropuenske had 10 tackles.

Seamus O'Malley put up 90 yards rushing for the Tornados, as well as 83 yards passing. Trent Sikkink rushed for 53 yards. Josh Deraad had 33 yards receiving and one touchdown.

Centerville travels to face Irene-Wakonda in Irene Friday, while the Cougars host Alcester-Hudson in Viborg.

VIBORG-HURLEY (2-2) 14 0 14 15 — 43
CENTERVILLE (1-3) 8 6 0 0 — 14

Mount Vernon-Plank 27, Freeman 6

FREEMAN — Mount Vernon-Plankton's Cote Hinker rushed for 183 yards and two touchdowns in the two-quarter football matchup against the Freeman Flyers Friday night in Freeman.

Eric Denning rushed for a total of 50 yards and one touchdown in the win for

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Cassel To Start Against Steelers

LONDON (AP) — Matt Cassel will get a chance to steer the Minnesota Vikings to their first win of the season — and maybe put himself in position for a more regular role.

Cassel will replace injured starter Christian Ponder at quarterback against the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday at Wembley Stadium. The Vikings (0-3) ruled out Ponder on Friday with a fractured rib sustained in last week-end's 31-27 loss to the Cleveland Browns.

“We worked with Matt in the mindset that this was a possibility, so I think we're prepared in that way,” coach Leslie Frazier said. “He’s been in this role before. His veteran presence — you can feel it. So there was no shock this week as he got more and more reps. I think (the team) will handle it the right way.”

Cassel hasn’t played a down this season since signing a two-year deal with the Vikings in the offseason. The former New England Patriot threw six touchdowns and 12 interceptions in nine games for the 2-14 Chiefs last season.

“I’ve been preparing for this and I feel like I’m ready to go,” Cassel said. “I feel comfortable with this offense. I’m excited about it. That’s what you prepare for as a backup.”

Frazier is helping Cassel will go out at Wembley and make a statement.

“I’m hoping that he shines, but I don’t foresee a quarterback controversy,” Frazier said. “We want him to play lights out and have the best game of his NFL career on Sunday.”

If Cassel does shine, it could leave Frazier with a decision on who to start against the Carolina Panthers on Oct. 13 after the bye week.

Ponder, a third-year pro, has struggled this season, throwing two touchdowns and five interceptions for a 65.9 passer rating. He also has lost two fumbles.

Ponder had taken the majority of snaps in practice Thursday and looked determined to play Sunday.

“We just felt like it was, from a medical standpoint, too risky to put him out there to take a hit,” Frazier said. “He’s a tough guy but it probably wouldn’t be wise to put him out in that situation.”

“He’s a competitive guy and he’s played through some tough injuries here. He wanted to play,” Frazier said. “This is something you don’t know how many times you’ll get a chance to play in a game like this, but it’s probably wise since we have a bye coming up, so he understands.”

Also ruled out for the Vikings are cornerback Chris Cook (groin), safety Jamarca Sanford (hamstring), and tight end Rhett Ellison (knee).

USD Sweeps ‘Dons In Summit League Opener

VERMILLION — After a late-season surge left the University of South Dakota volleyball team just short of the Summit League Tournament a year ago, the Coyotes have picked up where they left off, sweeping defending league champion Fort Wayne 25-18, 26-24, 25-22 in the league opener for both squads.

Kendall Krittenbrink posted a match-high 17 kills and had 11 digs and four blocks (1 solo) to lead USD (10-6, 1-0 Summit). Kelsey Biltorf had nine kills and three blocks (1 solo). Tori Kroll had team-bests of 34 assists and 12 digs. Melissa Firtko had six blocks (1 solo) and Sydney Dimke had four assisted blocks in the win.

Emily Spencer led Fort Wayne (7-9, 0-1) with 12 kills and 13 digs. Madison Spence had 27 assists. Sarah Heckman had seven blocks (2 solo).

USD remains at home, facing IUPUI on Sunday. Start time is 1 p.m.

Mount Marty 3, York 1

YORK, Neb. — The Mount Marty Lancers are now 9-9 this season beating York College in four sets 25-23, 21-25, 25-7, 25-23 in volleyball action Friday.

In the win for the Lancers, Sierra Kloth led the team with 15 kills. Lexie Branson had nine kills and seven. Caitlyn Illg had 40 assists for the game and Courtney Miller made five digs.

The Lancers play Doane College in Great Plains Athletic Conference action today (Saturday) at 5 p.m.



DAVID LIAS/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK

South Dakota's Audrey Reeg, 4, attacks the ball during the Coyotes' Summit League volleyball opener against defending league champ Fort Wayne on Friday at the Coyote Den in the DakotaDome. USD swept the Mastadons 3-0.