

MMC Aims To Build On '14 Finish

Lancer Women Targeting National Berth

BY MICHAEL HAMMOND
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The Mount Marty College cross country teams look to improve their finish in the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC).

"We had a pretty good season last year," coach Randy Fischer said. "We hope to improve this year and possibly have a couple of national qualifiers."

The Mount Marty women's team finished seventh in the GPAC Championship in 2014 with their top finisher being Jordyn Hudelson in 16th place. The team is made up of 13 runners led by the seniors and captains Hudelson and Miranda Pribil, who will have to help along the seven freshmen joining the team. Junior Mandy O'Malley, 32nd in GPAC a year ago, and sophomore Kelsey Sutura, who has improved according to

Fischer, look to be key contributors to the team as well.

"There are eight or nine girls that I think are going to help us out," Fischer said. "We would like the team to qualify nationally, which hasn't been done before."

"We are excited for the challenge."

On the men's side Mount Marty finished 10th in the GPAC a year ago and its highest finisher was Gage Blaschke in 50th. Blaschke, a senior, will be the top runner for Mount Marty this year.

"For the men's team we would like to move up in the conference and hope to peak by conference time," Fischer said. "We have some pretty good freshmen coming in and senior Vincent Raia will add some leadership."

Sophomores Christian Petrich and Kyle Pardun will join Blaschke as the top runners on the team, while fresh-

men Dustin Heiden (Jackson, Minnesota), Matt Jirele (Worthington, Minnesota) and Nick Wixon (Centerville) will try to contribute in their first year.

The key to Mount Marty achieving its goals will be to stay healthy and work hard.

"The biggest thing is stay healthy and keep consistency," Fischer said. "We have a lot of positive attitudes and hard workers on this team."

"If we can keep working as a team our goals will fall into play for us."

Mount Marty will open the season on Sept. 4 in Sioux Falls at the Augustana College Twilight. They will then compete in Madison, Crete, Nebraska, and Sioux City, Iowa, before hosting the Mount Marty Invite on Oct. 24. The 2015 GPAC Meet will be on Nov. 7 in Crete, Nebraska.

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P&D FILE PHOTO

Mount Marty's Christian Petrich competes in the 2014 MMC Invitational. MMC opens its 2015 season on Friday.

Football | SDSU Preview

Jacks Looking To Take The Next Step

BY JEREMY HOECK
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On to the next.

If there was a kind of unofficial motto for the South Dakota State football team, it would be something like that.

The Jackrabbits, coming off a third consecutive trip to the FCS playoffs, are moving on from the days of Zach Zenner and Austin Sumner, and can literally see the future in front of their eyes: Work continues on a new football stadium that opens next year.

"It's an exciting time for sure to be a Jackrabbit," said sophomore defensive lineman Kellen Soulek, a Yankton High School graduate.

At the same time, SDSU — ranked No. 15 and 16 in pre-season polls — realizes past success and new facilities don't translate directly to wins on the field.

"We try to keep the buzz at a minimum in the locker room," Soulek said. "We just try to do our thing."

And what that's been is forward momentum.

With a number of new faces, particularly on offense, looking to carry the torch, confidence is a huge factor to any success in 2015, according to head coach John Stiegelmeier.

"Number one is to believe you can do it," he said. "They need to believe they can compete."

Having reached the second round of the FCS post-season field each of the last three years, the natural next step would be the semifinals or championship game, right?

"We've set the target higher," Stiegelmeier said. "We've talked about that as a program, to grow as a football team."

"We've got a decent tradition right now."

And Zenner played a key role in developing that Division I tradition.

Zenner, now with the NFL's Detroit Lions, was a three-time All-American and last year rushed for 2,019 yards and 22 touchdowns.

The question now for the Jackrabbits isn't simply how to replace those numbers,



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BROOKS SCHILD

Five former Yankton High School players, including three from the Bucks' 2014 Class 11AA championship team, are currently competing for the South Dakota State football team: Kellen Soulek, Brady Hale, Matt Fitzgerald, Evan Greenway and Troy Hunhoff.

Swashbuckling Rookie RB Zenner Has A Shot With Lions

BY LARRY LAGE
AP Sports Writer

ALLEN PARK, Mich. (AP) — Zach Zenner has made the most of his opportunities with the Detroit Lions, leading the league with 162 yards rushing through three preseason games.

Zenner isn't paying attention to the relative hype he has generated.

"I keep my head in the sand for a lot of that stuff," he said in his aw-shucks fashion.

The former South Dakota State star has one more shot in a preseason game to show he deserves to stay with the team. He will probably get the ball a lot Thursday night

when Detroit (2-1) hosts the Buffalo Bills during an exhibition in which both teams are planning to rest their starters.

Fellow rookie Amir Abdullah, a second-round pick with a job secured, laments that the preseason drags along. Zenner is just looking forward to displaying his swashbuckling style at least one more time.

"Every preseason game is very important, especially for a guy like me as an undrafted free agent," Zenner said. "Those opportunities, not everyone gets them."

No, they don't. Zenner survived a wave

of cuts earlier this week after zigging and zagging around defenders, breaking some tackles and displaying he's got at least a touch of speed against some of the best football players in the world.

Some have been surprised that the player from the second-tier of college football has been effective against NFL players, including some first-string defenders last week in Jacksonville, but Abdullah has simply shrugged his shoulders.

"I expected it," said Abdullah, who Detroit drafted out of Nebraska. "We played South Dakota State in 2013 and his first run was like a

50-yard touchdown. I think he ran for like 220 on us. At that point, I knew what kind of player he was going to be."

The Eagan, Minnesota, native was a quarterback in high school when Vikings star Adrian Peterson once watched his team play from the sideline. The 5-foot-11, 222-pound Zenner went on to South Dakota State, where he became the first running back in NCAA Division I history to rush for at least 2,000 yards in three straight seasons.

He finished his career with 6,548 yards on 1,095 carries with 61 touchdowns, but the Football Championship Sub-division All-American wasn't

selected in the NFL draft.

Zenner provided a glimpse of what he could do in his first preseason game, running for 55 yards on 13 carries against the New York Jets. He had 81 yards on the ground and through the air in his second game at Washington. Playing with and against some starters and later with reserves, Zenner had a 41-yard run against the Jaguars last week and finished with 85 yards on eight attempts.

"We got a steal in Zenner," said Joique Bell, Detroit's top running back. "That kid there, his numbers speak for itself. Hard running. Hard-nosed. Does everything right."

Soccer: Presentation Rallies To Sweep Mount Marty



JACQUE SCOBY/ABERDEEN AMERICAN NEWS

Mount Marty's Courtney True stops a penalty kick in the waning moments of Wednesday's 3-1 loss to Presentation. True made 15 saves in the match.

ABERDEEN — Bobby Pendleton scored twice and assisted on another as Presentation rallied from an early deficit to beat Mount Marty 3-1 in women's soccer action on Wednesday.

MMC took the lead on a Carly Mahan goal in the 28th minute. Pendleton converted a Paige Posvar pass for a goal just before halftime, then converted a Brittney Cusick pass early in the second half. Pendleton found Cusick for an insurance goal with less than five minutes remaining.

Presentation had an 18-1 edge in shots on goal.

Courtney True stopped 15 shots in goal for Mount Marty.

MMC, 1-1, is off until a Sept. 19 match at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa.

Men: PC 5, MMC 1

ABERDEEN — Presentation scored five unanswered goals to claim a 5-1 victory over Mount Marty in men's soccer action on Wednesday.

MMC got on the board in the eighth minute win Renner Mickelson converted a pass from Ludwin Arana. Presentation scored the tying and go-ahead goals later in the half, with unassisted goals by Cole Lewandowski and Johnny Partida, Jr.

In the second half, the Saints added three goals in a nine-minute span, with Brian Estrada, Doug Heinrich and Mason Beatty each scoring. Braedon Seelhorst, Chuy Garcia and Nathan Cuena added assists.

Mickelson, Colin Linde and Collin Sorensen each had two shots on goal for MMC as the Lancers matched the Saints at 10 shots each. Matt Richardson stopped seven shots and



JACQUE SCOBY/ABERDEEN AMERICAN NEWS

Mount Marty goalie Rogelio Rodriguez grimaces after stopping a kick along the baseline by Presentation's Brian Estrada in the first half of Wednesday's men's soccer contest at Saints Field.

Brandt McCall stopped two shots in goal for Presentation. Rogelio Rodriguez made six saves in goal for MMC.

MMC, 0-2, plays a non-league match against Briar Cliff on Saturday and Morningside on Sunday, both in Sioux City, Iowa.