

# Coyote men's basketball inks two

University of South Dakota head men's basketball coach David Boots announced Thursday that Karim Rowson and Eric Robertson have signed National Letters of Intent to play for the Coyotes in 2012-13 bringing the recruiting class to four for next season.

"Both of these young men are great additions to our program and will fit in well with our current roster," Boots said. "They can play multiple positions on the floor, and have the ability to play inside and out. We're very excited to have Karim and Eric join our university and our basketball program."

Rowson, a 6-foot-5-inch, 193-pound guard from New York, NY, played his last two seasons at Western Oklahoma State College in Altus, OK, where he averaged 18 points and five rebounds per game to lead the Pioneers in scoring as a sophomore for head coach Rolando De La Berrera. Rowson was named to the All-Region II team and led the region in scoring. He shot 52.3 percent from the field and had a career-high 40 points to go along with 12

rebounds versus Seminole State College in the Region II Tournament on March 5.

In addition, Rowson tallied 37 points and 12 rebounds versus Kansas State-Salina on Dec. 9 and had 29 points and 11 rebounds versus Northern Oklahoma College on Jan. 12. As a freshman at Western Oklahoma State College, Rowson averaged eight points and four rebounds per game while helping guide the Pioneers to a 21-9 record and a berth in the Region 11 Tournament.

He prepped at Waldeigh High School in Harlem, NY, where he played for head coach Michael Crump. While there, he averaged 13 points and eight rebounds per game, and was named second team all-city as a senior. As a junior, he averaged 16 points and seven rebounds also earning second team all-city honors.

Rowson becomes the fifth signee for the Coyotes from Western Oklahoma State College and third in the last three years as former Coyotes Mitchell Bouie and Kendall Cutler both played for De La

Berrera at WOSC.

Robertson a 6-foot-7-inch, 195-pound forward from Wayzata, MN, spent the past season at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, FL, where he averaged 12 points and 10.1 rebounds per game for head coach Loren Jackson.

"I wanted another year to develop and I was a little undersized to play power forward," Robertson said on the IMG Web site. "Coach Loren (Jackson) and Coach Yusef (Fitzgerald) helped me develop as a player, and now I am really excited to get out to the University of South Dakota and play. I chose South Dakota after building a solid relationship with the coaching staff through a number of visits. I'm very happy with my decision."

Robertson had 14 Division I scholarship offers over the past two years. Robertson graduated from Wayzata High School and was four year letterman, two year captain and a two-time all-conference selection. He was a Mr. Basketball Semifinalist and earned honorable mention all-state honors.

He earned third team all-

metro honors and was selected to the Minnesota All-Star Game. He was a 2011 SportsJam All-Area selection and earned ESPN High School Midwest Player of the Week honors. Robertson averaged 20.3 points and 9.4 rebounds per game as a senior for head coach Phil Ward.

Rowson and Robertson join Casey Kasperbauer of Carroll, Iowa, and Tyler Flack of Lakeville, MN, who signed during the early signing period in November. Kasperbauer earned ESPN High School Midwest Player of the Week honors in February as he scored 47 points including 17 in the fourth quarter in an 84-70 win over Winterset (Iowa). He connected on eight triples and all 11 free throws in the second highest scoring game for an Iowa player this season.

Flack a 6-7 wing from Lakeville North High School helped lead his team to the state championship game in March and just the school's second appearance in school history. Flack led his team with 12 points in the championship game - a 49-47 loss to Osseo High School.

## Westbrook makes strong showing at Portsmouth Invite

University of South Dakota senior guard Charlie Westbrook helped lead his team to the consolation championship of the 60th Annual Portsmouth Invitational over the weekend in Portsmouth, VA. The Portsmouth Invitational showcases the top college basketball seniors for NBA general managers and scouts prior to the June draft.

"The P.I.T. was great," Westbrook said. "I got to compete with really good guys from major universities, had the opportunity to get to know them and show the scouts and general managers I can play at a high level. My agent and I got really good feedback from teams and played point guard there and showed by versatility in scoring or setting up my teammates for better shots. It was a blessing to be invited and have the opportunity to play in front of every NBA decision maker. I feel I really helped myself and, when I go into workouts, I'll have the same mindset to work hard, attack and go after my dream. Overall, this was one of the best

experiences of my life."

The P.I.T. invites 64 of the best college basketball seniors from across the nation to participate in a four-day, twelve game tournament in front of representatives from every NBA team.

Not only is the NBA represented at the Portsmouth Invitational, but scouts from numerous international leagues also are represented. Over the years, the P.I.T. has been a showcase for five of the 50 greatest players in NBA history including Rick Barry, Earl "The Pearl" Monroe, Dave Cowens, John Stockton and Scottie Pippen and many others who have gone on to NBA stardom.

Westbrook, a native of Milwaukee, WS, averaged 12.3 points and 3.0 rebounds per game as his Norfolk Sports Club team went 2-1 in the tournament. Westbrook led the team in minutes with 90 and a 30.0 clip per game. He went 16 of 39 from the field (.410) and 1 of 3 from beyond the arc. He made 4 of 7 charity tosses and led the team with six steals.

## WELDING

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"Typically, the first-time welder tends to go too fast; they tend to rush, and one of the things that we really have to work on is to get people to slow down," he said. "Whether it be my high school students or this group of students here, we first have to work on getting them to slow down."

Before the "hands-on" portion of the course, where each student fires up a welder to practice techniques instructed by Pier, each participant spends some time in a classroom.

"During the first night of the course (April 10), we went over safety during the classroom portion of instruction," Pier said, "and we covered some of the machines that we'll be using in the course."

The second night of the course, April 12, was dedicated to teaching students about different positions and joints used in welding.

"In future classes, we'll start working on more difficult welds," Pier said. "Tonight, we started with the real easy welds, in the flat position, but in the next couple weeks, we'll start to do the vertical welds and the overhead welds."

"There is also a math component that makes up part of the course, and we have one of our math teachers here at the high school, Nichole Tarr, who teaches that," he said. "We'll also do blueprint reading with welding symbols and drawings that are used in industry, and we also have a couple of activities that we'll do later in the semester to test the students with their welding integrity and things like that."

Participants will receive a certificate signifying that they've completed the coursework in late May. The students

will then discover if their welding skills are sufficient when they go out into the workforce.

"If they go out to Masaba, for example, and apply for a welding job, they'll have to take a welding test," Pier said. "That's really where the 'test part' of this course comes into play. They have an individual out there who will have them weld, and will test their welds, and if they meet their standards, they can become employed there."

After this 35-hour session wraps up next month, another course likely will be held at the high school next October.

"The first class we did (this year) was full, and that was during the wintertime," Pier said. "This one we're holding now isn't quite as full, but, of course, it's springtime and people would rather be outside doing stuff rather than inside welding, so we expected the numbers to be down just a little bit this time."

The course was designed with input from Pier, Steve Howe of the VCDC, and personnel from Masaba.

"We sat down and wrote a curriculum for what it is that Masaba needs as far as welders," Pier said. "We've got everything tailored to meet Masaba's needs, but, in reality, a person could go to another industry somewhere and work for them, and take those skills with them."

Howe told the Plain Talk last month that if the CDBG grant sought by the city is approved, the welding program will be expanded for three years of quarterly sessions.

It will also help offset the costs of the course, and make it possible for students who must pay \$250 to receive the training to be reimbursed once they get a job.

"We want to be able to provide the tuition at no cost. We will continue to offer the class at a charge to make sure that people are taking it seriously, but

we want to be able to reimburse them for their tuition and still pay the instructor," Howe said.

This course is playing an important role in Vermillion's changing economic landscape, he said.

"Vermillion has not had a tradition of the skilled trades," Howe said. "As we are recruiting these businesses and helping the existing ones grow, we're at a disadvantage with our workforce. We just don't have the skilled trades-people necessary to meet their needs."

Howe added that it's heartening to see different groups working together to help meet those needs.

"It means that this community is taking an active role in getting the workforce that they need so they can continue to grow in Vermillion," he said. "It's a real positive when we have these different entities working together to do this."

## CATCH

From Page 01

"I started to cry, and I turned and ran out of the courtroom," he said. "My mother never saw me again for about seven years, until I was a young adult."

"Contrary to the movie, my father never saw me nor spoke to me again," he said.

Abagnale eventually was arrested at the age of 21 by French police, who put him in prison - an experience Spielberg reconstructed for the movie by poring over the institution's log books.

"He said there was a blanket on the floor, a hole in the floor to go to the bathroom, no plumbing, no electricity," Abagnale said. "He said the log books show that I entered the prison at 198 pounds, and left the prison at 109 pounds."

Even more painfully for Abagnale, his father died during his incarceration.

After his release, he was imprisoned by Swedish authorities, and then by the U.S.

Four years into a 12-year sentence he was approached by the FBI to work against fraud, and he's been doing so ever since.

"I was very fortunate because

I grew up in a great country where everybody gets a second chance," he said. "I owe my country 800 times more than I could ever repay for the opportunity it's given me for the past 36 years."

One idea Abagnale shuns is that his story is a glamorous one.

"How could I tell you my life was glamorous when I cried myself to sleep until I was 19 years old?" he said "I spent every birthday, Christmas, Mothers' Day in a hotel room somewhere in the world by myself."

Beyond his work for the FBI, Abagnale said it has been his

wife and three sons who have turned his life around.

"Steven Spielberg made a wonderful film, but I've had nothing more rewarding, nothing more worthwhile,

nothing that's brought me more peace, more enjoyment, more calm in my life, than a sense of being a good husband and a good father," he said.

The program was presented

by the Beacom School of Business and sponsored by the Beacom Opportunity Fund, Arthur Volk Symposium and the USD Office of Student Life.

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