

USD Will Go In ‘Different Direction’ After Big Ten Decision

BY JEREMY HOECK
Press and Dakotan

Here are the drive times between the University of South Dakota campus in Vermillion and three potential football games against Big Ten Conference opponents:

Lincoln, Nebraska: Three hours.
Minneapolis, Minnesota: Four hours.
Iowa City, Iowa: Five hours.

Such FBS games for the Coyotes are, however, off the table because of a decision last week by the Big Ten to eliminate FCS games from league schedules beginning in 2016. The reason for the mandate? To accommodate nine league games, one non-conference against a ‘Power Five’ opponent and the Big Ten championship game.

The decision to move on from scheduling FCS opponents has already had a trickle-down effect at USD, for example, a Missouri Valley Football Conference school that is still hunting for FBS games for the 2017, 2018 and 2019 seasons.

“We have to go in a different direction,” athletic director David Herbster said Monday.

Despite the announcement last week by Big Ten commissioner Jim Delaney, schools like USD had been operating under the assumption that Big Ten schools were off the table anyway, Herbster said.

That doesn’t mean it was any less disappointing, he added.

“Those are regional matchups, and matchups between two state schools, the ‘University of’ in both cases, and now those aren’t possible,” Herbster said of such games as Nebraska, Minnesota or Iowa.

The Coyotes, like many of their Missouri Valley brethren, have previously played ‘guarantee’ games against Big Ten schools. USD faced – and defeated – Minnesota in 2010, and then had games against Wisconsin in 2011 and Northwestern in 2012.

Five Missouri Valley programs have Big Ten games on their schedule for this season, and North Dakota State has a game scheduled with Iowa next fall – the Big Ten did say it would attempt to honor contracts already signed.

Such games between two leagues in the same geographic area would, in Herbster’s eyes, make more sense than a Big Ten school trying to spend more money to bring in an FBS opponent – even one outside the Power Five.

“If you’re Minnesota and playing Louisiana-Lafayette, there’s more of an interest to the game from an attendance perspective if you’re playing South Dakota,” Herbster said.

If the Big Ten is, indeed, trying to position itself better for the College Football Playoff,

that’s one thing, Herbster said, but mandating that every league team follow suit could leave some schools wishing they could schedule an FCS game.

“If Ohio State feels like they’ve got the team to make the run, they don’t have to schedule an FCS team,” Herbster said, “but a team like Indiana, which is in rebuilding mode, they would probably rather face an FCS team.”

And in turn, those FCS schools would be open to such conversations. But now, without the Big Ten as an option, USD has to look elsewhere.

When it comes time to filling an FBS vacancy, there are a series of two key questions to answer, Herbster said: Is it within driving distance for fans? Or is it an area that your athletic department or institution already recruits?

Herbster said his ideal philosophy would be to schedule a regional FBS game every other year or every three years (like was the case in 2013 at Kansas and this fall at Kansas State), and then schedule a ‘destination game’ (as was the case last year with Oregon and next year at California).

It’s just a matter of finding the right fit, Herbster said. Sure, the money can be nice – USD made \$525,000 for playing Oregon and will make \$550,000 for playing California – but that also means the Coyotes would likely be sacrificing a win for the big-time experience.

“You can play your Alabamas or LSUs, but I’m not fired up to do that, which means you have to find a different game,” Herbster said.

With the Big Ten now out of the question, USD’s options for regional guarantee games are suddenly limited. It can either tap into the Big-12 (as it will in 2020 with Iowa State), look west to the Pac-12 or Mountain West, or look east to the Mid-American Conference.

“If we’re on the East Coast, it’s not that big of an issue because there are schools up and down the coast,” Herbster said. “But we’re in the Midwest, where it’s more spread out.”

Not only does the decision by the Big Ten mean that 14 games are off the market, but it means 28 games – with FBS opponents for the Big Ten – are suddenly gone.

“We’re looking right now, but when you take the Big Ten opponents off the table, the list gets small for 2017,” said Herbster, who added that he would like to see USD schedule a game in Colorado.

Under the current format of an 11-game schedule, schools like USD would be searching for a guarantee game and two other non-conference games before the league slate. Would two FBS games ever be a possibility? No, Herbster said.

“That’s burying your program, if you want any shot to make the playoffs,” he said.

It would also be highly unlikely that a school like USD, for example, wouldn’t have an FBS game one year – North Dakota State has that exact scenario this season.

University Of South Dakota Sports News

Coyotes Announce 2015 Cross Country Schedule

South Dakota head cross country coach Dan Fitzsimmons has released the program’s 2015 schedule, a slate which begins on Sept. 4 and races through November as the program aims for its first NCAA Championship berth as a team.

“We intentionally made this season’s schedule comparable to last year to build off the success we had,” said Fitzsimmons. “By racing on courses that provide continuity and consistency, we are able to measure fitness levels between seasons. At the same time, I am excited for the athletes to experience Rim Rock Farm when they race at the NCAA Regional.”

The regular season begins with the NDSU Bison Open on Sept. 4, a rivalry triple-dual showdown at Rose Creek Golf Course in Fargo, N.D. South Dakota will battle North Dakota State, North Dakota and South Dakota State.

After a two week hiatus, the Coyotes travel to St. Paul, Minn., for the 30th annual Roy Griak Invitational on Sept. 26. On the women’s side, 2014 National Champion Michigan State, runner-up Iowa State and five NCAA qualifying teams made appearances at the meet a year ago. Five NCAA qualifying men’s teams also ran at the Griak last season. The meet will provide an opportunity for the Coyotes to boost national rankings.

South Dakota takes an early look at the league championship course by racing the SDSU Classic on Oct. 3 in Brookings, S.D.

To close out the regular season, the Coyotes return to the Bradley “Pink” Classic in Peoria, Ill., on Oct. 16. As another large meet with nearly 30 teams, the Bradley “Pink” Classic will serve as a second opportunity to improve national rankings heading into the postseason.

In the sequel to a successful 2014 Summit League Championship meet, the Coyote women aspire to repeat as Summit League Champions on Oct. 31 at the Edgebrook Golf Course in Brookings, while the men shoot for their first program title.

Kansas plays host to the 2015 NCAA Midwest Regional meet on Nov. 13 at Rim Rock Farm in Lawrence, Kan. Should either the men or women finish in the top two at that meet or receive a wildcard bid, they would advance to the 2015 NCAA National Championships held at E.P. “Tom” Sawyer State Park in Louisville, Ky., on Nov. 21.

Lubberding Joins Coyote Golf

South Dakota head golf coach Nick Hovden announced Monday the addition of Noah Lubberding to the Coyote men’s golf team.

“We are excited to add such a talented player and great all-around individual to our program,” said Hovden. “Noah will be a solid fit with our team and his game will transition nicely to the collegiate level.”

Hailing from St. Albert, Alberta, Lubberding was selected to represent Team Alberta for the 2013 Junior America’s Cup held in Maui, Hawaii. He also played for Team Alberta in the 2013 Alberta vs. Montana Ryder Cup. Lubberding also helped St. Albert Catholic High School win

the Zone Championships and finish runner-up at the Provincial Championship as a sophomore. Standing at 6-foot-1, Lubberding also helped the SkyHawk men’s volleyball team win the city championship as a sophomore. At South Dakota, Lubberding plans to major in accounting.

Lubberding joins two other freshmen, Andrew Brown and Will Gretton, on the Coyote men’s golf team for the 2015-16 season. The trio are all natives of Alberta, Canada.

“With this strong class of freshman, this will be the deepest team we have had,” said Hovden. “It will be fun to see how they all push each other this fall and who will step up to lead us on the course.”

Coyote men’s golfers open their season on Sept. 4 with a duel versus Nebraska-Omaha in Nebraska City, Neb.



Bergner Named To Watch List

South Dakota junior place-kicker Miles

Bergner has been named to the Fred Mitchell Award Watch List announced Wednesday. Bergner is one of 12 FCS kickers and one of 41 overall named to the list which recognizes place-kickers for excellence on the football field and in the community.

Bergner has led the Coyotes in scoring in each of his first two seasons. He made a program record 16 consecutive field goals last year including all five attempts from 40 yards or more. Bergner added 19 extra points and averaged nearly 60 yards on kickoffs with 11 touchbacks.

Bergner has served as a volunteer coach for his high school team in Longmont, Colo., during the last three summers. Last month, he helped the team in its efforts to assist residents of Longmont and nearby Lyons who are still rebuilding following a flood in 2013. He also leads the team through early morning summer workouts.

The Fred Mitchell Award is celebrating its seventh year in 2015. Bergner is one of 22 nominees who return to the list from a season ago. The 41 place-kickers on this year’s list were selected from more than 750 eligible colleges including FCS, Division II, III, NAIA and NJCAA.

Coyote Volleyball Earns AVCA Team Academic Award

LEXINGTON, Ky.—South Dakota volleyball has earned the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Team Academic Award for the 2014-15 season. The Coyotes are one of 146 Division I teams to receive the honor.

The award honors collegiate and high school volleyball teams that displayed excellence in the classroom during the school year by maintaining at least a 3.30 cumulative grade-point average. The Coyotes boasted a GPA of 3.66, which ranked second in the Summit League.

South Dakota returns 10 players from last season’s third-place team and adds five freshmen. The 2015 season opens at the Wyoming Tournament on Aug. 28-29 in Laramie, Wyo.

USD Ready For Start Of Fall Practice

BY JEREMY HOECK
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It’s been nine months since the last game. And six months since National Signing Day. For Joe Glenn and his coaching staff at the University of South Dakota, the waiting game is almost over: Fall practices began Thursday in Vermillion.

As construction work picked up steam this summer in the DakotaDome, the sound emanating from the weight room may not have been as loud as the cranes and drills, but it was a welcome sound.

“I saw our kids work all summer,” Glenn said this week. “The things they went through, they’ve proven to me that they want to win, and do whatever it takes.”

There hasn’t been much talk of last season’s 2-win campaign other than the injuries that again piled up late on the Coyotes, but Glenn has maintained all pre-season that – using one of his favorite adages – “hope springs eternal.”

“They’ve done everything they possibly can to get their bodies and hearts right for the season,” he said.

Barring any unexpected surprises, USD figures to have 95 players (the maximum number allowed) report for Thursday’s first practice at 3:15 p.m. in Vermillion. On Wednesday, players went through meetings (introductory welcome, compliance, academics, etc.) and were issued equipment.

For the freshmen, in particular, there was a lot of information thrown at them right away. “They’ll get a lot in hurry,” Glenn said. “I like to say, ‘They’ll be drinking out of a fire hydrant.’”

Perhaps more than in any recent season, the incoming freshmen class will likely be counted on for instant impact at certain positions – USD signed a handful of running backs, for example.

Before depth charts get to that point, the staff is just glad to finally see those newcomers take the field with the returning players, Glenn said.

“It’s like a farmer going out to check his crops after some rain,” Glenn said, chuckling.

“The kids have grown a little bit. And when it’s their first time all together, it’s really exciting.”

The Coyotes will have four weeks of preparation heading into the Sept. 5 season opener at Kansas State. Though injuries have derailed the past couple of seasons in Vermillion, optimism doesn’t seem to be an issue.

“Everything doesn’t shake down perfect, but in the end, you go with the guys you have,” Glenn said. “I’m looking forward to it, and I know the kids and the coaches are too.”

Krolikowski Transfers To Sioux Falls

SIoux FALLS – Kray Krolikowski, a former all-state football player from Winner, has transferred from FCS South Dakota to join the University of Sioux Falls Football Team, according to an announcement by USF head football coach Jed Stugart.

Krolikowski played as a true freshman during the 2014 season at South Dakota, a member of the Missouri Valley Conference. The sophomore will be immediately eligible to play for the Cougars, which returns 45 letter winners and 18 starters from an 11-1 team that finished #16/#18 in the national polls following the 2014 season.

Krolikowski, a criminal justice major, joins a defense that ranked 12th in the nation in scoring defense (17.4 ppg) and was third in the NSIC in total defense and pass defense as well as third in rushing defense. USF was first in the NSIC in pass defense efficiency at 90.5 and ranked fourth nationally.

In 2014, the former Winner prep played in 10 games, recording six tackles and three solo stops. He made his collegiate debut at Oregon, which was the FBS runner-up a year ago. Krolikowski was named to the MVFC Honor Roll last year.

In high school, he was named first team all-state in 2013 after recording 45 tackles, eight TFLs and seven sacks on a 10-1 team. In 2012, he played a key role as Winner rolled to a 12-0 record and won the 11B title with a 13-6 win over Tri-Valley. As a junior, he had 48 tackles, including seven sacks. In his final two seasons of high school, Krolikowski helped lead Winner to a 22-1 record, state title and a 22-game-winning streak, the 15th longest in S.D. high school football. In total, he had 93 tackles and 14 sacks in high school.

Krolikowski and the USF Football Team will open the season against U-Mary at noon on Saturday, Sept. 5 at Bob Young Field.

‘Get Inspired!’ Peter Auch 5K Set For Aug. 8 At Beresford

The second annual Get Inspired: Peter Auch 5K Memorial Race and Fun Glow Run/Walk will be held on Saturday, Aug. 8, at Beresford High School.

The event celebrates the life of Peter Auch, a 16 year old, who attended Beresford High School who was tragically killed in a car accident in November 2013. Peter was known as a leader in his class by his example and influence on his peers to excel in all they did. His passion was for running and academics. He made it his aim to make Jesus the center of his life and has challenged us to not waste our lives.

Registration will run from 5-6:30 p.m., with introductions, the National Anthem and line-up at 7:30 p.m., with the race to follow.

Doug Adams from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes will speak at 8:15 p.m., with special music and the 5K awards ceremony at that time. The glow run/walk, approximately two miles, will begin at 9 p.m.

Registrations are being taken at www.allsportcentral.com. For more information, go to the Get Inspired” Peter Auch 5K and Fun Glow Run page on Facebook, or call Cindy at 605-214-4380.