

Minnesota Guard Commits To USD

BY JEREMY HOECK
Press and Dakotan

The University of South Dakota men's basketball team has nabbed a commit from a big guard in a big-time Minnesota AAU program.

Tyler Peterson, a 6-foot-4 guard from Centennial High School (Circle Pines, Minnesota), announced Thursday that he has committed to USD and will join the Coyote program in 2016-17.

"The relationship I had with the coaching staff has been great," Peterson told the Press & Dakotan on Thursday. "I could tell they wanted me there. They've been very easy to deal with."

Peterson, who has already scored over 1,000 points in his career, again played with Howard Pulley, an Elite Youth Basketball League (EYBL) summer team – and one that has consistently produced future college (and at times, NBA) stars.

The 'Alumni' tab on the Howard Pulley website is filled with notable college and NBA players, ones such as Harrison Barnes, Kris Humphries and Royce White.

As a member of such a prestigious program, Peterson previously got to play against Tyus Jones, an Apple Valley product who went on to success at Duke and went on to be drafted by the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves.

"It was cool, I thought," said Peterson, who was 14-15 years old at the time, "knowing who Tyus Jones. He was really good."

When it came time for Peterson to make his own college decision, it was important for him, he said, to find a place where he felt he could be successful – and his two prior visits to the USD campus in Vermillion put him over the top.

"I'm trying to go to college and win a lot of games," Peterson said. "I want to get to the NCAA Tournament."

To that end, he said he has been impressed with the USD coaching staff, led by Craig Smith, who helped guide Colorado State and Nebraska to the NCAA Tournament.

"It shows he knows what he's doing," Peterson said.

With still his senior season remaining at Centennial, Peterson's stock figures to only rise. But he again raved about the USD coaching staff, as well as the opportunity to play in a new arena – his freshman season will coincide with USD's first in the new 6,000-seat arena.

"The new arena is exciting," he said. "It gets players excited."

As far what Peterson could potentially bring to the table at USD, he pointed to his size and versatility.

"I'm a complete player, can do a lot of different things," he said.

But for now, Peterson is anxious for his senior year at Centennial and one final season.

"It's for sure nice to get this out of the way," he said. "It's a lot of pressure off my chest."

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remains the Coyotes' all-time leader in both the pentathlon (3,777 points) and heptathlon (5,301 points). She also ranks in the top five on USD lists for triple jump, long jump, 60-meter hurdles and 100-meter hurdles. She earned All-America honors in the heptathlon, triple and long jump during her four-year career.

Edwards and her husband, David, reside in Rapid City, S.D., with their children Westin, Emmett, Leo and Talia. They began the Lach's Legacy program with the help of the CJ Foundation for SIDS in loving memory of their son, Lachlan.

Edwards went on to USD's physician assistant program and worked at Sanford Hospital in Sioux Falls for four years before moving back out to the Black Hills. She works part time as a physician's assistant in a general surgery practice.

Nancy McCahren (special contributor)

McCahren has served USD for more than 50 years. After graduating in 1957 and earning her master's degree in 1962, McCahren served in USD's Department of English from 1962-65 and then from 1966-87. In addition, McCahren worked in the Department of Modern Languages from 1982-90 and then Office of Student Life from 1968-84. In 1990, she took the job as executive director of USD's Alumni Association. She retired from that post in 2004.

McCahren is the daughter of long-time USD basketball coach and athletic director Rube Hoy. She was an advocate for the North Central Conference, was the first woman to serve on the USD Athletic Board of Control, and was the first female to chair that board. She received the NCC Honor Award in recognition of her efforts to heighten the integrity of the NCC.

McCahren and her family established the Hoy Award many years ago, which recognizes an outstanding senior male and female student-athlete each year. The family also funds a scholarship for a student-athlete from a South Dakota high school.

VHS Grads Return To USD For 2015 Season

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN
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Two Vermillion High School graduates are preparing for their second season with the University of South Dakota football team and both have high expectations of the Coyotes this year.

Nick Jensen, left tackle, is looking forward to his first year of eligibility after redshirting the 2014 season, and Ethan James, kicker/punter, is looking to compete for minutes after appearing in one game last season.

"I filled in for Miles Bergner, he went down in the Illinois State game right before half time," James said.

In his appearance, James recorded three kick-offs and one tackle. His only extra point attempt was blocked.

After a week of preseason practices, James hopes to see more time and be competitive with Bergner.

"Me and Miles, the kicker in front of me right now, we're going at it. We're both doing things pretty well," he said.

Jensen has been practicing in the left tackle position.

"I'm just kind of working everyday as hard as I can to get myself the best opportunity and whoever gets the starting job out there has earned it," Jensen said.

After the seven days of practice, both agree that the team is coming together and have high hopes for the season.

'Brand New' Coyotes Hit The Field For First Time



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK

The University of South Dakota football team began fall practices last Thursday afternoon to prepare for the fall season. The Coyotes open the 2015 season at Kansas State on Sept. 9.

BY JEREMY HOECK
Press and Dakotan

There can't be much gleaned from one football practice. Progress, however, has already been seen away from the field and now it's time to translate that to success on the field, according to University of South Dakota senior linebacker Keyen Lage. The Coyotes, who held their first practice last Thursday afternoon, are ready to turn a corner.

"Every team says every year they're a new team, but this is probably the first time since I've been here that it actually feels like a brand new team," said Lage, a third-year starter from Sioux Falls.

Why?
"I feel like we're all calmer, not as jittery," Lage said. "We're ready to be out there."

There were 95 players – the limit – at Thursday's first practice, and for those guys coming back from a disappointing 2014 season (0-8 in conference games), the biggest change has been mental, Lage said.

"Physically, we had the athletes to compete, the problem has been, it's almost like we got used to the losing culture," he said. "Guys are starting to buy into the winning culture."

"We all know that losing can't be something that's acceptable."

Head coach Joe Glenn liked the attitude change to the 1969 movie 'Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid' – keeping his trend of western-themed analogies rolling right along.

"They were being chased by the law, and they looked back and said, 'Who are those guys?'" Glenn said of the film. "That's how I want us to be."

"When we're getting after someone this year, and we're not going away, the other team will be saying, 'Who are those guys?'"

What Glenn hopes those guys become are winners. The Coyotes won two games last season and are 3-21 since joining the Missouri Valley Football Conference in 2012.

"This team is going to win. They're going to get it figured out," Glenn said. "They've worked too hard for something good to not happen."

"I know good things are going to happen to them."

Coyotes Receives Votes In Preseason FCS Coaches Poll

The University of South Dakota football team received 12 votes in the preseason FCS Coaches Poll announced Wednesday.

The Coyotes were one of seven teams from the Missouri Valley Football Conference to receive votes in the poll. Conference foes North Dakota State and Illinois State ranked 1-2, respectively, in the poll.

South Dakota begins fall practice Thursday and the Coyotes kick off the season at Kansas State on Sept. 5.

Preseason FCS Coaches Poll (August 5, 2015), Team, 2014 Record, Points, 2014 Final: 1. North Dakota State, 15-1, 600, 1; 2. Illinois State, 13-2, 551, 2; 3. Villanova, 11-3, 512, 7; 4. Sam Houston State, 11-5, 511, 6; 5. Coastal Carolina, 12-2, 502, 5; 6. Eastern Washington, 11-3, 481, 4; 7. New Hampshire, 12-2, 445, 3; 8. Chattanooga, 10-4, 409, 8; 9. Jacksonville State, 10-2, 396, 9; 10. Northern Iowa, 9-5, 381, 10; 11. Montana State,

8-5, 296, 20; 12. Montana, 9-5, 278, 11; 13. James Madison, 9-3, 272, 19; 14. Liberty, 9-5, 256, 17; 15. South Dakota State, 9-5, 215, 13; 16. Youngstown State, 7-5, 205, 25; 17. Eastern Kentucky, 9-4, 171, 21; 18. Richmond, 9-5, 170, 16; 19. Southeastern Louisiana, 9-4, 164, 12; 20. Indiana State, 8-6, 106, 18; 21. Fordham, 11-3, 103, 14; 22. Harvard, 10-0, 99, 15; 23. McNeese State, 6-5, 91, NR; 24. Idaho State, 8-4, 82, NR; 25. Eastern Illinois, 5-7, 73, NR.

Others receiving votes: Alcorn State 52, Stephen F. Austin 51, William & Mary 43, Cal Poly 42, Northern Arizona 34, Bethune-Cookman 25, North Carolina A&T 24, Jackson State 21, South Carolina State 21, Charleston Southern 14, Sacred Heart 14, Western Carolina 13, Furman 12, South Dakota 12, Maine 9, Bucknell 9, Lehigh 8, Towson 5, Samford 5, Bryant 4, San Diego 4, Yale 4, Central Arkansas 2, Duquesne 2, UT Martin 1

"From beyond my position group, practice has been going really well. The guys are starting to trust each other a little more, everyone's getting more confidence and I think this could be a turn-around year for us," James said.

During the summer months, the team had 6 a.m. workouts every weekday, and though players were not required to attend, all returners took advantage of the time in the weight room.

Jensen said he noticed the team get stronger in all aspects.

"It was really good for us and a lot of guys were here this summer," he said. "It was really good for the whole team to be here and we all really got stronger as a group."

James mentioned that workouts may have interfered with summer social plans, but the work will pay off in the end.

"Summer was really busy. I had a lot of plans, but football kind of took over that, but I don't think any of us minded it because of how we're looking right now and it was really tiring, but it was all worth it in the end," James said.

The Coyotes open the season on Sept. 5 at Kansas State and host the first home game on Sept. 19 against Drake.

"I think this team is something special this year," James said. "Hopefully game one we'll start showing that to ourselves."



COURTESY PHOTO

Vermillion High School graduate Ethan James in action last season for the University of South Dakota football team against Illinois State.