

SDCGA touts top nine highlights in 2009 USD Sports Information lists the top 10 DakotaDome moments

The South Dakota Corn Growers Association (SDCGA) has named the top nine highlights of 2009 for the South Dakota corn industry:

Another record corn crop – For the third year in a row, South Dakota has topped all records harvesting its largest corn crop state history. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will release its final production figures in January, but preliminary numbers show much for South Dakota producers to be proud of. Recent estimates indicated South Dakota produced 690 million bushels of corn, exceeding all previous records. Producers can and will produce the food and fuel our nation needs.

BYO ethanol Blender Pump Program is launched – Consumers can enjoy more choices at the pump, gas station owners can experience product flexibility, and the nation can achieve its renewable fuels targets – all thanks to the blender pump and the distribution of mid-range ethanol blends. An unprecedented national campaign was launched between leading corn-producing states, the American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE), and the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA) to get 5,000 blender pumps installed nationwide over the next three years.

Property Tax Solution – The SDCGA was just one of many ag groups in the state to take an active role in making sure the new productivity property tax assessments were fair and equitable for producers. New cropland valuations now are based on productivity instead of market sales. The new law shifts ag land tax assessments away from unpredictable market fluctuations and instead bases them on the land's average earning capacity.

Biotechnology gains acceptance worldwide – The European Union approved four traits for food and feed uses and import and processing in October and November, after receiving a positive safety assessment from the European Food Safety Authority. The clearance of these products opens the door of possibility for U.S. feed ingredients including value-added products like distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS) and corn gluten, both co-products of U.S. ethanol production and sets the stage for future acceptance.

Farmers helping Farmers – In an unprecedented move, a farmer-owned cooperative made a bold commitment to corn producers in Southeast South Dakota. Central Farmers Cooperative purchased the former VeraSun Marion, ethanol plant, renaming it NuGen Energy, LLC. The move reestablished a 33 million bushel market for area corn, keeping ownership local.

South Dakota farmer assumes national corn helm – At a time when the nation's most abundant crop is a focal point of policy, press and production, Darin Ihnen of Hurley, assumed the helm as president of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). With unique challenges and exciting industry opportunities on the horizon, Ihnen will represent the nation's corn farmers, reflecting his own South

Dakota roots. As NCGA president, Ihnen will be the voice for our nation's corn farmers on countless topics of importance including policy, consumer awareness and production practices.

Rail Legislation – Record crops require efficient transportation. For the first time in 30 years, proposed rail reform has a chance of making meaningful improvements for rail customers. Rail legislation introduced in December would streamline the rate complaint process, and even more important for South Dakota shippers, the bill would create a new arbitration process for small rate complaints. As a rural state in the middle of the country, rail service is critical to South Dakota's farm economy. This legislation will help ensure that South Dakota farmers receive a fair shake from rail carriers as they move their goods to market.

This Land is Your Land – As original environmentalists, corn farmers are continuing their work as stewards of the earth's natural resources. Production agriculture has been increasing in efficiency over time, demonstrating positive progress toward meeting increasing demand for agricultural products while achieving lesser environmental impact. Growth in sustainability by corn farmers over the past 20 years was found by the broad based alliance, Field to Market, which released the following:

- Land use per bushel of corn decreased 37 percent.
- Soil loss above a tolerable level has decreased 69 percent per bushel.
- Irrigation water use per bushel has decreased 27 percent.
- Energy use per bushel decreased 37 percent.
- Greenhouse gas emissions per bushel decreased 30 percent.

Genome – Dedicated and persistent efforts on the part of producers across the nation came to fruition as results of the Maize Genome Sequencing Project became available to the public. A longtime advocate of increasing access to agricultural data, the SDCGA along with National Corn Growers Association worked tirelessly for 12 years to obtain the funding necessary to complete this first comprehensive gene map of North American corn. Results from the Maize Genome Sequencing Project appeared in the Nov. 20 journal Science. Now, both public and private scientists will take this knowledge and develop real world applications and innovative technological advances that will improve plants and expand their uses to meet growing needs for food, feed and fuel. The data will expedite breeding programs and increase knowledge of corn's important agronomic traits. Information encoded in the corn genome can help scientists improve water and nitrogen use efficiencies, help plants cope with disease, pests and adverse weather and allow breeders to develop innovative products for specific end users. By decreasing the inputs needed and increasing yields, these traits will also allow corn to become an even more sustainable crop.

Athletic competition is about rising above the repetition of everyday practice routines and accomplishing something that no one thought possible. Sports fans and athletes participate day after day in practices and games just waiting for that one moment, that "I can't believe that just happened" moment that brings everyone to their feet. Coyote athletics has been no different.

Though USD's athletic teams have enjoyed steady success, each team has a defining moment, a game, a shot, a win that everyone remembers as the time that team achieved greatness. In celebration of 30th anniversary of the DakotaDome, the USD Sports Information department has compiled a list of the top 10 greatest competitions that have taken place in the Dome.

10. Feb. 4, 1989: Men's Basketball vs. South Dakota State

In Coach Dave Boots' first season with the Coyotes, USD's first meeting with South Dakota State in Brookings resulted in a 60-72 loss. When the Jackrabbits came to the Dome to play later in the season, the Coyotes had something to prove. "Our first home game against State in 1989 was important because we found out what it was like to play State at home," said Boots. USD made a statement as they controlled the entire game. USD was never behind by more than 2 points and led the game after 10:45 in the first half. SDSU made a late surge in the second half, but the Coyotes maintained the upper hand to win the game 65-60. Leading the scoring for the Coyotes was Tim Hatchett with 19 points. Jeff Rau added 12 points and had a team-high nine rebounds.

9. Jan. 18, 1997: Women's Track and Field

At the 1997 USD Invitational, the Coyote women set 10 meet records. USD's Elena Swan was a part of three with records in the 55 hurdles (8.2), the long jump (18-4 1/2), and the 4x100-meter relay (49.1). Swan went on to become one of the most decorated track and field athletes in USD history. A 13-time All-American, Swan won two NCAA Indoor National Championships (long jump and triple jump) in 1998. At the end of her eligibility, Swan held eight school records, five of which still stand today.

8. Oct. 20, 2007: Women's Swimming & Diving vs. North Dakota

For the first time in school history, the USD women's swimming and diving team beat North Dakota in dual meet action. USD won seven individual or relay events in the 123-120 win over the Fighting Sioux. Leading the way for the Coyotes were Stacy Bjorlie, who had a hand in three wins, and Megan Gordon with two wins. The Coyotes also set two school records in the contest. The first was the 400-medley relay team of Gordon, Bjorlie, Amelia Payne and Erin Wagoner with a time of 4:32.36. Gordon set a second record in the 200 backstroke with a time of 2:24.89. "The win was so exciting because we didn't expect it. It was the first meet of the season and the first time we had a duel against North Dakota in seven years," said Gordon. "Winning against UND was such a great way to start the season because it gave us confidence that we could handle every team on our schedule." The Coyote women finished the season 10th in Division II, scoring 178.5 points at the

national meet, the most in school history.

7. Feb. 15, 2003: Women's Basketball vs. South Dakota State

In a crucial NCC contest, No. 17 USD overcame a 36-39 halftime deficit to beat No. 2 South Dakota State 87-83 in front of a crowd of nearly 8,000. "I remember this game as 'The Carrot Game.' We got four technical fouls in the second half for fans throwing carrots onto the court. I even got on the microphone to try and convince [the fans] to stop," said coach Chad Lavin. Though the Jackrabbits made 7-of-8 free throws off the technical fouls, two free throws by Mandy Koupal with 2:50 to play gave the Coyotes control for the remainder of the game. Leading the Coyotes were Koupal, who recorded a double-double with 28 points and 17 rebounds, Heather Nelson and Julia Frie with 26 and 17 points, respectively. With the win, the Coyotes went on to tie SDSU for the NCC conference title.

6. Feb. 24, 2007: Men's Track and Field

At the 2007 NCC Indoor Track and Field Championships, USD was behind Minnesota State-Mankato by 25 points going into the last two events. In the second to last event, the 3,000-meter run, USD runners Tyler Wetering, Tony Turgeon and Matt Yaggie finished 1-2-3 to pull USD within half a point of the lead. In the 4x400-meter relay, the final event of the meet, the team of Ben Oberle, Tyler Williamson, Josh Jeffery, and Scott Hargens needed a win for the team victory. When the baton was handed to the anchor leg, Hargens, Mankato was ahead of the Coyotes. Hargens passed Mankato's anchor in the final 100 meters of the race to win the event and the NCC championship title. USD beat MSU Mankato by 1.5 points, 223.5 to 222. Oberle, the lead leg of the 4x400 relay said "After I handed off the baton, I just knew we were going to win. We had all the fans behind us."

5. Nov. 30, 1985: Football vs. Central State

After a 3-3 tie in regulation time, the first round NCAA playoff game went into overtime. "This was our first time in a playoff game, so we were all pretty excited," said Coach Dave Triplett. In the first overtime period, USD had the first possession and scored a touchdown on a keeper by quarterback Scott Jones. The extra point by Mark McLoughlin was good. On Central State's possession, the Marauders answered back with a touchdown and good extra point. In the second overtime period, the Marauders had the first possession, which led to a miss on a 46-yard field goal attempt. During the Coyotes' possession, McLoughlin connected on a 41-yard field goal to win the game and send USD to the second round of the playoffs. "Playing at the Dome made all the difference for us," Triplett said. "It was

packed to overflowing. The atmosphere was electric."

4. Oct. 23, 2004: Volleyball vs. Minnesota-Duluth

In the biggest win in school history, the USD women upset No. 6 Minnesota Duluth in five sets (30-28, 26-30, 30-24, 29-31, 16-14). Earlier in the 2004 season, the Coyotes lost 3-0 to UMD. Leading the way for USD were Kristen Miller and Lindsey Soukup, who recorded double-doubles for the second game in a row. Miller finished with 18 kills and 22 digs, while Soukup finished with 16 kills and a career-high 34 digs. Her 34 digs tied the school-record. Laura Marske added 18 kills as well. Setter Liz Selzer added a career high 61 assists. "Playing UMD at the Dome was a completely different experience [than playing in Duluth]," said Soukup. "Especially after beating No. 21 Augustana the night before, we had a lot of confidence that we could win. We were playing with such emotion; it seemed like no balls were hitting the floor," added Soukup.

3. March 11, 1994: Men's Basketball vs. North Dakota State

After suffering an 82-63 loss to North Dakota State in the 1994 NCC tournament, the Coyotes again faced the Bison in the second round of the 1994 NCAA Regional tournament. This time around, the entire game was tight. There was never more than a six-point spread between the teams. In the final seconds of the game, Shane Murphy hit two free throws to give the Coyotes a 3 point lead. After defending a 3 point shot, the Coyotes won the game 61-58. Murphy led the Coyotes with 22 points and eight rebounds. Loren DeKruyf added 14 points and Mike Kloth grabbed eight rebounds. The win against NDSU crowned the Coyotes North Central Region champions, sending them to their second straight NCAA Elite Eight appearance.

2. March 9, 2008: Women's Basketball vs. North Dakota

In the Coyotes' final season both in the NCC and under Coach Chad Lavin, the USD women's basketball team beat North Dakota in the NCC Championship final to become the first team other than North Dakota to win the NCC tournament title. Though the Coyotes had a 35-23 lead at halftime, the Fighting Sioux opened the second half on a 22-10 run, bringing them within three points midway through the second half. With 1:07 left to play, USD was leading 70-69. In the final seconds, Bridget Yoerger made 2 free throws to clinch the title 72-69. The Coyotes were led by Jeanna Hoffman, with 20 points, and Yoerger, who recorded her 11th career double-double, with 15 points and 12 rebounds. Ashley Robinette added 14 points. "From the beginning of the season we knew we were a good enough team to win the conference

tournament]," said Jasmine Mosely. "As the season went on, we got hungrier and hungrier until we had the confidence to say 'Yeah, we've got this!'" The 2007-08 Coyotes went on to become runnerup in the NCAA national title game. Mosely said "Words can't really describe a season like that. It was exciting!"

1. Oct. 6, 2002: Football vs. North Dakota State

In quadruple overtime, USD defeated the NDSU Bison 40-37. Though the Coyotes were leading 17-6 after three quarters, the Bison came on strong in the final quarter to take over the lead 20-17 with seven minutes left in regulation. With 3:04 left to play, USD's Cody Butler connected on a 49-yard field goal to tie the game at 20-20. A missed field goal attempt by NDSU sent the game into overtime. In the first overtime period, both USD and NDSU scored touchdowns followed by good extra points. The second overtime period ran much like the first, with both teams scoring touchdowns, sending the game into a third overtime period, where both teams kicked good field goals. In the fourth overtime period, Coyote defenders Kory Ebel and Bill Gassen held NDSU to no gain on a fourth-and-one play to open the door for South Dakota. On USD's possession, Butler kicked a 27-yard field goal to win the game. "As I was about to kick that last field goal, I could hear the NDSU fans yelling 'Choke! Choke!' I laughed to myself because I knew I was going to make it," said Butler. He added, "Winning was such a great feeling. Every time I go back to the Dome now, I can see myself and my teammates winning that game and everyone just going crazy."

Honorable Mentions 1. Oct. 12, 1985: Football vs. Morningside

In a Dakota Day thriller, USD beat NCC rival Morningside 40-38. In the final 1:13 of the game, USD was down 38-34. Quarterback Scott Jones connected on a 17-yard pass to Paul Parr to bring USD to the five-yard line with under 10 seconds on the clock. A flag against Morningside on Jones' next incomplete pass brought USD to the two-yard line for the final play. Jones faked a handoff and ran into the left side of the end zone to win the game for USD.

2. Jan. 2, 2002: Men's Basketball vs. North Dakota

In the 2002 NCC home opener, a buzzer beater by Josh Mueller clinched a 79-78 win for the Coyotes. With less than a second to play, Luke Tibbetts tossed a long pass to the Coyote end of the floor which was grabbed and thrown up by Mueller. The game-winning shot, the first in Mueller's career, came after North Dakota's Mario Porter sunk a fall away jumper from the left side of the lane that gave UND a 78-76 lead with one second remaining.

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