

Coyotes prep for NDSU with 79-56 rout of Cornell

VHS grapplers place fourth at Brandon Valley

By Keith A. Brockberg
P&D Correspondent

Stopping in Vermillion for a non-conference home game and a break from their three-game Summit League road trip proved to be the perfect remedy in the wake of the University of South Dakota's worst shooting performance of the year.

After shooting 24.1-percent in a 61-49 loss at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Saturday, the Coyotes rebounded with a 43-point first half and converted 55.2-percent of their shots in a 79-56 win over the Ivy League's Cornell Big Red at the DakotaDome Monday night.

"I thought we scored the ball well," USD head coach Ryn Williams said. "Scoring 43 points in the first half, that was just what we needed coming off a tough loss."

"We definitely have been struggling offensively missing some lay-ups and open shots; it's been frustrating," USD senior forward Amber Hegge said. "Tonight, everyone up and down the lineup was putting the ball in the hole; it seemed like it was contagious."

The Coyotes began the game hitting on 12 of 19 shots for 63.2-percent in taking a 29-18 lead with 11:50 to play in the first half.

USD's hot start trumped the Big Red's shooting, which would have held suit on most nights as they started eight of 16 in the game's opening 10 minutes.

As the half went on, the Coyotes' 100-point pace waned, but with three double-figure scorers at the break and a still-impressive 53-percent shooting percentage, USD took a 43-32 lead in to the lockerroom.

Hegge, who scored 14 points against the Big Red last January, had 13 points at the break while Annie Roche swished three of five 3-pointers and tallied 11 points.

Tempestt Wilson, USD's top scorer with 15 points in last season's 60-45 win at Cornell, added 10 points as she canned a pair of treys.

Allyson DiMugno scored nine points to lead the Big Red at the half as Clare

Fitzpatrick had eight points and six rebounds.

The lockerroom didn't cool the Coyotes down.

Alexis Yackley, who opened the game with a 3-pointer, did so to start 2nd-half action. Jodie Boss and Hegge added baskets and the Coyotes were off to a 50-32 lead in the early minutes of the second half.

The Coyotes grabbed their biggest lead thus far at 53-34 when Hegge spotted up for a 3-pointer with 15:48 to play.

"The first three or four minutes of the second half were key for us," Williams said. "We needed to score the ball or else we might not have kept the lead."

Kelly Stewart drove to rack and converted with the left hand, giving USD a 66-42 lead with 7:39 remaining.

After Stewart's drive, the Coyotes were still firing on all cylinders, penetrating the orange cylinder at 64.3-percent clip.

The Big Red outscored USD 11-7 in the final minutes, but the Coyotes were able to cruise to the 79-56 final and improve to 10-4 on the year.

Hegge finished with 22 points, six rebounds, six assists, three blocks and two steals.

McKayla Knudson, who is finally healthy after missing most of last season with an injury, scored 11 points.

"It's a lot of fun; this is a great group of girls and I've been practicing with them for two and half years," the red-shirt sophomore said. "It's nice to be out there on the floor contributing rather than just screaming my head off from the bench."

Conducting the finely tuned Coyote offense was junior guard Yackley, and passed out eight assists. Wilson added four assists to go with her 10 points. Roche finished with 11 points.

Fitzpatrick and DiMugno each finished with 15 points for the Big Red (5-8). Fitzpatrick grabbed 10 rebounds and Spencer Lane had six of Cornell's 18 assists.

Now, the Coyotes will renew rivalries in the Summit League with old North Central Conference foes.

USD, 2-3 in the Summit, will play at



Coyote Tempestt Wilson (3) faces Cornell defender Kristina Danielak (3) as she drives for the hoop during the first half of basketball action in the DakotaDome Monday night. Wilson contributed to the Coyotes 79-56 victory with 10 points.

(Photo by David Lias)

North Dakota State Saturday and South Dakota State Monday night.

The Bison have won 3-straight games to improve to 3-2 in the Summit while the Jackrabbits sit atop the conference standings with a 4-1 mark.

"It's always nice to get a win before a

road trip - it's going to be a really tough trip; we know that," Williams said. "NDSU is playing well and SDSU is at the top of the league, so we're going to have to play really well."

"Renewing rivalries," Hegge said. "We're excited."

Coyote Football completes 2012 schedule with Montana

University of South Dakota Director of Athletics, David Saylor, announced Monday that the Coyote football team will play at the University of Montana Sept. 1 in Missoula, MT, completing both teams' 2012 schedules.

The Coyotes will receive a cash guarantee for the game next fall and, as a result of scheduling the game, the two schools also have negotiated a home-and-home series in 2013 and 2014. Montana will visit the DakotaDome on Nov. 9, 2013, while the Coyotes will return to Missoula Sept. 13, 2014. All dates are subject to change.

"All of Coyote Nation should be excited about this agreement with Montana," Saylor said. "Getting an established FCS program, such as Montana, to visit Vermillion continues our push to bring the best possible opponents we can into the DakotaDome for our fans, the city of Vermillion and the state of South Dakota."

The Coyotes are coming off of a 6-5 season in the final year of the Great West Conference where they

went 2-2. Next season, the Coyotes begin play in the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

New Coyote head football coach, Joe Glenn, will have a homecoming of sorts as he was the head football coach at Montana from 2000-02. Glenn guided the Grizzlies to the 2001 National Championship and a runner-up finish in 2000. He led the Griz to a 39-6 record, including a 20-2 mark in the Big Sky Conference as he won two conference titles and tied for a third. His 86.7 winning percentage was the best in the history of the Big Sky Conference. From the third game of the 2001 season to the 10th game of the 2002 season, Montana won 24 consecutive games, tying the I-AA all-time record. His 2001 squad set a school record with 15 wins en route to a 15-1 record and the national title.

"What a terrific way to begin our season with such a quality opponent," Glenn said. "Certainly this will be an emotional game for me, however this will be a terrific

marking point for our program. We respectfully accept the challenge."

The Grizzlies are coming off of an 11-3 record and a semifinal finish in the 2011 FCS Championships with a 31-28 loss at Sam Houston State. Head coach Robin Pflugrad just completed his second season in Missoula as he took over for former head coach Bobby Hauck who became the head coach at UNLV in 2010. Pflugrad went 7-4 in his first year

in Missoula, followed by his 11-3 finish in 2011.

Montana leads the all-time series with the Coyotes 9-6 and the teams haven't met on the gridiron since the Griz won in Missoula 45-13 in 1999. The Coyotes are 5-2 against the Grizzlies in Vermillion, while Montana leads the series 6-1 in Missoula and 1-0 in neutral site contests. The lone Coyote win in Missoula came in 1965 with a 15-14 decision.

The teams first met in Vermillion in 1915 with the Coyotes winning 10-7. Montana won in Vermillion in 1916 11-0 and the teams didn't play again until 1949 with a 33-13 win by Montana in Butte, MT. The schools then played every year from 1965-1975 with the Coyotes winning five and the Griz winning six during the span. In 1999 the rivalry was renewed and they haven't met since.

K of C free throw contest is Jan. 22

The St. Agnes Council of the Knights of Columbus is having their Free Throw Contest Sunday Jan. 22, at 1 p.m. in the Vermillion High School Gym.

This Free Throw Contest is for the ages 10 years to 14 years old both boys and girls. First place T-shirts will be given out in each age group. For more info contact Ray Hofman 624-6457 or Dan Tracy at 659-5337.

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