



November 28, 2014 www.plaintalk.net

## Vermillion High wrestlers ready to improve state ranking



Vermillion's Brett Bye (top) has plenty to look forward during the upcoming 2014-15 wrestling season.

FILE PHOTO

By Mark Upward  
For the Plain Talk

Ask any wrestler on the Vermillion High School wrestling squad and they will tell you that the team is very capable of improving on the 11th place finish from last year's state meet.

Vermillion High School's head wrestling coach, Hazen Bye, is very optimistic about this year's season.

"Our goal as a team is to make it to the team podium, which means we are in the top eight teams at state," said Bye. "We have several wrestlers that have made it to state the past two years, but they didn't finish on the podium and if we want to move up on the podium as a

team, they will need to place."

There are twenty two wrestlers in grades 7-12 on this year's squad. Of those 22, three wrestlers stood on the podium at the awards ceremony after the state wrestling meet last year. This year the Vermillion program hopes to increase that number.

Bye is assisted this year in the wrestling program by Luke Heine, Keith Burkhart, and Gary Culver.

Ninth grader, Trey Hage, finished in fourth place in the 106 pound weight class last year.

"I know I have to be at

■ **READY,** Page 12A



Future Nebraska Cornhusker Regan Bye (right) has some unfinished business to take care of this wrestling season.

FILE PHOTO

## Simply too much



Nicole Seekamp (24), scored 22 points and added seven assists to help lead the South Dakota Coyote women's basketball team to a 96-52 rout of UC-Irvine Monday night at the Dakota Dome. It was USD's home opener and now they head to Milwaukee for Sunday's game at Marquette.

JAMES CIMBUREK / PRESS & DAKOTAN

By Alan Dale  
The Plain Talk

Cold outside and hot inside was the theme Monday night in Vermillion.

Mother Nature brought the shiver, but the University of South Dakota women's basketball team delivered the shake and bake.

Oh and UC-Irvine Anteaters were sent into the big chill as the host Coyotes struck from outside and too many times to count from short range in a resounding 96-52 win to kick off the home portion with authority.

USD (3-2) is back on the road as they travel to Milwaukee to take on Marquette Sunday at 2 p.m.

"I am pleased with our showing," USD head coach Amy Williams said. "Our kids came out with a lot of energy and excited to be back in the confines of the (DakotaDome) and playing in front of our fans. It was a nice sigh of relief to come out and have a good performance. Hopefully we carry some momentum this weekend to Milwaukee and Marquette."

The Coyotes were led by Raeshel Contreras (24 points, four assists), Nicole Seekamp (22 points, seven assists), Kate Liveringhouse (15 points, five rebounds), Heidi Hoff (10 points), and Lisa Loeffler (10 rebounds).

USD outrebounded Irvine 51-30, forced 19 turnovers, and help the Anteaters to 33 percent shooting - 27 percent

■ **MUCH,** Page 12A



Shannon Fitzsimmons (right) takes over the Vermillion High School gymnastics program this season.

FILE PHOTO

## New era begins for Tanager gymnasts

By Mark Upward  
For the Plain Talk

The Vermillion High School gymnastics team is being guided this year by first time head gymnastics coach Shannon Fitzsimmons. Fitzsimmons, a former Yankton High School gymnast, after being an assistant coach in the Tanager program last year.

Fitzsimmons is excited about taking over the program as head coach.

"We are really young this year," said Fitzsimmons. "We don't have a senior on our squad this year, but our young kids are doing really well getting ready for the first meet."

Fitzsimmons' assistant this year is Michael Rucker. Rucker, a sophomore at the University of South Dakota, is a rookie to the sport of gymnastics.

"I'm really excited to be here helping Coach Fitzsimmons," said Rucker. "I am learning something new about gymnastics everyday and I am looking forward to learning all the ins and outs of assisting the girls with their routines."

Rucker was also Fitzsimmons assistant coach this fall in the girls' soccer program.

The gymnasts have been working hard since Nov. 3 to learn new skills, polish skills they have and putting together new routines on each event.

"We are trying to give everyone a chance to compete in the first meet," said Fitzsimmons. "Most of the girls will be ready, but some of the rookies may need a little more time. We have been learning new skills and then putting those skills into routines to complete the routines."

With no seniors on the squad, the Tanagers will be relying on junior Cheyenne Mallory, freshman Anneliese Taggart, and eighth grader Carter Williams. These three gymnasts are the returning nucleus from last year's squad that placed 4th at the state gymnastics tournament.

■ **GYMNASTS,** Page 12A

## USD volleyball season ends short of Summit title

INDIANAPOLIS - Kaitlyn Hickey tallied 14 kills and Meredith Farkas added 12 kills as the IUPUI Jaguars swept past South Dakota volleyball 25-15, 25-23, 25-16 in the Summit League Tournament semifinals held in The Jungle on Saturday night. The loss ended South Dakota's season with a 19-12 record.

The win advanced the Jaguars (20-12) to the championship match, which will be held tomorrow at 3 p.m. CT. They will play Denver, who swept North Dakota State on Saturday, for the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

"IUPUI came out and played extremely strong," South Dakota head coach Leanne Williamson said. "They knew they had to play their best volleyball and they did just that. We got better defensively as the match went on, but it just wasn't enough in the end to get that

win." Beth Howard led the Jaguars on defense with 18 digs, while Hickey added 15 digs, Alexis Mapes tallied 31 assists and 10 digs.

Kendall Krittenbrink was the only Coyote to finish with double-digit kills, ending the match with 11. Riley Haug led USD defensively with 12 digs and Brittany Jessen had a double-double with 31 assists and 11 digs. Audrey Reeg added eight kills, nine digs and three total blocks, while Melissa Firtko added seven kills and three blocks.

The Jaguars out-killed the Coyotes 44-33 and held a 57-45 advantage in digs. They also held slight edges in aces (7-5) and blocks (6-5).

IUPUI out-killed the Coyotes 19-11 in the first set. Hickey tallied eight kills on nine attacks and recorded seven of IUPUI's 22 digs in the set. The Jags had a hitting percentage of .472 in the set

while USD hit a .167 clip.

The Coyotes out-killed IUPUI in set two (12-9), but couldn't overcome six Jaguar aces in the set. Krittenbrink had four kills to lead USD while no Jaguar had more than two kills in the set. The set saw 14 ties and seven lead changes.

The Jags had 16 kills and just four attack errors in the final set. Farkas and Hickey had five kills each.

It was the last game for a trio of Coyote seniors: Krittenbrink, Firtko and Haug. Each of them will leave the program with their names etched into USD's record books. Krittenbrink leaves as USD's all-time career kills leader at 1,925, Firtko ranks second in career total blocks at 306 and Haug leaves third in career digs at 1,531.

"All three seniors have left a lasting impression on this program," Williamson said. "They're going to be players

that we are going to talk about to our underclassmen and future players on how to be seniors and how to push for every single goal. From the time they were freshman to tonight, they've made huge strides and have taken this program to another level."

South Dakota is expected to return four starters from this year's team, which set a new program record for Summit League wins (12) and tallied wins over big name programs Arkansas, Colorado and Creighton.

"This year was a great stepping stone," Williamson said. "The team this year set a standard for future teams on where this program should be, and taught us the little things that we need to do still in order to get to the next level, win a conference championship and to get to the NCAA Tournament."

- Courtesy of USD sports information

## TANAGER ATHLETES EARN POST-SEASON ACCOLADES

Two Tanager football players earn Academic honors

Vermillion High School football players Jack Brown and Travis Weber were selected last Wednesday to the South Dakota Football Coaches Association 2014 Class 11A Academic All-State Football team.

In order to be selected a player must

be a senior with a 3.5 GPA or better, and have played or managed three years of football.

Brown and Weber were both a part of this year's 5-5 Tanager team which recorded the program's best record since 2008.

Nielsen, Siegel earn Dak XII volleyball recognition

Seniors Chloe Nielsen and Caitlin Siegel of Vermillion High School were chosen as honorable mention members of the Dakota XII All Conference team this past weekend.

The two seniors wrapped up their careers this month at the regional tournament.

- The Plain Talk

## Coyote football season ends with loss to State

By Jeremy Hoeck  
Press & Dakotan

BROOKINGS - Another State-U meeting. Another lopsided win for the program with playoff pedigree.

And for the third consecutive year, a game South Dakota State needed for its FCS post-season hopes.

Mission accomplished. The No. 15-ranked Jackrabbits beat rival South Dakota 37-14 on Saturday afternoon in Brookings to lock up their eighth win of the season - typically the benchmark for playoff consideration.

"We did what we were supposed to do, and hopefully with an explanation point," said head coach John Stiegelmeier, whose team will learn its playoff fate Sunday morning.

"Yeah, I think so," said a

smiling senior quarterback Austin Sumner, who passed for a career-high 395 yards, with three touchdowns.

The Coyotes (2-10, 0-8), meanwhile, finish their second winless league season in three years, and are 3-21 in conference games since joining the Missouri Valley - losers in their last 12.

"This one really hurts, more than all the others," head coach Joe Glenn said, "just because it is what it is, they're the Jackrabbits and we're the Coyotes."

The Coyotes, who still rolled up 438 yards of total offense, were kept off the scoreboard until the 10:34 mark of the fourth quarter. That was after quarterback Kevin Earl hit Eric Shufford

■ **ENDS,** Page 12A