# Coyotes play hard in season-opener loss at Air Force, 37-20

A strong second half effort by the University of South Dakota football team brought the Coyotes within 17 points in the season opener Saturday at Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) Air Force. The Falcons posted a 37-20 victory and jumped out to a 30-7 lead at halftime only to see a strong defensive effort bring the Coyotes back in the second half, outscoring the Falcons 13-7.

"We competed extremely well in the second half, especially defensively," eighth-year head coach Ed Meierkort said. "I'm not happy with the way we played offensively. I think we could've stretched these guys more, which then turns around and helps get the defense off the field."

From the first play from scrimmage Air Force's Mikel Hunter took an option reverse down the left side for an 80-yard touchdown giving the Falcons a 7-0 lead

"They did a great job-a reverse on the first play of the game and use your own anxiety against you," Meierkort said. "We didn't match offensively. We had some opportunities, but we took some bad penalties that really hurt us."

In a game that saw 15 penalties between both teams, the Coyotes were flagged nine times for 83 yards, while the Falcons were called for six infractions for

On the first Coyote possession, a tipped pass off a Dante Warren (Arlington Heights, IL) throw ended in an interception, but senior defensive back Jim Thompson (Hayward, WI) returned the favor for the Coyotes on the ensuing Falcon possession picking off hurler Tim Jefferson. It was Thompson's third career pick.

Warren and the Coyotes looked like they had something going on the next drive as they got inside the 40, but a

By Parker Knox

Sportswriter

The first week of the

season could not have gone

more smoothly than it did for

as the Tanagers swept to three

Vermillion's volleyball team

Starting six seniors –

"something we have never

done," according to Coach

on Aug. 30 resulted in a

game plan in both games,"

sweep for Vermillion.

Lenni Billberg – the season-

opening triangular at Lennox

"The girls carried out our

Billberg added. The Tanagers

set scores of 25-17, 25-21 and

scores of 25-20, 25-14 and 25-

Against Todd County Kelly

swept Todd County, 3-0, on

25-6, and gave Lennox the

same treatment, 3-0, on set

Amundson had seven kills

McClelland had 18 digs and

Lizzy Bye 10. Lexi Regnerus

Amundson rang the bell with

blocks and four block assists.

total to 26 and Bye hers to 13.

McClelland upped her digs

Fischbach had 18 set assists

and Sami Girard 12. Beth

had four blocks and Kylie

Fischbach 17 set assists.

In the Lennox dual

11 kills as well as two solo

and five blocks. Emily

straight victories.

Tanager volleyball

opens season with

three straight wins

Last Thursday at South

conditioning system failed on

done," their coach said. A 25-

19 Tanager win in the first set

Cardinal win in the second,

but Vermillion followed with

Amundson again led in

kills with seven, and Bye and

Fischbach had five each and

Szymonski four. Fischbach

and Girard had 16 and seven

14, followed by Szymonski

Girard with eight each and

Bve seven. Amundson had

four block assists, Fischbach

and Lexi Regnerus two solo

Vermillion will play both

match for nearly a full month

blocks each and Fischbach

four service aces and Bye

"A" and "B" teams in the

Luverne Invitational on

Saturday. The last home

will come Tuesday against

Sergeant Bluff-Luton.

three.

set assists, respectively. McClelland led in digs with

with 10, Fischbach and

Sioux City both teams dealt

with 98-degree heat in the

the worst possible night.

"just went out and got it

was matched by a 25-21

25-17 and 25-22 wins to

clinch the 3-1 victory.

Nevertheless, the Tanagers

gym where the air

penalty and a sack ended in a punt. Air Force's Jefferson optioned out to punt on fourth down from midfield on its next possession pinning the Coyotes deep.

Junior punter Cole Zweifelhofer (Chippewa Falls, WI) got the Coyotes of trouble with a career-long 72-yard punt. He had two 60-plus yard punts a year ago. The Falcons moved the ball down the field on their next possession as Wesley Cobb scored on a 1-yard run for his first career touchdown and a 14-0

The Coyotes began moving the ball again as Falcons as junior Will Powell (Sioux Falls) and senior Michael Neilson (Gilbert, AZ) had a pair of nice catches to move the Coyotes to the 18-yard line as the first quarter came to an end. It was Nielson's first career-catch as a

On third and goal from the five, Warren threw a fade to senior Dustin Nowotny (Rapid City) for the first touchdown of the season on a nine play, 67-yard drive taking up 3:09 on the

On the kick, two costly penalties cost the Coyotes 30-yards as the Falcons began the drive at the 19 of the Coyotes after a 34-yard return by Anthony LaCoste. Air Force then was penalized 30 yards for a hold and a personal foul as it scored on a reverse which was brought back. Parker Herrington then kicked a 45-yard field goal with 11:12 remaining in the half for a 17-7 lead for the home

The Falcons moved down the field quickly on their next possession as Asher Clark and LaCoste each had big runs and Jefferson called his own number for a two yard run for a 24-7 advantage. USAFA went 88 yards on eight plays in 2:03 for the score. Jefferson then added a three yard touchdown on the Falcons'

next possession for a 30-7 lead with 40 seconds remaining in the half.

"We've only played one option team, Cal Poly, and they're completely different than Air Force," Meierkort added. "I thought we adjusted at halftime. We came out completely vanilla and just let the kids play. That helped us get 11 out there and play fast."

The Coyotes were led by Warren on the ground with 35 yards on eight carries. Powell had two receptions for 44 yards, while Nowotny had five receptions for 27 yards and a touchdown. Warren was 9 of 15 with a touchdown and an interception for 86 yards.

Air Force had 298 yards on the ground as Hunter accounted for 82 and Clark had 71, while Jefferson rushed for 59 yards and two scores. Jefferson was just 3 for 6 for 41 yards and one interception.

The Falcons added another score early in the third quarter as a long touchdown from Jefferson to Hunter for a 37-7 score.

South Dakota then marched down the field on its longest drive of the day on 14 plays for 73 yards, but Warren was intercepted by Anthony Wright on the goal line. After a three-and-out by the Falcons, the Coyotes got the ball back with a short field.

Redshirt freshman Josh Vander Maten (Rock Valley, IA) had a nice sixyard rush to the four yard-line and junior running back Marcus Sims (Brooklyn Park, MN) punched it in for six and a 37-14 score early in the fourth quarter.

A forced fumble and recovery by sophomore Tyler Starr (Little Rock, IA) and an interception by senior Shane Potter (Becker, MN) set the Coyotes up nicely again as Warren hooked up with senior Jeremy Blount (Tampa, FL) over

Vermillion bowlers Kodie and Collin Lovejoy

competed at National Bowling Tournaments in

boys competing in The Junior Bowlers Tour Las

Vegas Open were Kodie and Collin finished first

and second respectively in the handicap division.

match play in second place at +209 pins. The two

brothers received first round byes then had to win

play to meet each other in the finals. Kodie's total

college scholarship earnings for the tournament

including sweeper events was \$3,020 and Collin

The next event of the week was the USBC

Youth Open "Youth Nationals" with Collin and

Kodie finishing in second place of 170 teams

entered in the 260-319 Doubles Division. The

boys rolling a six game total of 1154 pins for a

192.33 scratch average. Collin led the doubles pair

rolling games of 246, 170 and 194 for a 610 series.

Kodie rolled games of 215, 190 and 139 for a 544

earned \$1,310.

At the end of match play Kodie ended the

tournament +276 pins with Collin concluding

their way through two more games of bracket

Las Vegas, NV. The week started out with the

Lovejoys compete at National

**Bowling Tournament** 

the middle for a 35 yard strike cutting the deficit to 37-20.

For the game, the Coyotes were led by Ganious who had 79 yards on 15 carries. Warren tallied 61 yards on the ground, while Sims tallied 41 yards. Warren was 15 of 26 with two touchdowns and three interceptions for 184 yards. Nowotny led the team with 55 yards receiving and a score. Powell tallied 52 yards on three catches and Blount had two receptions for 37 yards and a score.

Blount had 45 yards in three kick returns brining him within two yards of the career kick return record. He has 1,351 return yards as James Vann leads the record book with 1,353 return yards between 1985-1989.

Defensively, the Coyotes were led by Starr who had a game-high six solo tackles, a sack, three forced fumbles and a fumble recovery. Darius Hogans (Las Vegas, NV) had a game-high nine tackles with three solo stops and six assisted

Clark led the way for the Falcons on the ground with 97 yards, while Hunter tallied 82 yards and a score. Jefferson finished with 69 yards and two scores. He was 4 of 9 with two interceptions and 96 yards in the air. Hunter had 55 yards receiving on one reception and a score.

The Coyotes return home to host the defending Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) national champions Eastern Washington Sept. 10 at 4 p.m. in the DakotaDome.

For more information about South Dakota athletics, check back with www.usdcoyotes.com. Season tickets for Coyote athletic events can be purchased by calling (605) 677-5959.

"This is a first-class place, we played against one of the better teams in the country and we can take some positives out of it," Meierkort said. "This is a great

**KODIE & COLLIN LOVEJOY** 

The singles competition followed with Kodie

average division. He rolled games of 214, 210 and

rolling games of 156, 236 and 167 for a 559 series.

College scholarship prize money is not yet

posted for the USBC Youth Open as of current

184 for a 608 series total. Collin finished 16th

### S.D. volleyball loses to Creighton and Northern Illinois

The South Dakota volleyball team won the first set against Creighton but the Bluejays came back to win the final three in a 22-25, 25-18, 25-17, 25-23 victory over the Coyotes at the Bluejay Invitational Saturday. The Coyotes lost to Northern Illinois to conclude the weekend, 25-20, 25-17, 25-21.

The weekend saw the Coyotes face three quality opponents as all three teams are picked to finish in the top four of their respective

"We don't feel like we're very far away," South Dakota head coach Matt Houk said. "The great thing about facing this type of competition is it shows you what your flaws are. Those teams take advantage of what you don't do well. We learned we need to improve our serve receive and we need to shore up our block. We also learned we can attack the ball with anybody."

Against Creighton, the Coyotes were led by senior Carol Logato (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), who led the way with a careerhigh 19 kills, while freshman Kendall Kritenbrink (Gretna, NE) added 13. Sophomore Natalie Walseth (Inver Grove Heights, MN) added eight kills and senior Tahnee Reed (Pierce, NE) collected seven. Sophomore Tori Kroll (Germantown, WI) had 38 set assists and also led with 14

The Coyotes trailed 13-10 in the first set but scored five straight points - with Kritenbrink and Reed providing two kills each - to take a 15-13 lead. The Bluejays battled back to take a 20-19 lead, but the Coyotes battled back to tie the set at 22-22. They scored the final three points with Kroll providing two kills - to record a 25-22 win. South Dakota hit .372 in the first set, led by seven kills from Logato.

South Dakota never led in the second set, and was as close as 12-9 after a Walseth kill but could get no closer and fell 25-18. Creighton hit .481 in the second set, compared to .156 for the

In the third set, the Coyotes took a 7-5 lead after a Logato kill, but Creighton scored five of the next six points to take a 10-8 lead. The Coyotes were within 14-11 after a Kritenbrink kill but Creighton pulled away from there to a 25-17 win.

The Coyotes gained momentum midway through the fourth set. They were down 10-9 but scored the next six points with Logato supplying three kills - to take a 15-10 lead. Creighton came back with a 9-2 run to take a 19-17 lead.

South Dakota battled back to tie the set at 23-23 after a Creighton attack error, but the Bluejays scored the final two points to secure a 25-23 win and a 3-1 win in the match.

"We came up in the first set really rolling hard," Houk said. "They came back and challenged us. We had an opportunity in every set against Creighton. We're just struggling finishing; we can't get over the hump yet. We played really good volleyball against Creighton."

Against Northern Illinois, which is the preseason favorite in the Mid-American Conference, Kritenbrink had 11 kills. Logato added nine, while Reed had six. Kroll had 25 set assists while Logato had 12 digs and freshman Riley Haug (Gretna, NE) added

Defense (solos-assists-total

#### Coyote women's soccer loses heartbreaker, I-0 sophomore Jenny Teslow (Sioux

The South Dakota women's soccer team battled Creighton to a deadlock for more than 108 minutes but Kelly Connolly's goal in the closing moments of the second overtime lifted the Bluejays past the Coyotes, 1-0 in nonconference action Sunday in Omaha, NE.

The Coyotes (0-3-1) gave the defending Missouri Valley Conference champions – and 2011 preseason favorites – all they could handle during Sunday's contest. To show the improvement South Dakota has displayed - the Coyotes lost to Creighton 4-1 at home last year

and 8-0 in 2009.

"Today we took another step in the right direction," South Dakota head coach Mandy Green said. "This was probably the best game we have played so far against a really good Creighton team."

The game was evenly matched, with the Creighton (3-1) holding a slight 13-11 edge in shots. Freshman Mackenzie Viktor (Loveland, CO) finished with seven saves for the Coyotes.

Freshman Rebecca Pederson (Waconia, MN) led the Coyotes with four shots, while

SSC: Derrick Geddings 2-

VHS: D'Andre Fore 1-yd.

**VHS** 

SSC

yd. run (Martinez kick), 4:45.

SSC: Stark 17-yd. run

(Martinez kick), 11:53.

run (kick blocked), 3:45.

(Martinez kick), 9:38.

Fourth quarter:

Falls) had three shots, including one on goal. Junior Erin Bello (Fort Collins, CO), sophomore Afton Keiser (Sioux Falls) and freshmen Makena Cameron (Chevenne, WY) and Lauren Bennett (Walton, KY) added one apiece.

The Coyotes applied pressure to Creighton in the overtime frames, holding a 6-3 edge in shots, including 4-1 in the first overtime period. The game stayed deadlocked at 0-0 down to the final minutes before Connolly scored the goal.

Penalties-yds. 10-70

Rushing: VHS, Fore 23-98, Mitch Brown 4-22, Michael Sand 7-20, Tanner Anderson 1-1, Nathan Garrett 1-1, Kyle Weiss 4-0. SSC, Geddings 23-144, Stark 19-124, Harral 4-14, Karter Keefer 2-16, Scott Manley 2-10, Curtis Waldemars

Passing: VHS, Kyle Weiss 2-2-55. SSC, Manley 3-7-51, Keefer 0-1-0.

Receiving: VHS, Anderson 1-43, Fore 1-12. SSC, Kaden Moore 2-42, Nate rogers 1-9.

tackles):1 VHS, Will Mart 3-6-9, Chayse Meierkort 6-2-8, Anthony Leber 4-4-8, Brett Bye 5-2-7, Anderson 3-3-6, Avery Garcia 1-4-5, Dan Goeden 0-4-4, Alex Osborne 2-2-4, Stetson Kastengren 1-3-4, Nick Jensen 2-2-4, Thoms Walker 1-2-3, Riley Vlasman 0-3-3, Fore 1-2-3, Garrett 1-1-2, Sand 1-1-2. Tackles for loss: Bye 1. Fumbles recovered: Goeden 1, Vlasman 1. Pass knockdowns, Meierkort 2, Anderson 1, Sand 1. Interceptions, Anderson 1.

## Szymonski had three solo **■ FOOTBALL**

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South Sioux put its monster linemen back into play, but the Tanagers got their TD anyway. Once they did, the Cardinals again used their first-string offense to try to answer, but the Tanager defense had other ideas. Leading by 28-6 with 20 seconds left, SSC called a time out rather than letting the clock expire in order to get its fieldgoal team onto the field. Justice was served, however, when the attempt was missed.

Fore led the Vermillion ground game, and his 98 yards in 23 carries were hard-earned yards. Brown had 22 yards and Sand 20. Weiss' two completions in two attempts earned 55 aerial yards. On defense Will Mart led the tackling with nine, followed by Chayse Meierkort and Anthony Leber with eight each, Brett Bye with seven, Tanner Anderson with six, and Avery Garcia with

"We're a work in progress," Culver said, "but give our kids credit. They put together a good drive for our first score. We're making strides, and we have to remember the season is a marathon, not a sprint. We just made life too easy for South Sioux City with our costly errors.'

VHS .... 0 0 0 6 --- 6 SSC ... 7 14 0 7 --- 28 First quarter:

SSC: Austin Stark 3-yd. run (Jorge Martinez kick), 9:14. Second quarter:

SSC: Sean Harral 9-yd. run

First downs 10 21 Rushes-yds. 51-311 40-142 Passing yds. 51 Total yds. 197 362 Passes 2-2-0 3-8-1 4-27.3 1-35.0 Punts-avg. Fumbles-lost 4-4

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