Coyote women's soccer continues run of good play; beat UND, UNI

By Alan Dale

alan.dale@plaintalk.net

What a great way to go into league play. The University of South Dakota women's soccer team defeated Northern Iowa 2-0 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on Sunday to continue it's best run

of play this season. Following a competitive 3-1 loss to a top-notch Creighton club on Sept. 14 in Vermillion, the Coyotes rolled past North Dakota in a 5-1 win on September 19 and on September 20 were able to take out UNI (2-5-2 thanks to goals by Colleen Reeves and Taylor

Nivala. "It's great that we were able to get a shutout," USD head coach Mandy Green said. "It was a good win for us because there were a lot of things that we had to overcome in this game, including the wind and the fact that it was really cold today. The fact that we were able to overcome those and get the goals when we got them was really big."

Reeves scored her third goal of the season in the 30th minute off of an assist from

Shannon Keller to lead 1-0 at

halftime. Nivala tallied her teamhigh eighth goal of the year in the 73rd minute off of a steal and counter attacking strike to cement the win.

"A key was finishing when we had the opportunity," Green said. "We didn't have as many opportunities as previous games but we finished on the opportunities we had.

"(Goalkeeper) McKenzie Viktor had an amazing save off the piece they had, within a minute Taylor got her goal in the second half. That killed the game right there. That was a big moment for us." South Dakota outshot the

Panthers 13-8. A lot of the recent run of

solid play follows a disappointing home loss to Wyoming on Sept. 12.

That loss) definitely woke us up," Green said. "That game we lacked the heart and energy and intensity we needed. I don't think it was the Wyoming as much as the Creighton game that we started to really believe that we can compete and we can win.

"It's more in our hands



BeccaTorres (4) helped the University of South Dakota women's soccer team roll past North Dakota 5-1 last Friday.

than we've really believed or realized in the past. So when we do things we need to do we come out and win games. The

girls are believing in that too." Routing UND to break the skid (as seen online) Gotcha!

That's got to be part of the verbiage the University of South Dakota women's soccer must have spoken – if not metaphorically - about its resounding 5-1 whitewash of visiting North Dakota Friday

ALAN DALE /The Plain Talk

afternoon. After never beating them, South Dakota (5-4) not only broke a three-game losing streak they finally got off the deck against a UND (1-5-1 team that either had tied or beaten the Coyotes during Di-

vision I play. 'We'd never beaten them and tied them a bunch of times." USD head coach Mandy Green said. "The fact that we kept going and kept pushing and kept getting

goals was awesome."

The run of play continues a strong 180-minute string of solid performance from the USD women, including their gutty 3-1 defeat against unbeaten Creighton in Vermillion last weekend.

"As far as playing-wise this was a good buildup off of the last game we played," Green said. "Yes we scored five goals but there are still things within the run of play that were sloppy and I wish we could do better.'

Rebecca Sparkman got USD off and running in the fourth minute with a light tap in front in front of the North Dakota goalmouth to put the home team up 1-0.

The score came after a poor defensive clearance by UND which followed a Coyote corner kick they earned following en worse clearing by the visiting back line.

Two minutes later North Dakota took advantage of the fourth poor pass by USD in midfield play already to that point and a transition attack led to Zoe foster score to tie things at 1-1.

"I am not happy about

that soft goal we gave up at the beginning," Green said. 'We have talked a lot about establishing our presence first and we may have been pressing much at the begin-

ning."
That didn't deter the Coyotes for long as they continued to pressure the UND

defense and it would pay off. Junior Danielle Anderson tapped in a stubborn ball in front of the North Dakota goal in the 30th minute to put the hosts back up 2-1.

Then Taylor Nivala put the

sweet in soccer into play. In a race for a back pass to the UND goalie, the junior Nivala scored her team-high sixth goal when she slid into the ball and rolled it past a lunging North Dakota goaltender in the 20th minute for a 3-1 Coyote lead.

They took that lead into the half and Nivala would punch in her second score of the day in the 57th minute to put USD up 4-1 as the North Dakota hex slowly began to slip away.

Megan Anderson wrapped up the onslaught with a tap in at the 74th minute.

WRAPS

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we want to be a threat to everyone."

Everyone could simply mean Summit League according to assistant USD coach Michelle Cole.

The only conference that matters to us is the Summit League," Cole said. "We are on a mission, we have goals to do and they all have to do with how we do in the Summit League. Yes, it's great to beat a team out of the Pac-12...yes, it's great to beat a team out of the SEC and Big East, but in order to hang a banner on our wall we have to take care of business in the Summit League.'

Summit League play begins against an NDSU (5-8) program that the Coyotes beat twice last year in four sets.

It also marks the team's home opener...fi-

"It will be great to play at home and we are really excited for it," freshman setter Brittany Jessen said. "To play in front of our fan base will be nice. We just need to come out with a lot of energy and come out strong."

A LOOK BACK at Omaha

Fighting Illini roll past feisty Coyotes In what boiled down to a unofficial title match for the classic, USD and Illinois matched wits in the night session match between two 2-0 clubs.

Illinois cruised to an unblemished weekend as it made quick work of USD 3-0 (25-18, 25-15,

25-22) to end a long day at D.J. Sokol Arena.

"That is a very good team and what they did well is tool us better than we tool them," Cole said of the Illini ability to score of USD blocks. "Normally we use the block very well and they found a way to use our size against us. They were outdigging us right until the third set when we got back to basics.

The first set saw the Illini (8-3) immediately establish their prowess at the net as their big middle block gave the USD offense plenty of fits to take an early 14-8 lead.

Illnois' size advantage was evident as it rotated in six players over 6-foot-1 on. A regular basis. the tune of an 11-10 lead.

Earlier on Saturday, a hot offensive start cooled to a nervy finish before the Coyotes found a way to tough out a 3-2 (25-23, 25-23, 18-25, 32-34, 15-10) win against the host Blue-

USD survived a triple threat hitting attack and the disappointment of seven lost match

points in a monumental fourth set. "I haven't been in that many sets like that and I don't plan on being in many more," Firtko said. "It's exciting when it's never end-

It wasn't a bad day for the senior hitter as Kritenbrink got to play and win in front of her hometown crowd.

"It was a huge win and I have a lot of friends on (Creighton's) team," Kritenbrink said. "It was nice winning my senior year after losing to them my first three years.

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RESTS

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Prop City

Junior defensive end Drew Iddings (Rapid City) earned his first ever MVFC Defensive Player of the Week accolades for his performance last week against NAU.

He had four solo tackles for loss and a sack. His stops resulted in a cumulative loss of 13 yards while he also was credited for a quarterback

Sophomore offensive lineman Nile Banks (Iowa City, Iowa) also earned recognition as the Offensive Newcomer of the Week.

"Drew has been playing lights out sideline to sideline all year," Glenn said. "Nile starts as a sophomore on a team that averaged 5.4 yards-per-carry and 304 yards on the ground against the No. 22 team in the country. He's tough and he's smart and doesn't make mistakes.

A look back at win over (as seen online by Jeremy

Hoeck)

Picking up a 'signature win' has been a popular goal for the University of South Dakota football program.

As it relates to beating a nationally-ranked opponent, the Coyotes can now check one box on their to-do list.

Sure, beating No. 22-ranked and 2013 playoff participant Northern Arizona 28-21 on Saturday at the DakotaDome was impressive, but the Coyotes made clear afterward that they're not about ready to settle.

"We've got to do it over and over again," said head coach Joe Glenn, whose team captured its second win over a ranked FCS opponent in three seasons since he took over.

'Somewhere we had to beat someone that's ranked.

In a similar situation a year ago, with a late lead over a ranked team, things might have turned out differently for the Coyotes (2-

"That's what we needed to see, a little grit and toughness, and being able to close it out," said sophomore quarterback Ryan Saeger, who rushed for a career-high 108 yards with two touchdowns.

Everybody in Vermillion knows that hasn't really been the case the past few years.'

Sporting a 20-0 lead at halftime, the Coyotes still had to fend off another furious rally by a visiting team — much the same story as last season, when Montana and Youngstown State rallied for late wins in Vermil-

The Lumberjacks of the Big Sky Conference got within 28-21 on a touchdown run with 4:16 remaining, but the Coyotes ran out the clock — keyed by a 33-yard scamper by Saeger that all but sealed the win.

"This was a very big win for us and this program, to beat a ranked team in the dome," Iddings said. "I agree, this is a signature

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