

- *New faces, same results at U of South Dakota
- *Boyhood pals lead Stevens
- *Youth tournaments coming up

Smooth transition



New coach, mostly new lineup and No. 5 ranked USD women keep rolling

By Bruce Strand

Two players who won four state championships each in high school are among the reasons the South Dakota Coyotes are having the best season among the state's Division I programs.

Under new coach Dawn Plitzuweit, the Coyotes are 7-1 in the Summit League and 17-3 overall, with a 24-game home winning streak, including their 80-48 thrashing of North Dakota State on Thursday evening to avenge their lone league loss.

Plitzuweit, after nine years at Northern Kentucky, succeeded Amy Williams, who left to coach Nebraska. Williams led USD to a 32-6 record last year and was named Summit League coach of the year twice in her four seasons.

There were four senior starters on last year's team but the Coyotes are carrying on nicely with the new coach and mostly new lineup, with a top six of three Nebraska natives and one each from South Dakota, Minnesota and Ontario.



Allison Arens, sophomore guard, leads the USD Coyotes.

USD photo

Their leader in all key categories is Allison Arens, 5-foot-9 sophomore point guard averaging 19.6 points, five rebounds and 4.1 assists, a relentless driver who gets fouled often and has cashed 115 of 134 from

the line. Arens was a four-time state champion in Nebraska at Crofton High School and was MaxPreps state player of the year. She exploded onto the scene this year after playing just 8.5 minutes last year.

Ciara Duffy, who led St. Thomas More of Rapid City to the fourth state crown of her prep career last winter, is making a big impact as a freshman. The 6-foot-1 guard averages 11.2 points and has 45 three-pointers. Duffy won eight state team championships in high school, including three in track-and-field and one in soccer, and was class valedictorian.

Jaycee Bradley is another talented sophomore from Nebraska. The 5-foot-10 wing from Norfolk is averaging 14.3 points and leading with 64 three-pointers.

Bridget Arens, Allison's sister, is a 6-foot senior forward averaging 6.1

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Coyote women: big boost from neighbor Nebraska

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points. At Norfolk, it's Bridget and not Allison holding the scoring record of 1,603.

The fifth starter is Abigail Fog, 6-foot-4 senior center from Ontario, who played for American University before transferring to USD and sitting out last season. Fog averages 9.2 points.

Providing instant offense off the bench is Madison McKeever, 5-foot-7 freshman guard who led Win-E-

Mac to a state title in Minnesota her sophomore year, and ranks 10th in scoring (3,298) and second in steals (823) in the North Star State. McKeever averages 7.8 points, and, like Allison Arens, has the knack for drawing fouls; she's made 40 of 50.

Other highlights besides the payback against NSDU have been beating South Dakota State 65-62 before 2,595 fans at home, and beating Illinois of the Big Ten 77-68 at home. That was the first visit of a Big Ten team for men or women in 35 years. USD is starting to earn that kind of respect.

Pals since 5th grade are senior leaders at Stevens

Mason Archambault and Jacob Martin, whose friendship and partnership began in fifth grade, are one of the top guard tandems in South Dakota as seniors at Rapid City Stevens, profiled recently by Richard Anderson of the Rapid City Journal.

"Outside of Mason's apartment, he had a little basketball court at the park," Archambault told the Journal. "We would go there all day long, just shoot, shoot, shoot. I would get his rebound, he would get mine. We played a lot of one-on-one. They were always good games."

Archambault is averaging 19.4 points and Martin delivers 13.3 points, 5.4 rebounds and 3.5 assists for the No. 3 Raiders, who lost to No. 1 Sioux Falls O'Gorman 71-65 Saturday with Martin scoring 19 points. Matt Cartwright led O'Gorman with 17. Stevens beat O'Gorman 64-54 earlier in the season.

* * *

Lexi Wadsworth joined the 1,000-point club while scoring 10 for No. 2 ranked Hamlin (10-0) in a 57-38 win over Milbank Area. Brynn Alfson led the Chargers with 16 points. (Watertown Public Opinion)

* * *

The Wolsey-Wessington boys (9-0) and Sanborn Central/Woonsocket girls (11-0) won the 281 Conference tournament last weekend. The Warbird boys beat Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 50-46 in the finals, led by Riley Gohms with 23 points and 12 rebounds and Bennett White with 19 points. The Lady Blackhawk girls drubbed Highmore/Harrold 64-29 in the finals. Megan

Pryro dominated with 25 points and seven rebounds, and Myah Selling hit 19 points. (Huron Plainsman)

* * *

Britney Lovre sank nine 3-pointers for 27 of her 29 points, leading Deuel (5-7) to a 50-37 win over Britton-Hecla. (Watertown Public Opinion)

South Dakota media Top Five

Boys Class AA — Sioux Falls O'Gorman 10-3, Brookings 9-1, Brandon Valley 10-2, Rapid City Stevens 8-3, Sturgis 8-2

Boys Class A — Madison 9-2, St. Thomas More 9-2, Sioux Valley 11-2, Sioux Falls Christian 6-3, Vermillion 11-1

Boys Class B — Bridgewater-Emery 12-0, Corsica-Stickney 10-1, Langford Area 11-1, Sully Buttes 7-1, Scotland 9-1

Girls Class AA — Harrisburg 8-1, Brandon Valley 10-2, Sioux Falls Washington 8-2, Rapid City Stevens 6-2, Rapid City Central 7-3

Girls Class A — St. Thomas More 11-0, Hamlin 10-0, Little Wound 14-1, Lennox 11-1, Belle Fourche 12-0

Girls Class B — Ethan 11-1, Sanborn Central-Woonsocket 11-0, Sully Buttes 10-1, Warner 9-1, DeSmet 10-2

2017 SOUTH DAKOTA YOUTH BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Questions? Call Pacesetter at 320-243-7460 or
email: info@pacesetternet.com • www.pacesettersports.net
Follow our Facebook page: Pacesetter Basketball

REGION PLAYOFFS

Region Champion and Runner-up are invited to the
South Dakota State Championship April 1-2 in Yankton.
Top two teams at STATE advance to Great State in the Twin Cities.



Sioux Falls Hurricanes - 5th Grade Boys
2016 Great Four-State Champs

All grades refer to the 2016-2017 school year.

All players on a team must either be enrolled in the same school system or live in the same city, the same school district or the same tribal community. Smaller schools may combine to form one team if the combined enrollment of their high schools for grades 9-12 is 400 or fewer. Schools that combine should be from the same area.

Region Playoff Schedule

North Region: Madison

Saturday, Feb. 25

Boys Grades 4, 6 & 8

Girls Grades 5, 7 & 9

Sunday, Feb. 26

Boys Grades 5, 7 & 9

Girls Grades 4, 6 & 8

South Region: Vermillion

Saturday, March 4

Boys Grades 5, 7 & 9

Girls Grades 4, 6 & 8

Sunday, March 5

Boys Grades 4, 6 & 8

Girls Grades 5, 7 & 9

**DEADLINE: Mail – Prior Saturday
Online – 12:00 noon Monday**

Team Entry Form - SOUTH DAKOTA Region Playoffs

All players are from one school district. School district _____

Combined team. List all school districts: _____

If registered by Dec. 30:
\$145/team

Starting Dec. 31: \$155/team
3-4 game guarantee

(See back for details)

Site _____ Grade _____ Circle Boys or Girls Circle Rating: Strong - Good - Fair - Weak

Team Contact Person _____ Team Color _____
(needed if own teams from non school register)

Cell # _____ Alt # _____

Mailing Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Email address _____
(Email address required - Confirmation will be sent via email - Please write legibly)

Alternate Contact Person _____ Cell # _____

Send check with this entry form to: PACESETTER, PO BOX 222, PAYNESVILLE, MN 56362

Registration also available online at www.pacesettersports.net

The South Dakota
state champion
and runner-up in
each grade are
invited to the
Great Four-State
Championship in
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All players will receive a
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The road to Minneapolis-St. Paul

Youth teams now have 'Midwest Madness' Playoffs

By Jeff McCarron
Pacesetter Director

There is a tug-of-war on for basketball players. This battle splits two ways: the groups that offer all-star team or club team tournaments and the groups that offer school team or community team tournaments.

At Pacesetter, we provide for the "hometown team" group, where youth basketball teams in grades 4-9 that are school-based or community-based now have a "Final Four-style" playoff system, the Pacesetter Great Four-State championships, that involve over 900 teams in four states: MN-IA-ND-SD.

Pacesetter Sports started this system in 2010 to give school teams an exciting playoff to match or surpass the lure of AAU teams traveling to tournaments around the country. All players must either attend the same school or live in the same city, school district or tribal community. Smaller schools (under 400 in 9-12) may combine if the total enrollment adds up to 400 or less.

Teams begin with Region Playoffs in February-April in their own section of their state, seeking to advance to state championships. The top two teams in their state tournaments then advance to the Pacesetter Great Four-State championships in the Twin Cities. The Target Center hosted the championships from 2010-2016. Due to construction this summer, the championships are likely to be held at Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. Last year Minnesota and North Dakota won four "Great

State" titles each, Iowa three and South Dakota one. Here are the 2016 Great Four-State champions:

MINNESOTA

7th Grade Boys – Stewartville
9th Grade Boys – Perham
8th Grade Girls – Eden Valley-Watkins
9th Grade Girls – Mountain Iron-Buhl

NORTH DAKOTA

4th Grade Girls – Bismarck Showtime
6th Grade Girls – Central Cass
7th Grade Girls – Dakota Thunder
8th Grade Boys – St. John's/Four Winds

IOWA

4th Grade Boys – Pella
5th Grade Girls – Xavier Catholic
6th Grade Boys – Mason City

SOUTH DAKOTA

5th Grade Boys – Sioux Falls Hurricanes

Fliers, further information and registration are available at www.pacesettersports.net.

Teams in the Great Four-State are invited to a meeting in the Marriott or Radisson ballroom, a Timberwolves suite, or the Target Center floor, the night before their event. Players are introduced in front of the hundreds of players, parents and coaches. The next day they play on the home of the Timberwolves and the Lynx. It doesn't get any better than that.

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Extra - The Gun will require shots to be **made** before it moves to the next spot. This allows you to focus on successful repetition vs just getting 500 shots in.

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4th-5th-6th-7th-8th Grade Boys & Girls

\$10 discount if registered by Dec. 30



Saturday, Mar. 4

Boys Grades 4, 6, 8 & Girls Grades 5, 7
College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph

Sunday, Mar. 5

Boys Grades 5, 7 & Girls Grades 4, 6, 8
College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph

Limit of 16 teams per grade/gender • Register by Feb. 24

The 2017 Pacesetter Winter Classic Basketball tournament will be held at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, MN.

These tournaments are open to all boys' and girls' teams in grades 4-5-6-7-8. All players must either be enrolled in the same school system or live or attend school in the same city, the same school district or the same tribal community.

Each date is limited in the number of teams that can be accepted. These are ONE-day tournaments. All teams will play 3-4 games.

Championship teams will receive a team plaque, and top finishers will receive individual medals with neck ribbons.

\$150/entry if postmarked by December 30, 2016. \$160/team if postmarked after December 30.

Registration also available online at www.pacesettersports.net • Follow us on Facebook: Pacesetter Basketball

2017 Winter Classic

March 4 - 5

Circle gender: Boys or Girls

Circle grade: 4 5 6 7 8

School _____ Team Color _____

(needed if two teams from same school enter)

Team Contact _____ Email address _____

(required - confirmation will be sent via email)

Cell # _____ Alternate # _____

Mailing Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Alternate Contact _____ Cell # _____

Team Entry Form

Questions?

info@pacesetternet.com

320-243-7460

Team rating: (confidential)

____ Strong ____ Good

____ Fair ____ Weak

Make check payable to Pacesetter and send with form to Pacesetter, PO Box 222, Paynesville, MN 56362

Up to Dec 30 \$150/team per tournament • After Dec 30 \$160/team per tournament

Registration also available online at www.pacesettersports.net

Vermillion, Madison to host regionals prior to Pacesetter state youth tourneys

Vermillion and Madison have been selected to host the Pacesetter Region Playoffs for the South Dakota Youth Basketball Championships for boys and girls, grades 4 through 9.

Madison will host the North Region playoffs Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 25-26, at the community center, Dakota State University, and Madison High School.

Vermillion will host the South Region playoffs Saturday and Sunday, March 4-5, at the new USD Sanford Coyote Center, the USD Wellness Center, and Vermillion High School.

The Chamber of Commerce in each city and officials from all the facilities have worked together with youth team coordinators to secure the courts for this first stage of the Pacesetter Great Four-State playoff system that involved over 900 teams from South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa in 2016.

South Dakota claimed one Four-State championship last summer when the Sioux Falls Hurricanes 5th grade boys' team won the title at the Target Center in Minneapolis.

All teams play 3-4 games in the region playoffs. The top two teams at each region advance to the state tournament April 1-2 in Yankton at the Summit Center to play

in a Final Four-style bracket, and the top two teams at state advance to the 8-team four-state championship, which is likely to be held at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul this year due to construction on the Target Center.

The region playoffs are expected to draw 50 to 80 youth teams at each regional site.

Fliers, registration forms, and further information are available at www.pacesettersports.net.



The Hamlin girls and their coaches posed with a runner-up plaque after the 2016 Great Four-State Championships at the Target Center in Minneapolis last summer.

—Submitted by Jeff McCarron, Pacesetter Director ... contact at Jeff@pacesetter.net

Big game? Star player? News story?

If you know about a player or team or coach or an exciting game or perhaps some issue that would be worthy of an article in South Dakota Basketball News, feel free to let us know.

E-mail to bruce.a.strand@gmail.com

Thanks!