



THE U REVIEW

The latest news from the United Sports Academy

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2nd Annual Labor Day Volleyball Classic

Local NAIA women's volleyball programs flooded the CNOS Fieldhouse Labor Day weekend for the **2nd Annual United Sports Academy/College of Saint Mary Labor Day Classic Tournament presented by Wall of Fame**. MVP United Volleyball Club served as the tournament organizer, Old Chicago Pizza and Taproom and the North Sioux City Subway were additional sponsors of the tournament.

21 programs, ranging from local GPAC teams to programs who travelled across the country, competed on Friday and Saturday. The draw of this tournament? The NAIA Women's Volleyball National Championships take place at the Tyson Events Center in Sioux City at the end of each fall season. Therefore, this tournament is a great opportunity for teams to compete in the very town they may be competing for a National Championship in just a few short months!

The teams in attendance included host team: **College of Saint Mary (NE)**, as well as a number of local GPAC squads: **Briar Cliff University (IA)**, **Concordia University (NE)**, **Dakota State University (SD)**, **Dordt University (IA)**, **Hastings College (NE)**, **Jamestown University (ND)**, **Midland University (NE)**, **Morningside University (IA)** and **Northwestern College (IA)**. Local non-conference competition include **Presentation College (SD)** and **York University (NE)**. Teams who travelled a bit further to compete are **Evangel University (MO)**, **Mayville State University (ND)**, **Park**



University (MO), Rocky Mountain College (MT), Tabor College (KS), University of St. Francis-Ft. Wayne (IN), University of Saint Mary (KS), University of Tennessee Southern (TN) and Viterbo University (WI).

Eight of these teams are in the [Top 25 rankings of the NAIA Coaches' Poll](#), making for a surplus of high-level matches. Ranked teams included: Midland University (2), Park University (4), Jamestown University (6), Northwestern College (8), Viterbo University (9), Concordia University (10), College of Saint Mary (16) and Dordt University (23).

"The Labor Day Classic always draws the top NAIA talent to the United Sports Academy. It is exciting to see teams from all across the country come to compete in our facility! It's a chance for programs to come to Sioux City where the NAIA National Championships are held and use it as motivation to start and finish their season in this city. Last year's competition was fierce, and this year was no different, having an even more competitive schedule inside the CNOS Fieldhouse this year," states College of Saint Mary Head Volleyball Coach and MVP United Club Director, Rick Pruett.

This was the second year of this tournament, with 19 teams having competed in the Inaugural Labor Day Classic in 2021. This was BallerTV's first broadcasted event in the CNOS Fieldhouse, adding an additional 2,000 viewers of the event! We are excited to partner with them for upcoming volleyball, basketball, soccer and baseball events!

"It was another successful event and we want to thank all of our volunteers, staff, sponsors and the teams who attended the tournament for continuing the tradition of this tournament," states MVP United Volleyball Director, Melissa Smith. "It was especially gratifying to see 27 of MVP United's alumni competing again under one roof sporting different uniforms. We are excited to see what year 3 will bring!"

You can see a full album of photos from the tournament [on our Facebook page](#). More photos are available for purchase on [Nate Castillo's website](#).





Fall Baseball League will be led by New Hire Casey Baker

The United Sports Academy has hired Casey Baker as the Director of Baseball



and Softball. This is a great addition to our program and we are excited to welcome him to our team. In his new role, Baker will work with United Sports Academy athletes on baseball and softball skills training, development and directing events like the upcoming Fall League.

This will be United Sports Academy's second year directing the Fall League. The format will be six games played on Sundays starting September 18th. Participants are invited to [sign up as a team](#) or as [individuals](#) by visiting www.usportsacad.com. This year, high school games will be played at the Bishop Mueller Field, the home field of Briar Cliff's Baseball Program. Little League games will be played at __. The Fall League is presented by the United Sports Academy, Briar Cliff Baseball and Sioux City Futures.

"The Fall Baseball League was a huge success last year," states Casey Baker. "I have been in contact with many of the high school coaches, and working together, we will continue to adjust the League to achieve both player individual goals, and high school program goals. With the quick action by Coach McGlauflin and the Briar Cliff Baseball Program, I feel even with my short tenure at United, the fall will be a positive experience for the Siouxland area baseball community."

Casey attended Sioux City North High School and was named 1st Team All-State for the North Stars in 1996, 1997 and 1998, while also being named to the 1st Team All-Iowa Super Team and was honored as the MVP of the All-Iowa Senior All-Star Team. He went on to play ball at Iowa State University, University of South Dakota and Morningside University.

Casey began his professional career in 2002 as a member of the Sioux City Explorers and played a total of 4 seasons with the X's and was named the 2004 Northern League Rookie of the year. In 2006, Casey joined the Kalamazoo Kings of the Frontier league where he was named a Frontier League All-Star, while winning the batting title with a .333 average. Casey finished his professional career .322 batting average.

"Joining the United Staff as Baseball/Softball Director, feels like I just received my dream career at the perfect time. I am beyond grateful and enthusiastic for the opportunity. In the short time I have been with United, I have been blown away with the level of help offered to me by the athletic community. I have no doubt through United and the Siouxland Community, we can go as far as our imagination will take us," states Baker.

Redline Athletics Makes its Mark in Siouxland



The CNOS Fieldhouse and Liberty National Bank Performance Center welcomed a new addition the beginning of August: **Redline Athletics**. With the trademark of "We Build Better Athletes", Redline Athletics is a National sports performance brand that specializes in comprehensive athletic development and speed and agility training for athletes, especially those 8-18 years of age.

The sports performance brand has gyms in 18 different states throughout the Nation. The program is designed to make athletes more athletic and more resilient so they can achieve more success on every field-of-play. If you've ever thought: "How do I get faster & quicker?" or "Where can I find age and sport-appropriate strength training?" or "What can I do to get ready and stay ready for my season?", Redline Athletics encompasses all of that in classes that focus on improving both speed and strength.

"The vision is to be the #1 sports performance training brand in the nation by impacting millions of athletes and thousands of communities, one rep at a time," states Director of Sports Performance, Erin Bailey.

The program consists of zones that athletes are assigned based on age and fitness. Through the specific zone, movements and exercises are targeted that are age appropriate. Within the hour of each class, an athlete will get: injury prevention and mobility training, a dynamic warm-up, speed and agility work, a strength and power complex, and a cool down.

"This is a huge resource to be introduced to the Siouxland area," states Coach Erin Bailey.

"Redline is already helping Siouxland athletes of all ages become stronger, faster and more explosive, which will translate to more success on the field and court. We can expect to see some awesome sport highlights come out of these athletes this season!"



Soccer Keeps the Turf Buzzing with Camps, Training and Tournaments

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world and 4th most popular in the Nation. In Siouxland, it is picking up speed as the area continues to provide numerous outdoor, and now indoor opportunities year-round thanks to the Liberty National Bank Performance Center.



United Sports Academy has opened its doors to dozens of soccer events ranging in skills sessions, camps, leagues, development lessons, youth tournaments, adult tournaments and more. "It was fascinating to see the number of athletes coming out to our camps and training this summer," states Soccer Director, Armand Garcia. "Soccer in Siouxland is growing and it is not slowing down. Our goal is to see the local club teams have success against other major clubs in the Midwest. We also want to see all the high schools in the area be the teams to beat. We are striving to provide elite and professional training to all soccer athletes in Siouxland in order to help them take their game to the next level. We are aiming to produce professional



athletes who love the game and are dedicated to being the best they can be. We will continue to provide the highest quality training for our athletes in Siouxland."



"Our tournaments have been a tremendous success. We are always very thankful for all the clubs and their teams, players, and coaches that participate in our events. I know it is very crucial for our local athletes to have some local competition. The more local playing opportunities we can provide to our teams, the better. Improving as a team simply comes from experience. More playing opportunities for our local club teams equals more experience. By providing multiple tournaments and leagues, not only are we growing the game for our local club teams in Siouxland, but also for clubs all over the region."

United Basketball Preps for a Busy Winter Season

Just three weeks after the conclusion of the summer season starts the winter season for United Basketball with tryouts for girls in grades 3-8. Along with teams, the balls never stop dribbling in the CNOS Fieldhouse with our monthly basketball skills sessions and camps for all ages and skill levels.

This winter, we are excited to announce the two tournaments we will be hosting: **We Give Thanks, an all girls tournament happening November 12th and Kings of the Court, an all boys tournament happening January 21st.**



"We are excited to continue our success from the summer season to the winter season," states United Girls Basketball Director and Coach, Sheila Adams. "We see so much growth in our athletes who continue to commit to our program and it allows us to help them grow on their journey. We have opportunities coming up for athletes to get in the gym, make new friends, and compete. Team tryouts will be held in September as well as some youth tournaments for school teams to participate in. We are excited to see continue to see growth in our events!"



MVP Alumni Play Abroad

MVP United Volleyball Club is the premier volleyball club of the Siouxland area and has had great athletes come out of its works with **94 athletes going on to compete in college** over the last decade. Two athletes have recently taken



Alexis Conaway

their talents overseas with Alexis Conaway (2014 graduate) having completed her final professional season in Germany and Kenzie Foley (2020 graduate) having played for **Beyond Sports Organization** in Italy for a couple of weeks.

Alexis Conaway was a stand-out athlete for MOC-Floyd Valley in volleyball, basketball and track-and-field. She played for MVP her senior season and took her talents to Iowa State University where she was named to the All-Big 12 First Team and awarded an Academic All-American. Following college, Conaway went abroad for 3 seasons, competing for LiigaPloki Club in Pihtipudas, Finland for the 2019-20 season, Rote Raben in Vilsbiburg, Germany for the 2020-21 season, and VC Neuwied in Neuwied, Germany for the 2021-22 season.

"Playing volleyball overseas was the most challenging, yet rewarding experience I've ever had. I grew not only as an athlete, but as a person as I navigated different cultures and environments, coming away with memories and friendships that will last a lifetime. I am forever grateful for this amazing sport and the vast opportunities that came along with it!" states Alexis Conaway.

Kenzie Foley was also a decorated multi-sport athlete coming out of Sergeant Bluff-Luton High School, having made appearances at the Iowa State High School Softball and Volleyball Tournaments. She was an athlete for MVP United for 4 seasons, most notably a part of the 2020 18 Red squad that took 3rd Place at the AAU National Championships and was named to the All-Tournament Team. She joined the St. Cloud State University Volleyball Team in the fall of 2020 and immediately made an impact at the collegiate level. She was named the AVCA Division II National Freshman of the Year, AVCA Central Region Region Freshman of the Year, and NSIC Freshman of the Year last season and will be entering her sophomore year this fall.



Kenzie Foley

Foley recently played for Beyond Sports this summer, where she went abroad for two weeks competing in and experiencing the country of Italy. Italy is one of the top countries in the world for men's and women's indoor volleyball. Her sport tour included stops in Rome, Florence, Venice and Lake Como as well as playing a number of semi-professional teams with her teammates from various Division III and NAIA colleges. "It was so fun to play volleyball with a fantastic group of girls while getting to explore Italy! It doubled as a way to get extra reps in during the summer and having an International experience," stated Foley.

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