

# Huskers 'to have to fight' for win

By Ward W. Triplett III

When he came to Western Michigan six seasons ago, Rod Buck decided the Bronco's women's volleyball team should be able to win a national championship in 1985.

"This has been no overnight success," Buck, whose team finished 30-0 this season, said. "It's been a long struggle, but we're on schedule."

Saturday, in front of an expected 8,500 in the Reed Field House in Kalamazoo, Mich., the Broncos will be hosts for Nebraska in a first round NCAA tournament game. The 8 p.m. game will match the No. 1 and No. 2 seeds in the Midwest regional. The winner will go on to the second round at West Lafayette, Ind.

In other first-round Midwest games, Illinois State will be at Purdue and Providence will be at Penn State. Third ranked UCLA received a bye.

The Huskers finished the season with a 29-3 record after a five-game sweep in the LSU Invitational last weekend: Western Michigan, which reached the Top 20 for the first time this season at No. 18, defeated Purdue and twice turned back Illinois State. Purdue handed the Huskers one of their three losses in the Purdue Invitational in October.

"I think we're an extremely good ball-control team," Buck said. "I think we've got a very diversified offensive attack."

Two seniors, middle blocker Jackie Backus and outside hitter Ami Timmers lead the Bronco attack. Backus, 5-11, has a .430 hitting percentage, while Timmers, 6-1, has a .350 hitting percentage. Nebraska's leaders, Cathy Noth and Karen Dahlgren, have .374 and .403 hitting percentages, respectively.

Buck also pointed to sophomore setter Heather Sawyer as a major force for his team.

Buck said that even though the Broncos reached the NCAA for the first time last year (losing to Brigham Young in the first round at Provo), attendance was still a meager 200 a game at the start of this season.

"At first it was your basic volleyball crowd, but then the local press just adopted the girls as a very special team," Buck said. "Once the press coverage picked up, the crowds picked up too. We went to 1,200 to 1,500, and after we beat Purdue, we had 5,000 for the next match."

Tickets went on sale Tuesday afternoon, Buck said, but all indications pointed to a sellout for the most important home match ever for the Bronco.

Buck said he saw the Huskers play in the regionals last year at Purdue, but hadn't seen, nor heard much of them since.

"I'm not going to lose sleep over something I have no control over," he said. "We don't scout any of our opponents. People thought we scouted Purdue, but we didn't. As for Nebraska, there's no reason for us to ask any one any questions about them, since I doubt we would get a straight picture from anyone about what they're doing anyway."

"We just plan to throw the ball up and go at them. We'll make minor adjustments during the match if necessary, but we'll worry about that then."

Buck said he was expecting to play Illinois State or Penn State in the first round at home, but was disappointed that Nebraska ended up the opponent.

"Terry Pettit has an excellent program down there, and they deserved to play someone who would give them an easier game to get into the regionals," Buck said. "But now, they're not going to get any easy game. They're going to have to fight for it."

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## Orange Bowl...

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"I don't think she turned anyone away who came to the office but it was impossible for her to handle four telephones at the same time," Wagner said. "We weren't able to sell that many tickets, so we're going to extend it (the selling schedule) a day."

Tickets will be sold to students on a first-come, first-served basis each day, Wagner said. The 2,500 student tickets will be divided up evenly between Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday customers.

"We're just trying to be fair," Wagner said. "We divide the total amount of tickets into three, so that a student that cannot make it down here, say on Tuesday, will still be able to buy a ticket."

The tickets are being sold at the ticket office, on the south side of the stadium. Each ticket costs \$20 and can be bought daily 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Wagner said there was a crowd when the ticket office opened Tuesday, but it was easily handled by the office.

"We have three extra people who come in and help us handle the rush," Wagner said. "For the most part, it's

been pretty steady, but it does go in spurts when classes get out."

Nov. 23 was the deadline for priority ticket orders for the general public, but Wagner said the ticket office is still accepting orders.

"Basically, the deadline serves as a guideline. It lets us know where we are," Wagner said. "The only time that the priority is really important, is if demand exceeds supply. And that has happened here."

Wagner said that the ticket office would be unable to determine how many tickets have been sold to the general public until all cash payments have been recorded. She did say however, that Nebraska traditionally sells all their Orange Bowl tickets.

"Last year we only sold 8,200 tickets, but that was because a lot of people went to the Hawaii game and couldn't afford to go to Miami too," Wagner said. "Two years ago, we sold the entire allotment, and three years ago we sold ours and 2,000 of Oklahoma's tickets. I would say there's a pretty good chance we'll sell all our tickets this year. We've had a tremendous amount of interest in the Orange Bowl this year because of Nebraska's record."



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