

Sports

Spikers hope for patience, intensity

By Ward W. Triplett III
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

Nebraska's women's volleyball team has several statistical advantages, as well as experience and national ranking, which its next NCAA opponent Western Michigan lacks. Western Michigan, however, does have a home court advantage and a victory over Nebraska in last year's NCAA tournament.

But Nebraska Coach Terry Pettit said his team has responded well to having to play in Kalamazoo again. After a good practice Monday, Pettit said, things look better this season.

"The situation is different this year," said Pettit, whose team will face the Broncos at 5 p.m. central time Saturday. "Last year we went up there in the first round when we thought we would be playing at home. This year, we figured that Western Michigan would get the home court if they got this far, so nothing caught us by surprise."

The Huskers also played that match after winning a tournament in Louisiana and waiting out a snowstorm in St. Louis. Pettit made sure the schedule was clear of such possible obstacles this season.

"We really didn't have time to prepare for them last season," he said. "We didn't have the opportunity to practice and we didn't have a scouting report. We eventually got those things, but not in enough time to really work with

them." Western Michigan lost an All-American in Jackie Bacchus but are a more balanced team now, Pettit said.

"Their major strength is ball-handling. They're a very aggressive ball handling team with a great ability to run down balls. They're fundamentally very strong, and they're very well coached. The one thing is they are a little less experienced than we are."

Pettit said Nebraska is as healthy now as they have been all season. Michelle Smith played for the first time in five weeks against Pittsburgh, and could have played more Pettit said. The 6-0 center blocker from Medina, Ohio, may see more time against Western

Michigan if the situation calls for it, Pettit said.

"We don't plan any significant changes," he said. "Michelle's strengths are blocking and transition. We can go to that if we need to, because we're not locked into any certain lineup."

Pettit said the most important thing is to keep his team from trying to play beyond its limitations. The Huskers can't overpower Western or, if they should win, Penn State or Pacific Sunday.

"We have a very good team," Pettit said. "If we can maintain our intensity and be patient, we're going to be successful. If we go out and try to beat the other team into the ground, we have the potential to make too many errors. Then, we can get beat."

Regional volleyball tickets available

Tickets for the NCAA Volleyball Midwest Regionals are available by phone from the Western Michigan ticket office at (616) 383-1780. A Bronco ticket office spokeswoman said the \$5 reserved seats can be purchased through Visa or MasterCard.

Tickets for the match went on sale at 7 a.m. Tuesday and an estimated 1,500 were sold. Nebraska will play Western Michigan at 5 p.m. central standard time. If they win, they will play Penn State or Pacific at 6:30 p.m. Sunday.

Last season, the Broncos

averaged around 3,500 for each match and drew a record crowd of over 8,000 to the Nebraska match. Bronco assistant sports information director Steve Babik said those numbers have dropped off even though the Broncos still led the eastern half of the nation in attendance.

"Last year it was kind of a new thing that just caught on," Babik said. "This year we've been averaging around 2,500 a match, but part of that is because there's a number of things going on around Kalamazoo. I think there will be another large crowd this weekend, at least for our match."

Bowl ticket sales end today

Today is the last day for the student sale of Sugar Bowl tickets.

The \$25 tickets are available at the Athletic Ticket Office, 117 South Stadium. Students

must pay for the tickets with correct change or check, and must present an identification card. Groups, which are limited to six, must apply together if they wish to sit together at the game.

Lions deemed threat in Midwest regionals

Note: This is the first in a three-part series on Nebraska's Midwest regional opponents.

Penn State may not be the biggest, but Lion's volleyball Coach Russ Rose does have a two-pronged attack that has pierced the best of the sport once this season. Saturday they'll have a chance to beat that same team again.

The Lions will meet Pacific after the Nebraska-Western Michigan match. Penn State, 31-5, defeated Pacific in five sets in a California tournament in October. It also beat Western Michigan in Kalamazoo, Mich., three weeks ago.

The Olympic Ten conference champions advanced to the quarter finals with a five set victory over Big Ten champion Northwestern in Evanston, Ill.

"We were the only team to go on the road and win, (in the NCAA tournament)," Rose said. "I am very proud of them for that."

Penn State's lineup is small as far as the sport's major powers go, but senior Lori Barberich has been near the top of the All-American lists for three years. She and Marcia Leap, a 5-10 senior, get 80 percent of the Penn State sets, Rose said.

"Penn State has a good solid team with Lori Barberich in the middle," Northwestern Coach Jerry Angle said. "They have a good defense and are a very good serving team."

"Everybody plays their roles well and they don't make many mistakes," Nebraska Coach Terry Pettit said about the Lions.

Penn State lost to Nebraska in a first round game two years ago in Lincoln. It lost to UCLA in the first round last year. The Lions were expected to be a threat in the region this season, but proved more than that by tipping Pacific while the Tigers were No. 1 earlier this year.

Undeclared Husker cagers to battle Bluejays

By Jeff Korbelik
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

One of the first announcements made at the basketball media luncheon in the Nebraska Union Tuesday was the sell-out of Saturday's Nebraska-Creighton basketball game.

The game, played in Omaha this year, always brings large crowds because of the interstate rivalry. Nebraska Coach Moe Iba said it is one of the bigger games Nebraska plays.

"For the basketball fan it has been, (one of the biggest games)" Iba said. "It has become a good series."

The Huskers will try to extend their win streak over the Bluejays to five. Last year Nebraska defeated Creighton twice: Once early in the season at Bob Devaney Sports Center and again in Omaha in the first round of the National Invitation tournament.

Iba said this year's Creighton team is better than last year's. He said the Huskers will need to stop guard Vernon Moore and center Benoit Benjamin.

"When Vernon gets the ball he has the ability to get in the scoring area so quickly," Iba said. "When Benjamin catches the ball in his area he's going to score."

Nebraska enters Saturday's contest 3-0 after Monday night's victory over Mon-

tana State. Iba said he was pleased with the first three ball games. He was able to make many substitutions and see some of the newer players. Against Montana State, Iba said he played his starters more.

"There are still some things we need to work on," he said.

The Huskers have had 81 assists in their first three games. Iba said sophomore point guard Brian Carr has been doing a good job.

Freshman Joel Sealer also is contributing four of five a game.

"It seems it doesn't matter who is open, we're getting them the ball," he said.

The Nebraska women's basketball team

will play before the men as they take on Creighton's undefeated women (6-0).

The women's team will enter the game 1-3 after suffering losses to Minnesota and No. 14 Tennessee in the Minnesota Dial Classic. Coach Kelly Hill said the team is a little down now, particularly the freshmen. "Martice Ivy (freshman) hasn't lost a game in three years," Hill said.

Starting guard Stacy Imming had her wisdom teeth pulled Monday and may not be able to play in Saturday's game. Ivy may also be sidelined with a thigh pull she has been nursing for the past week.

"Right now we have to get some wins under our belts and regain our winning attitude," Hill said.



Poor Mike Walters. The Montana State freshman center drew the assignment of stopping each of the Huskers' big men Monday night. Tryg Johnson, the bobcats' senior center, sat out most of the game with foul trouble. At left, Curtis Moore (21 points) shoots over Walters from 15. Next, Bill Jackman (18), shoots from 10. Finally, Dave Hoppen (23) sends Walters sprawling before hitting a 4-footer.

Kevin Dugan/Daily Nebraskan