

Sports

USC adjusts to win volleyball regional

By Jim Ballard
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team fell one game short of a berth in the NCAA's Final Four for the second year in a row when it lost to four-time champion Southern California on Saturday night.

The Cornhuskers lost to Southern Cal in the finals of the Mid-East Regionals 5-15, 15-11, 15-12 and 15-7, before a crowd of 3,300 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"We're very disappointed," Nebraska coach Terry Pettit said. "We didn't play very well, except for the first game. In a match at this level, you have to stay with your game plan and stress the other team's limitations, and after the first game we just didn't get the ball to who we wanted to."

Southern Cal coach Chuck Erbe said that it took some time for his team, which is seeded fourth, to adjust.

"It took us a game to adjust to the level of play out on the court," he said. "Nebraska came out and played strong, powerful volleyball in the first game, just as they had last night (against

Purdue), and we didn't adjust well."

Nebraska jumped out to an early lead, but then fell behind 3-2.

Behind some key blocks by senior Sharon Kramer and junior Karen Dahlgren, the Huskers took a 6-3 lead and never looked back in winning the first game.

The second game started off the same as the first. Nebraska took an early 5-0 lead.

"We were hoping to win the first game and take the crowd out of it," Erbe said. "When we got down 5-0 in the second game, that was a critical point. We knew it had to be one game a piece to establish our game plan."

"If we would have lost that second game, I would have been real nervous."

Nebraska held a 9-6 advantage in the second game before Southern Cal reeled off two four-point runs to take a 14-9 lead. From there, it took the Trojans four tries at game point before they could seal the win.

"We had to adjust in two areas," Erbe said. "We got our offense going and found our middle hitters, and we got in a rhythm at the net when we got Nebraska's block off-balance. We got our

transition game going, and when we're in it, we have as strong of a transition game as anybody in the country."

"When we were swinging, and they were swinging, we won," Pettit said. "But their plan was to throw some balls and we didn't handle that very well."

"Basically it was inexperience under stress. That's not an excuse, it's just that we couldn't stay with our plan. If we played in Southern Cal's conference, there's no question we would be one of the best teams in the country."

In the third game, Nebraska came back from an 11-4 margin to tie it at 11-11. But Southern Cal pulled away for the win.

In the fourth and final game, Southern Cal ran off seven straight points before the Huskers even got a chance to serve. The Huskers pulled to within 9-5, but that was all the closer they could come as Southern Cal won 15-7.

"In the second and third games, we scored on our adjustments, but the key to the fourth game was that we served real strong, and that made Nebraska's middle attack more tough to do," Erbe said.

Southern Cal, now 25-8, advances to the Final Four in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Erbe said that the Southern Cal players didn't celebrate much after their victory on Saturday. "The feeling they have is one of satisfaction and accomplishment, but they still have a goal," he said.

With the loss, Nebraska ended its season at 28-3. Pettit said that was something that couldn't be overlooked.

"We had a great season," he said. "When we started it off, we talked about winning the national championship. When we step back and look at it, nobody at the beginning of the season could have known that Tisha Delaney would step in and do the job that she did. Also, Enid (Schonewise) and Kathi (DeBoer) did a good job stepping in as full-time starters. In fact, I don't know of a player that didn't have her best season this year."

Nebraska placed two players on the all-tournament team: Dahlgren and Schonewise. Southern Cal placed three: Kim Ruddins, Tracy Clark and Yvonne Lewis. Purdue's Linda Reichel rounded out the team.

Fiesta Bowl preview: Nebraska vs. Michigan

Editor's note: The following is a position analysis of the Fiesta Bowl. The analysis is that of the Daily Nebraskan staff reporters listed after each story.

Quarterbacks

Some questions will be answered on Jan. 1, 1986.

● Will Nebraska's "revolving door" quarterback situation be able to offset Michigan's signal caller Jim Harbaugh?

● If it does, will Wolverine fans howl "Bo must go" after Michigan loses its 11th bowl game against six wins in the school's history?

The answer probably will be no. Harbaugh has set several Michigan passing records and hasn't thrown an interception since Oct. 12.

Meanwhile, NU's sophomore McCathorn Clayton, senior Travis Turner and freshman Steve Taylor have taken turns leading the Cornhusker offense. However, Turner has a knee injury and will miss the final collegiate game. That leaves Clayton and Taylor.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said there is a "5 percent chance Taylor will start in the Fiesta Bowl. That uncertainty has plagued the Cornhuskers' quarterback position all season. That 5 percent of doubt could mean a 10-point turnaround.

The Wolverines have stuck with Harbaugh all season, and they have gotten much more out of the position than the Huskers. Harbaugh has passed for 1,913 yards this season, a school record.

But Nebraska has better rushing quarterbacks. Clayton and Taylor have combined for 640 yards in the air, but have rushed for 511. Clayton averaged 3.5 yards a carry and Taylor 7.4. Harbaugh

has only 159 yards rushing.

Based on those statistics, Nebraska holds a solid advantage rushing, but Harbaugh's passing figures give the Wolverines much more. Quarterbacks: Big advantage Michigan.

—Mike Reilley
Senior Reporter

Running backs

Few enjoy having their backfields compared to Nebraska's. Add mighty Michigan to the list.

Southern Cal used to be the place to hang out to watch Heisman candidates juke and jive for 200 yards a game. All things must change. Nebraska has taken over as the tailback capital of the football world.

Doug DuBose is continuing the tradition. Hipp, Redwine, and Rozier's shoes are size 14 EE — tough to fill. But DuBose has been nothing less than a nightmare for teams that lack a tough defensive line.

DuBose's 116-yard average a game was good enough for second best in the run-oriented Big Eight. But can second-best cut the mustard against a stingy defense?

DuBose goes from average to all-world the minute he gets through the line. DuBose couldn't find the secondary against Oklahoma, and don't look for it to happen Jan. 1 in the Fiesta Bowl with any regularity.

Fullback Tom Rathman has no complaints with the size of holes. The red-and-white bus rambled for nearly 900 yards this year, 7.5 yards a carry. Not bad for a fullback.

But Rathman fumbles, right? Negative. Fumbling is in Rathman's past.

At 5-7 and 175 pounds, sophomore tailback Jamie Morris is tiny. But his statistics are not. The speedster picked up 893 yards to lead Michigan's ground attack.

Fullback Gerald White checks in 40 pounds heavier and will get Michigan's tough yards. White was good for 4.5 yards a carry this year.

Adequate? Yes, but don't look for Heisman trophies in Ann Arbor, Mich.

The old cliché says games are won and lost in the trenches. For Nebraskans, it's a shame the Fiesta Bowl couldn't be decided in the backfield.

Running backs: Big edge to Nebraska.
—Steve Thomas
Staff Reporter

Receivers

When you think of Michigan and Nebraska football, you think of running teams: Tight ends are used as extra linemen and split ends as down-field blockers.

But Michigan has followed the Big Ten trend and relied more on the pass.

This year, Paul Jokisch led the team in receiving. Jokisch, a senior from Birmingham, Mich., caught 36 passes for 666 yards and an 18.5-yard average. Jokisch's career number of catches was only 10 entering this season.

The second leading receiver on the team was tight end Eric Kattus. Kattus, a senior from Cincinnati, was a third-team All-American and was selected to play in the East-West Shrine game this year. An excellent blocker, Kattus had 35 catches this year with a 15.5 yard average. His career high before this year was four.

For Nebraska, the leading receiver

was junior Robb Schnitzler. Schnitzler led the Cornhuskers with 16 catches in 11 games. Although he was not among the leaders in number of catches, Schnitzler was second in the Big Eight in number of yards a catch, with a 23.98-yard average.

Michigan threw almost 100 more passes this year than Nebraska. Except for the top two receivers, Michigan mostly threw to running backs. Nebraska threw downfield more. Receivers — even.

—Brian Keenan
Staff Reporter

Linebackers

At linebacker, Michigan has better statistics, but they're also greater in numbers.

Michigan ranks first in the nation in scoring defense, surrendering only 6.8 points a game. Its linebacking corps has played an important role in that statistic.

The Wolverines run a 3-4 defensive alignment. They have three linemen and four linebackers. Nebraska runs a 5-2 most of the time. Three of Michigan's top six tacklers are linebackers.

Andy Moeller, a senior inside linebacker, led the Wolverines in tackles this season. He had 80 individual tackles and 52 assists for a total of 132. Another inside linebacker, senior Mike Mallory, is second with 99 total tackles. Outside linebackers Jim Scarcelli and Jeff Akers have combined for 80 total tackles. Akers has seven quarterback sacks this year.

However, Nebraska has a big advantage of depth. When Marc Munford was sidelined with knee injuries for the

Missouri and Oklahoma games, junior Kevin Parsons stepped into the starting lineup and was the Huskers' leading tackler in each game.

Munford will miss the Fiesta Bowl also. He underwent knee surgery following the Kansas game and developed kidney problems while in the hospital.

Munford will be missed. He led the Huskers with 67 tackles this year and had two interceptions. Senior Mike Knox ranks right behind Munford with 65 tackles and two interceptions.

The Huskers' supporting cast includes Chad Daffer, Steve Forch and freshman LeRoy Etienne. Daffer has 31 tackles this year.

Despite the loss of Munford, Nebraska still has an edge because of depth. Linebackers: Slight advantage to Nebraska.

—Mike Reilley
Senior Reporter

Defensive backs

It's always better to have more of a good thing.

That's what Nebraska's defensive backfield has. Just as Nebraska's linebackers have more depth than does Michigan, so do its defensive backs.

Statistically, the backfields are mirror images of each other. Michigan is led by junior cornerback Garland Rivers, who has 63 tackles this year, and safety Ivan Hicks, who has five interceptions.

Nebraska's leaders include safety Chris Carr (31 tackles, 3 interceptions) and Brian Washington (37 tackles, 3 interceptions).

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