

Sports

Centennial volleyball win sets up NU's

By Mark Derowitsch
and
Tim Hartmann
Senior Reporters

Centennial High School volleyball fans had two reasons to celebrate Saturday: a hometown victory in the state volleyball tournament and a Nebraska victory over Missouri.

And Nebraska middle blocker Virginia Stahr said she played especially well against Missouri because she was "psyched up" from watching the Centennial victory.

Centennial High School won the class C-1 volleyball championship Saturday by winning matches in the morning and evening. Meanwhile, Stahr led Nebraska to a 15-7, 15-5, 15-7 victory Saturday afternoon over Missouri at the NU Coliseum before 875 fans — including a large contingent from Centennial.

Stahr, a sophomore from Waco, finished with a game-high 14 kills, seven blocks and two ace serves.

Stahr said Centennial's success in the state high-school playoffs prepared her for the match.

"The way they affected me was that I went to the game before and it got me psyched up," she said.

Missouri began the match with a service error. Stahr then served an ace to open Nebraska's scoring.

The match was the 14th consecutive one in which Stahr has served an ace, tying Lori Endicott's season high.

Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said that although Stahr "played

well," he was more pleased with the team's performance, especially in blocking.

"We spend all the last two days working on our blocks," Pettit said. "Blocking and sealing are the two things we did better."

Missouri came back to 3-3 in the first match, but the Huskers took the next five points. Stahr had three blocking assists and a kill in the streak.

Missouri got within three points at 10-7, but Nebraska scored the last five points to win.

"I thought Missouri competed pretty hard," Pettit said. "It took us awhile to get in our rhythm, but I thought our blocking was stronger today. . . . I thought on the whole we played stronger than we did against Kansas (Wednesday night)."

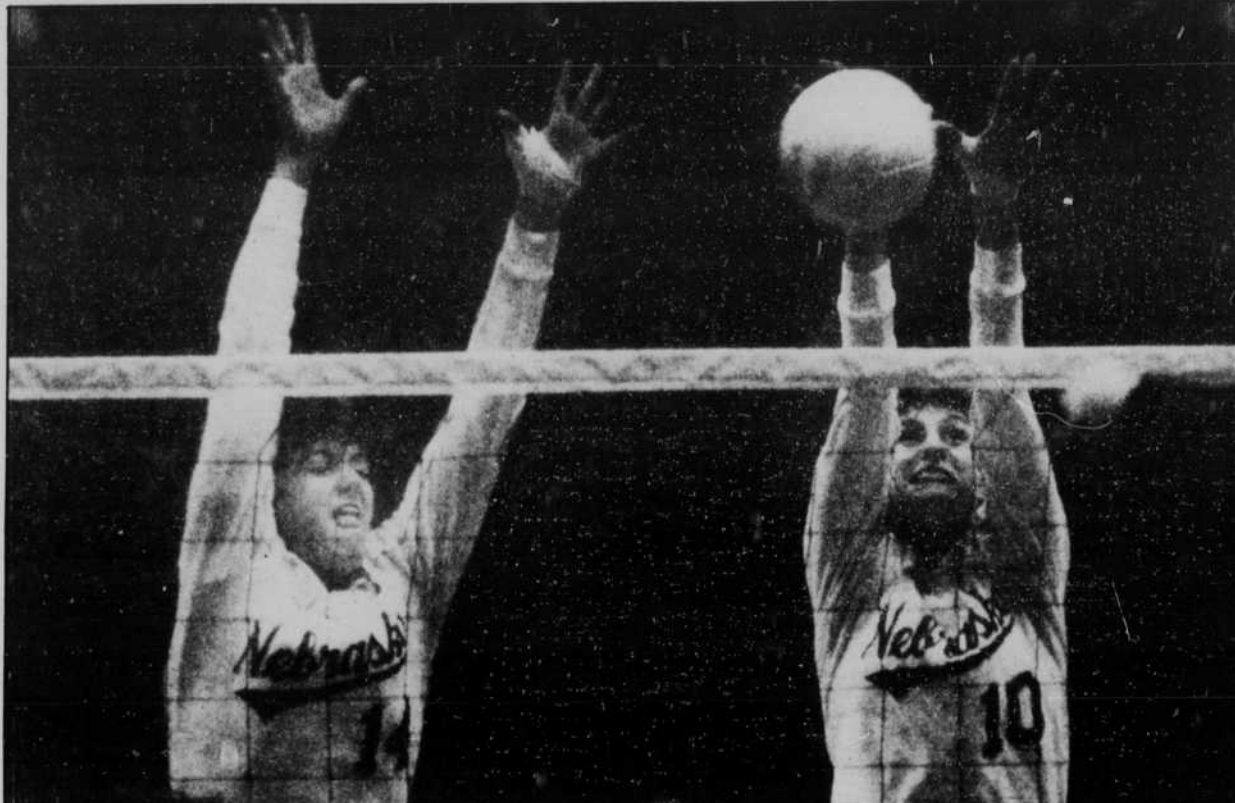
Nebraska jumped to an 8-2 lead in the second match, then rolled off another five-point streak that included two ace serves by freshman Val Novak. Novak led Nebraska in service aces with five in the match.

Missouri scored three points to make the score 13-5, but kills by Kathi DeBoer and Carla Baker gave Nebraska the match.

Missouri scored the first four points in the third match, but Nebraska came back to 6-6. The Huskers then outscored Missouri 9-1 for the final victory.

Nebraska is 26-3 overall and 12-0 in the Big Eight. The win marked the Huskers' 60th consecutive victory over a Big Eight school.

Missouri's record fell to 8-21 over-



Butch Ireland/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Virginia Stahr and Kathi DeBoer attempt a block during the Cornhuskers' 15-7, 15-5, 15-7 victory over Missouri Saturday at the NU Coliseum.

all and 1-11 in the Big Eight.

Missouri coach Craig Sherman said the 1987 Nebraska team is comparable to the Husker team that finished second in the country last year.

"They're not quite as consistent,"

he said. "But I think they're a little bit quicker than last year and have a little bit more hustle."

Stahr said Nebraska is beginning to

"We played much better today," Stahr said. "Things are picking up. We're on our way."

Road to Sooners' victories full of potholes

By The Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Oklahoma football coach Barry Switzer, who was hurting as much as his offense, wasn't happy with the top-ranked Sooners despite a 17-13 victory over Missouri.

"I think we're a good team that's not playing very good," Switzer said while rubbing the left knee he sprained in a sideline collision Saturday.

The Sooners, who have been ranked No. 1 since the start of the season, are 10-0 for the first time since 1974 and 6-0 in the Big Eight. But it hasn't been a smooth road.

Against Missouri — a team Oklahoma beat 77-0 last year — the Soon-

ers scored only two touchdowns while losing four of six fumbles. Their 17 points and 283 rushing yards were season lows.

Oklahoma led 17-3 late in the third quarter before a fumble at the Sooners' 20-yard line led to a touchdown that made it 17-10. A field goal midway through the fourth quarter brought Missouri within four points, and it took an intercepted pass with four minutes remaining to hold off the Tigers.

A week earlier against Oklahoma State, Oklahoma had to return two fourth-quarter interceptions for touchdowns to seal a 29-10 victory. The Sooners fumbled six times in that game, losing three.

Oklahoma has fumbled 50 times

this season and lost 19. The Sooners have been talented enough to win every game, but this week the opponent is unbeaten, second-ranked Nebraska.

"We can't expect to mess up for two games and think we'll be perfect against a team like Nebraska," Oklahoma safety David Vickers said. "The main problem is they're not holding onto the ball when they take a good hit."

Fullback Rotnei Anderson, who rushed for 118 yards in place of injured starter Lydell Carr, fumbled on Oklahoma's first play from scrimmage. He fumbled again in the second quarter after the Sooners had moved from their 10-yard line to Missouri's 22.

Quarterback Charles Thompson, who started in place of the injured Jamelle Holieway, rushed for 91 yards and a touchdown, and completed five of nine passes for 104 yards. But he lost two of three fumbles, including one at Oklahoma's 20-yard line that Missouri converted for its only touchdown.

"You expect to go out and play good each week and play to your ability and not make mistakes," said Thompson, a redshirt freshman. "But it doesn't always come out to be the way you want it to be, and today was that case."

Oklahoma gave up only five first downs through three quarters, including one that halfback Michael Jones picked up on his touchdown run.

Missouri sustained only five drives longer than five plays.

In the fourth quarter, with the score 17-10, Missouri had a second-and-four situation at the Oklahoma 20-yard line. Sooner linebacker Dante Jones sacked Missouri quarterback John Stollenwerck for an 8-yard loss, and the Tigers settled for a 45-yard field goal by Tom Whelihan.

Missouri, 4-6 overall and 2-4 in the Big Eight, got the ball at its own 38-yard line on its next drive, but the Oklahoma defense responded when cornerback Scott Garl intercepted a Stollenwerck pass.

"I thought it was going to be a blowout and hoped to be out of the game by the first quarter," Oklahoma defensive end Darrell Reed said.

Injuries and redshirting hurt freshman football team

By Steve Sipple
Staff Reporter

Nebraska freshman football coach Shane Thorell said that during the past season he often felt like a kid wishing for a Christmas present he knew he couldn't have.

That's because the Cornhuskers played the entire season without blue-chip redshirts Mickey Joseph, Leodis Flowers and Nate Turner as well as varsity players Reggie Cooper, Mike Croel and Tahaun Lewis — players who Thorell said would have made a difference.

"It's like a little boy looking at a bike in the window, and it's about Christmas time and he's hoping he can have it," Thorell said. "That's the way I looked at a lot of these freshmen walking around the halls. It's hard not to think like that when you see Mike Croel and guys like that."

Without the blue-chippers, the Huskers finished the season with a 2-3 record which included a season-ending 42-35 loss to Iowa's Waldorf Junior College. This was the first season the Husker freshmen have lost three games in one year. It was also the Cornhuskers' first losing season since 1957.

Thorell said not having the freshman redshirts and varsity players

might have been the difference between a 2-3 and a 4-1 season. Nebraska used only eight of 20 freshman scholarship players against Waldorf, he said.

Scholarship athletes Tim Herman and Will Thomas also weren't allowed to play this season because they failed to meet the academic requirements set by Proposition 48, Thorell said.

"I was out helping the varsity and I noticed a lot of talent out there we could have used, and I think it would have made a difference in two of the games," he said.

"In the Coffeyville game, it would have made it a lot better game. If we had all of our guys, it still would have been a good game."

The Red Ravens defeated Nebraska 49-14 at Coffeyville, Kan., on Oct. 29.

Thorell said the Huskers also were plagued by injuries suffered by scholarship players.

Fullback Randy Williams was out for the season after breaking his foot in the Husker's 21-19 loss to the Air Force junior varsity on Oct. 9. Williams was the Huskers' second-leading rusher entering the Air Force game with 148 yards, including 99 yards and three touchdowns in Nebraska's season-opening 62-0 vic-

tory over the St. Thomas (Minn.) junior varsity.

Tight ends Dan Lohmeier and Chris Garret also were injured. Lohmeier missed most of the season with a torn ligament in his knee. Garret injured his ankle against Bethany (Kan.) College on Sept. 28 and sat out the rest of the season.

Quarterback Keithen McCant also missed Nebraska's final game against Waldorf with a shoulder injury.

"At the beginning of the season I really thought we had a great group of talent," Thorell said. "And you know, with injuries and redshirting and guys playing with the varsity we lost a lot of talent."

"But I still thought we had a good freshman team. We had some guys who really worked hard and did everything we asked of them," he said.

Thorell said the fact that the Huskers' schedule "was probably the toughest Nebraska has ever played" didn't make things any easier. Coffeyville and Waldorf were loaded with speed and experience, and Air Force played a lot of upperclassmen in a game where experience was needed, he said.

"The Air Force game was the first big game, first close game for the freshman team," Thorell said. "And it's a different situation. Guys who

are older with more experience know how to handle that sometimes."

Thorell, who has coached the Husker freshman defensive backs for the last three years, said he can't remember Nebraska redshirting players to keep them from getting injured. He said that despite the decision, he doesn't feel shortchanged.

"I think he (varsity coach Tom Osborne) is doing that because he feels we've recruited guys who can play varsity for four years," Thorell said, "and a lot of times it takes awhile to get used to everything."

"So we'd rather redshirt them than have them play freshman ball. The main thing is that the varsity wins," he said.

Thorell said the freshmen accomplished a lot this season.

"Our freshman philosophy is to prepare guys for the varsity and teach them the things they need to know for the varsity," Thorell said.

"We've been very successful in winning in the past, but I still feel we met the goals and philosophies that we set out at the beginning of the season," he said.

Thorell said he plans to return as freshman coach next season.

"I'm planning on it, unless someone else has something planned for me," he said.

Thorell listed several freshmen who could have an impact on the varsity next season. They include:

Quarterbacks: He said Joseph, who was named All-America by Parade Magazine and USA Today, will "obviously" have a chance. Joseph has spent this season playing on the scout team.

Running backs: Thorell said Flowers has a good chance. He also said George Achola could play next year "but needs to work a little on his flexibility." Achola led the Husker freshmen with 506 yards rushing.

He also said Williams and Tim Johnk, a walk-on from Schuyler, could battle for varsity spots next year. He said Johnk, who rushed for 94 yards this season, "will become a really good fullback" in time.

Wingbacks: Thorell said Turner "is a really good athlete. He's probably ready physically to play right now."

Split ends: Thorell said Paul Baumert and Dan Pleasant have good instincts and catch the football well, but need "work in the weight room." He said Mark Dowse, the fastest of the freshman split ends, played well in his backup role.

See EVALUATE on 7