

Volleyball invitational features three top teams

By Darran Fowler
Senior Reporter

"Exciting" is the way to describe this weekend's FirstTier Invitational at the NU Coliseum, Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said.

Pettit said the tournament promises to be exciting because all four participating teams will provide Nebraska fans with an opportunity to watch strong teams compete.

The tournament features three ranked teams -- Nebraska, Stanford and Kentucky. Pittsburgh, which finished 24-9 last season, also is

competing.

In the American Volleyball Coaches Association and NCAA Committee polls released Tuesday, Stanford was ranked fifth. Nebraska was ranked seventh in the AVCA poll and ninth in the NCAA ratings. Kentucky was No. 11 in the AVCA and No. 15 in the NCAA rankings.

"It'll be exciting," he said. "All the matches will be very competitive. I anticipate on Saturday that we'll have a real big crowd. It'll be a great tournament."

The tournament begins at 6 p.m. Friday with Stanford facing Pittsburgh, followed by a

match between Nebraska and Kentucky at 8 p.m.

Action will resume on Saturday at noon with Nebraska playing Pittsburgh, followed by Stanford and Kentucky at 2 p.m., and Kentucky and Pittsburgh at 6 p.m.

The tournament will conclude at 8 p.m. with a match between Nebraska and Stanford. That match will be televised live by NETV.

The tournament is free for all University of Nebraska-Lincoln students who show their IDs.

Fundamentals will be the key to who wins,

Pettit said.

"It's going to be won by who flat out plays the best and that comes down to execution," he said.

Stanford, ranked No. 2 in the preseason, was 3-1 going into Wednesday night's match at Colorado State. The Cardinal's only loss was to third-ranked Pacific.

Stanford leads the series with Nebraska 3-1.

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Corporate sponsors contribute to NU volleyball success

By Darran Fowler
Senior Reporter

Talented recruits are not the only reason the Nebraska volleyball team has been successful over the years.

The support of team sponsors also has played a huge role.

Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said one of the major developments in the Cornhuskers' program in the last four years has been that of team sponsors.

This year corporate sponsors like Runza, FirstTier Bank, Baden and Mizuno have helped to lure some of the country's top teams to play in

Lincoln.

"They are as important as our freshman recruits because Nebraska is only as good as the teams we play against," Pettit said. "We are playing for the national championship every year and you can't do that if you're not playing against the best teams."

Bowling Green, Houston and Kansas State played in the Runza Invitational two weeks ago, and No. 5-ranked Stanford, 11th-ranked Kentucky and Pittsburgh will participate in this weekend's FirstTier Invitational.

Top-ranked Hawaii also will play

Nebraska in the NU Coliseum Oct. 20 and 21 in the Baden Challenge.

"They're our unsung heroes," Pettit said of Nebraska's corporate sponsors.

Runza and FirstTier Bank each gave \$5,000 grants to the Nebraska volleyball program to help attract teams to come to play the Huskers.

That money is spent to cover the costs of putting on a tournament. Those costs include the fees encountered for player awards, team banquets, lodging for opposing teams and officials, Pettit said.

Baden contributed almost \$2,000 to lure Hawaii to Lincoln, he said,

and also gives Nebraska its year supply of volleyballs, which cost around \$30 each.

"They helped defray the costs to bring Hawaii here," he said.

Mizuno, which supplies Nebraska with most of its equipment, acts as a sponsor in all these events, Pettit said.

Besides Nebraska, Mizuno also sponsors the UCLA and Stanford volleyball teams, so "you're in a pretty select group there," Pettit said.

Fern Spencer, assistant vice president at FirstTier-Lincoln, said his corporation's role "is really monetary."

"It's up to the volleyball team to

use the money as they wish for the tournament," Spencer said. "We get good publicity out of it and at the same time it helps the volleyball team. So it's a good deal for both of us."

The volleyball program needs additional financial help because its revenue is not as great as other sports, Spencer said.

"Since they don't have the income like the football team does, they need the outlet support," Spencer said.

Several other sponsors have

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Linebacker Petko says he has much to learn after Utah

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Mike Petko was emotionally torn after Saturday's game against Utah.

Petko, a 6-foot-2, 225-pound sophomore linebacker, was happy to have started the game, which the Cornhuskers won 42-30. He even made two unassisted tackles and an interception.

But Petko said he thought he could have done better.

"It was nerve-racking out there," he said. "I didn't do too good of a job. I still don't know all the defenses, and we ran some unfamiliar ones today."

Petko was playing as part of Nebraska's "dime" defense, which employs five defensive backs, faster linebackers and the team's best pass-rushing defensive linemen. The defense is used on obvious passing situations, or against predominantly pass-oriented teams like Utah.

Petko said the coaches' solution to his mistakes against Utah was simple.

"They put (linebacker) Pat Tyrance in," he said, shaking his head.

"I just still have a lot to learn."

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Petko shouldn't take his mistakes so hard.

"Petko played with a lot of heart," Osborne said. "He calls the alignments of the defense. He's almost like the quarterback for the defense, and for a first-year player, that's pretty difficult."

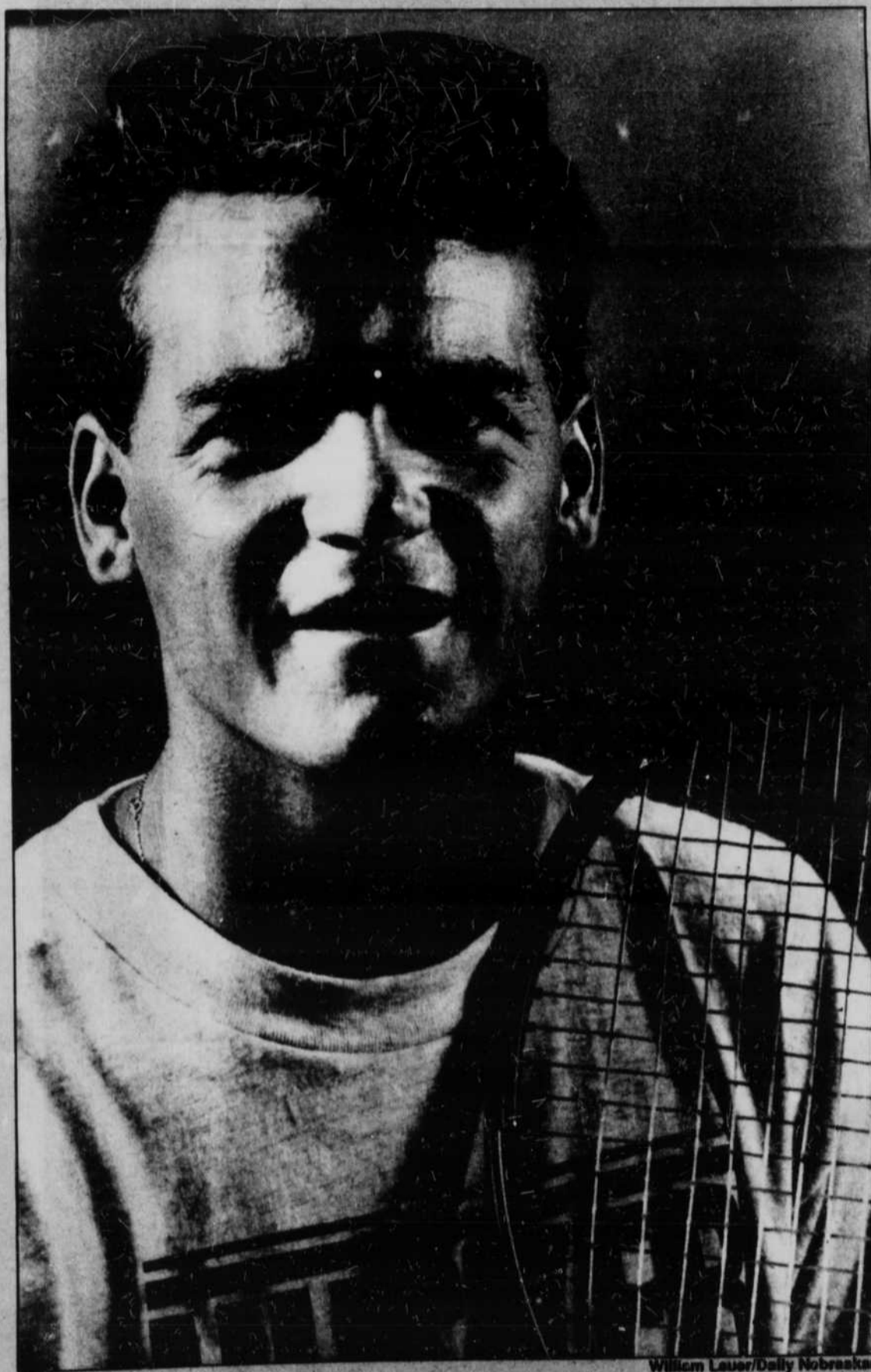
Last season, Petko started for Shane Thorell's junior varsity team and finished with 25 tackles -- 11 of which were unassisted. He also recorded a tackle for a five-yard loss, recovered a fumble and broke up a pass.

Petko, a scholarship recruit, was a two-year starter at Anaheim Servite High School, where he earned all-league and All-Orange County honors as a senior. During his final season at Servite, Petko made 97 tackles, five quarterback sacks, two interceptions and three fumble recoveries.

Nebraska recruit Derek Brown, a Parade Magazine All-America selection who is sitting out this season to gain Proposition 48 eligibility, also graduated from Servite High School.

Petko said many of his problems were caused by Utah's unique style of offense.

"(Utah quarterback) Scott Mitch-



New Wesleyan tennis coach Brad Scheidegger.

Former Husker to begin career as tennis coach

By Paul Domeier
Staff Reporter

When Brad Scheidegger was at Nebraska, Cornhusker men's tennis coach Kerry McDermott never pictured him as a coach.

But McDermott will have ample opportunities to see Scheidegger in the coaching ranks, as the former All-Big Eight champion was named the new men's and women's tennis coach at Wesleyan Wesleyan. He succeeds Julie Davis, who resigned after one season with the Plainsmen.

McDermott said Scheidegger surprised him when he announced in mid-August that he was the new Wesleyan coach. He said he never pictured Scheidegger in the coaching ranks even though the former Husker claimed the Big Eight's No. 5 singles title in 1987.

McDermott said Scheidegger will "have his eyes opened" when he gets into the full swing of his new job.

"He'll find out it's a lot harder than you think it is," McDermott said.

Scheidegger said his job has not been too tough so far. He said he hasn't even met with his players yet because Wesleyan's season does not begin until after the start of the new year.

"It's basically a second-semester (season)," Scheidegger said. "I'm just getting the schedule together now."

Scheidegger said the job does present new challenges, but recruiting is not one of them. He said he does not have to worry about recruiting because Wesleyan does not offer athletic scholarships.

Scheidegger said coaching will not be much of a change because he has been giving tennis lessons for over a year. He said his teaching position gave him a definite advantage entering his new job.

"I kind of knew how everything worked, and knew how to run practice," Scheidegger said.

McDermott disagreed, saying there is more to the job.

"There's a lot of hours involved," he said. "It's not an 8-to-5 job. There might be a player calling you at night and you'll talk for a half hour."

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