

## Illinois State attempts to make regionals

By Darran Fowler  
Senior Reporter

The Illinois State volleyball team will come into Lincoln with the intent of doing something it has failed to do five times -- survive past the first round of the NCAA tournament.

"The goal of this university is to get our team into regionals," Illinois State coach Julie Morgan said. "It's not just to go the NCAA's, but to get to regionals."

"We know what it's like to win a conference championship and we know what playing in a first-round match is like. But, we don't know what it's like to get into the regional tournament."

The Redbirds' sixth attempt at a berth in the semifinal round of regionals will take place Saturday, when they bring an 11-match winning string into Nebraska for a 2 p.m. contest at the NU Coliseum.

The two teams last met in 1982, when the Redbirds defeated Nebraska in three games. Illinois State leads the series 5-2.

Illinois State comes into the match as the last-seeded team of the eight-team Midwest region. Nebraska, which is making an eighth-straight appearance in the NCAA, is the region's No. 1 seed.

The Redbirds matched Nebraska's sweep in the Big Eight by going undefeated in Gateway Conference regular season play and winning the postseason tournament.

In defeating Northern Iowa in the

finals to claim the conference title, the 21-9 Redbirds automatically qualified for the NCAA's 32-team tournament for the second consecutive season. Illinois State also qualified for the NCAA championships from 1982 to 1985.

Morgan, who is in her third season at Illinois State and was named the Gateway Coach of the Year for the second consecutive season, said the Redbirds needed to win their conference tournament because an at-large bid would have been unlikely.

"I think because of the parity of volleyball across the country, especially this year, we knew we had to win the tournament in order to get looked at," she said.

Morgan said she is familiar with this year's Nebraska team, which is ranked No. 4 in the country with a 25-3 record.

"We respect them," she said. "We know they're a great team, there aren't any secrets about that. They are well-coached and have a lot of talented players."

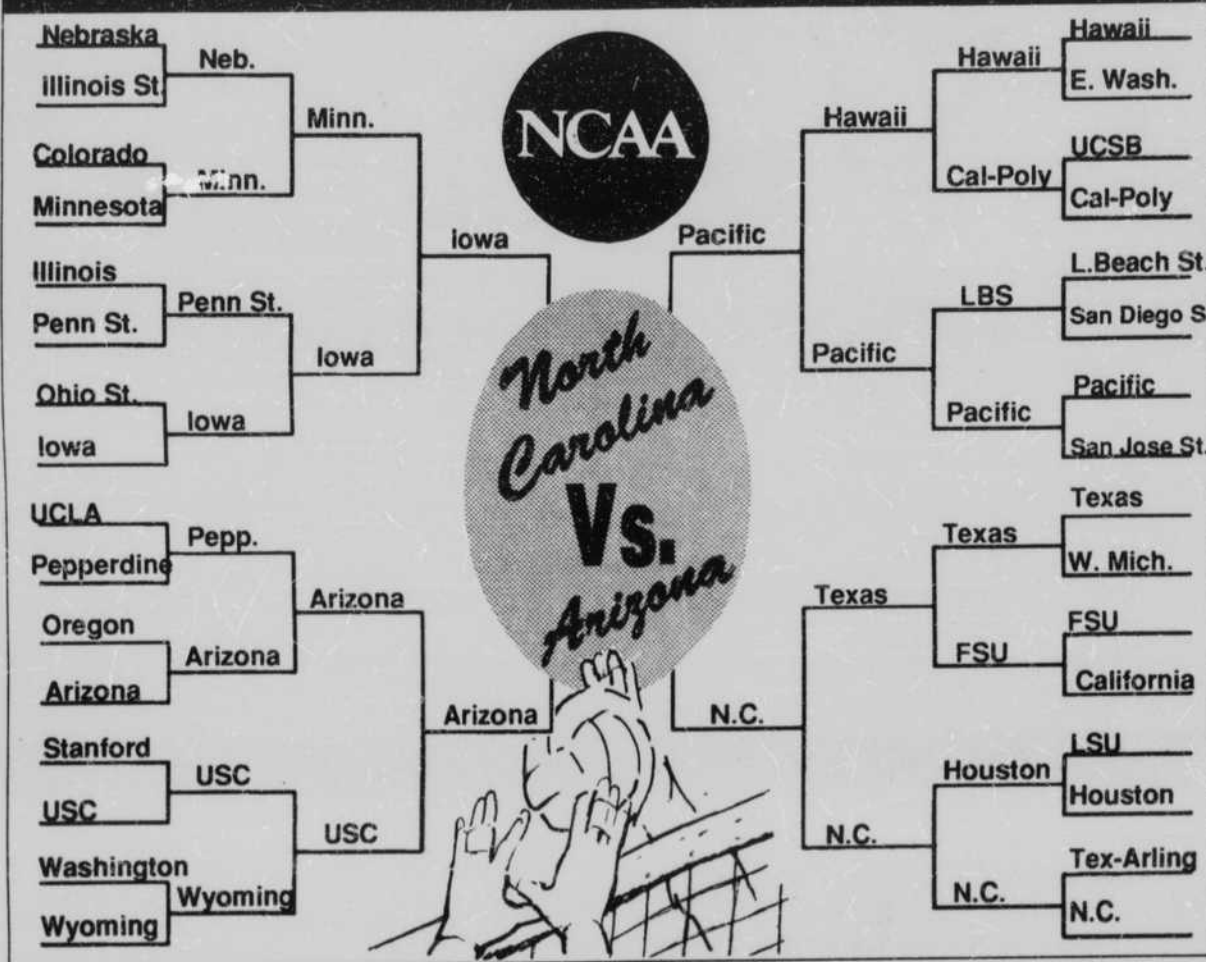
"Obviously, setter Val Novak... she's a great leader on the floor and a great athlete. I think Virginia (Stahr), Janet (Kruse), Eileen Shannon... all of them are just great players. (They) have a very well balanced team."

That balance and talent will be in Nebraska's favor more than the home court edge, she said.

"Any time you're not on your home court, it's difficult," she said.

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### 1989 NCAA tournament predictions



DN sports staff predictions

Andy Manhart and John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan

## Basketball coaches predict season's leaders

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Editor

The big names are gone, but Oklahoma men's basketball coach Billy Tubbs' cockiness remains.

Tubbs said he is looking forward to the season even though Oklahoma lacks the big-name players it has possessed in the past. The Sooners also lack height, as they start 6-foot-8 Tony Martin at center.

"For the first time in five years we will be starting the season without a proven star in our lineup and our lack of size will certainly be a factor," Tubbs said. "However, I think we will be quicker, tougher and better defensively than last year. I also feel that we will score as many points as last year."

Tubbs said those attributes should

help Oklahoma return to the national prominence it earned last season. The Sooners finished last year with a 30-6 record while advancing to the third round of the NCAA tournament.

Tubbs said he wouldn't mind seeing a repeat of last season. Oklahoma spent six of the last eight weeks of the 1988-89 season ranked No. 1.

"We have the same goals this season as we do every season: one, win the Big Eight; two, go to the NCAA Tournament and three get back to the Final Four," Tubbs said. "Of course, I wouldn't mind being ranked first in the nation again."

Missouri coach Norm Stewart also would not mind being ranked No. 1. The Tigers have that potential, as they return forward Doug Smith and guards Lee Coward and Anthony Peeler from last year's team that finished 29-8.

Stewart said Missouri will rely on Smith, Coward, Peeler and forward Nathan Buntin to overcome the firepower that was lost through graduation last season. The Tigers lost center Gary Leonard, guard Byron Irvin and forwards Greg Church and Mike Sandbothe to graduation.

"We lost four outstanding players," Stewart said. "But on the positive side, we have four people returning who played a key part in last year's success."

Stewart said Missouri will mix its returning cast with an abundance of talented newcomers. The top Tiger newcomers are Chris Heller and Jim Horton, a pair of 6-10 centers.

"We'll need some help from the people who have been with us," Stewart said, "and also from our recruit-

ing class."

Oklahoma State coach Leonard Hamilton said he also will rely on a wide variety of people this season. The Cowboys' top returnees are guard Corey Williams and forward Byron Houston, who were teammates on last summer's North team that won the gold medal at the U.S. Olympic Festival.

Michigan State coach Jud Heathcote, who coached Williams and Houston at the Olympic Festival, said he was impressed by the pair. Houston led the North in scoring with a 12.2 points-per-game average while pulling down a tournament-high 43 rebounds.

"They both have tremendous potential and they were certainly two of the better players in the whole festival," Heathcote said. "And the most

impressive thing is that they can't help but get better and better."

Williams said playing in the Olympic Festival made him and Houston better players.

"With me and Byron being in the festival," he said, "I think it boosted our team's style to another level."

Hamilton said Oklahoma State can boost its play to a level above last season's 17-13 performance if it becomes more consistent.

"I feel that it is going to be very important to develop some consistency this year -- especially on the road," Hamilton said. "There were times last year that we played tremendous basketball -- especially at home."

"It's going to be very important that we show some maturity and en-

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## National championship for Nebraska or Florida State remains a possibility

By Chuck Green  
Senior Reporter

Though a national championship for either Nebraska or Florida State is unlikely, it is not impossible, according to Bruce Skinner, the executive director of the Sunkist-Fiesta Bowl.

Skinner said that although the Cornhuskers and Seminoles need "a lot of luck" to capture the mythical national title, "stranger things have happened."

"There's always that outside chance," he said. "A lot will depend on this week's rankings. There are still a lot of big games to be played."

The Associated Press last week had Florida State ranked fifth, while the Huskers were No. 6.

Florida State will play Florida Saturday in its final regular-season game. Skinner said he and other Sunkist-Fiesta Bowl officials are holding their breath for the outcome.

"You kind of have to," Skinner said. "We held it for a while during the Nebraska-Oklahoma game."

For the game to have national championship implications, Skinner said, teams ranked ahead of Florida

State and Nebraska must lose, either Saturday or in their respective bowl games.

Skinner said the following scenario would be necessary for the Fiesta Bowl winner to be considered for No. 1: Colorado, which likely will be ranked first this week after Miami defeated top-ranked Notre Dame 24-10 last Saturday, would have to be beaten in the Orange Bowl by the Fighting Irish and Michigan would have to lose to Southern California in the Rose Bowl.

In addition, he said, Alabama -- the only team other than Colorado to remain undefeated -- would have to either lose Saturday to Auburn, or lose to Miami in the Sugar Bowl. If, however, Miami moves ahead of Florida State and Nebraska in this week's ratings, Alabama would have to lose to Auburn and then defeat the Hurricanes on New Year's Day.

"It's all pretty much up in the air for us," Skinner said. "But it's all possible. That scenario isn't really that far-fetched."

Regardless of national title implications, Skinner said he thinks this year's Sunkist-Fiesta Bowl "will be a

great contest."

"It's one of the best bowl games going this season," he said. "You've got two of the finest teams in America, year in and year out, and aside from our national championship games a few years back (between Miami and Penn State in 1987 and Notre Dame-West Virginia last season), this could be the best one we've ever had."

Skinner said he thinks Nebraska and Florida State are ranked too low in the polls.

"They're two of the better teams in the country right now," he said. "They're both a lot better than some of the teams that are ranked ahead of them."

Skinner declined to name the teams he thought were inferior to the Huskers and Seminoles.

Skinner said the bowl's payout to each school this year will be "between \$2.5 and 3 million," which is about the same as last season's purse.

Nebraska and Florida State will receive an allotment of 11,000 tickets each, Skinner said, and the remaining tickets "have been sold out since May 1."

### BOWL OUTLOOK PROJECTED PAIRINGS



- FIESTA BOWL**  
Nebraska vs. Florida State
- ORANGE BOWL**  
Colorado vs. Notre Dame
- COTTON BOWL**  
Tennessee vs. Arkansas
- ROSE BOWL**  
Southern Cal vs. Michigan
- SUGAR BOWL**  
Miami, Fla. vs. Alabama
- CITRUS BOWL**  
Illinois vs. Virginia
- GATOR BOWL**  
Clemson vs. West Virginia
- PEACH BOWL**  
Florida vs. Syracuse
- COPPER BOWL**  
Undecided vs. Arizona

- JOHN HANCOCK BOWL**  
Texas A&M vs. Pittsburgh
- LIBERTY BOWL**  
Air Force vs. Mississippi
- HALL OF FAME BOWL**  
Auburn vs. Ohio State
- INDEPENDENCE BOWL**  
Texas Tech vs. Tulsa
- ALOHA BOWL**  
Michigan State vs. Hawaii
- ALL-AMERICAN BOWL**  
Georgia vs. Duke
- HOLIDAY BOWL**  
Penn State vs. BYU
- CALIFORNIA BOWL**  
Central Mich or Ball St. vs. Fresno St.

John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan