

## Cornhuskers pounded by Long Beach State

By Darran Fowler  
Senior Reporter

Although it ended in a nightmare, the Nebraska volleyball team still had a dream season.

Nebraska fell one victory short of the national title for the second time this decade after losing to Long Beach State 15-12, 15-0, 15-6 in the championship match Saturday night at the Neil Blaisdell Center in Honolulu.

The Cornhuskers, who ended their season 29-4, also finished as runners-up to Pacific in 1986.

With a starting lineup of two seniors, two sophomores, a junior and a freshman, Nebraska coach Terry Pettit said the Huskers accomplished more than what could have been expected.

"We're certainly disappointed we didn't play better in the championship match," he said. "But that's one of the risks you take when you advance a little further than your experience can handle at that point."

"But, while we didn't play up to our potential in the championship match, we certainly played to our potential during the season. It was a great year for us."

Nebraska advanced to the title match with consecutive sweeps of Illinois in the Midwest regional final and No. 2-ranked UCLA in the championship semifinals.

Long Beach State eliminated third-ranked Pacific, top-ranked Hawaii and No. 7-ranked Texas-Arlington en route to reaching the finals.

Nebraska, which trailed UCLA 11-4 in the first game, came back to defeat the Bruins 15-13, 15-11, 15-6 Thursday night behind a 19 kill performance by sophomore outside hitter Cris Hall.

"That's a super performance for someone that young, but you're not going to be able to do that every

night," Pettit said.

He said the Huskers' youth was bound to catch up with them sometime.

"We had to play extremely well against Illinois and UCLA to win and it's only so long that you can keep that up," he said. "Emotionally the players probably left everything at the UCLA match."

"Some of it I attribute to Long Beach State and some of it to our inexperience as a team. With our inexperience, it's very tough to play real big matches back-to-back and we didn't have the time to prepare mentally and physically as much as we needed to do."

More time could have helped the Huskers prepare for Long Beach State's fast-paced style, Pettit said.

"We weren't able to adjust to Long Beach State's tempo," he said. "We hadn't played a team that played that fast of a style. I think that confused us."

In the first game against Long Beach State, Nebraska was headed towards another sweep after erupting to a 9-1 lead.

But even then Pettit said he didn't feel comfortable, because most of those points were coming off Long Beach State errors.

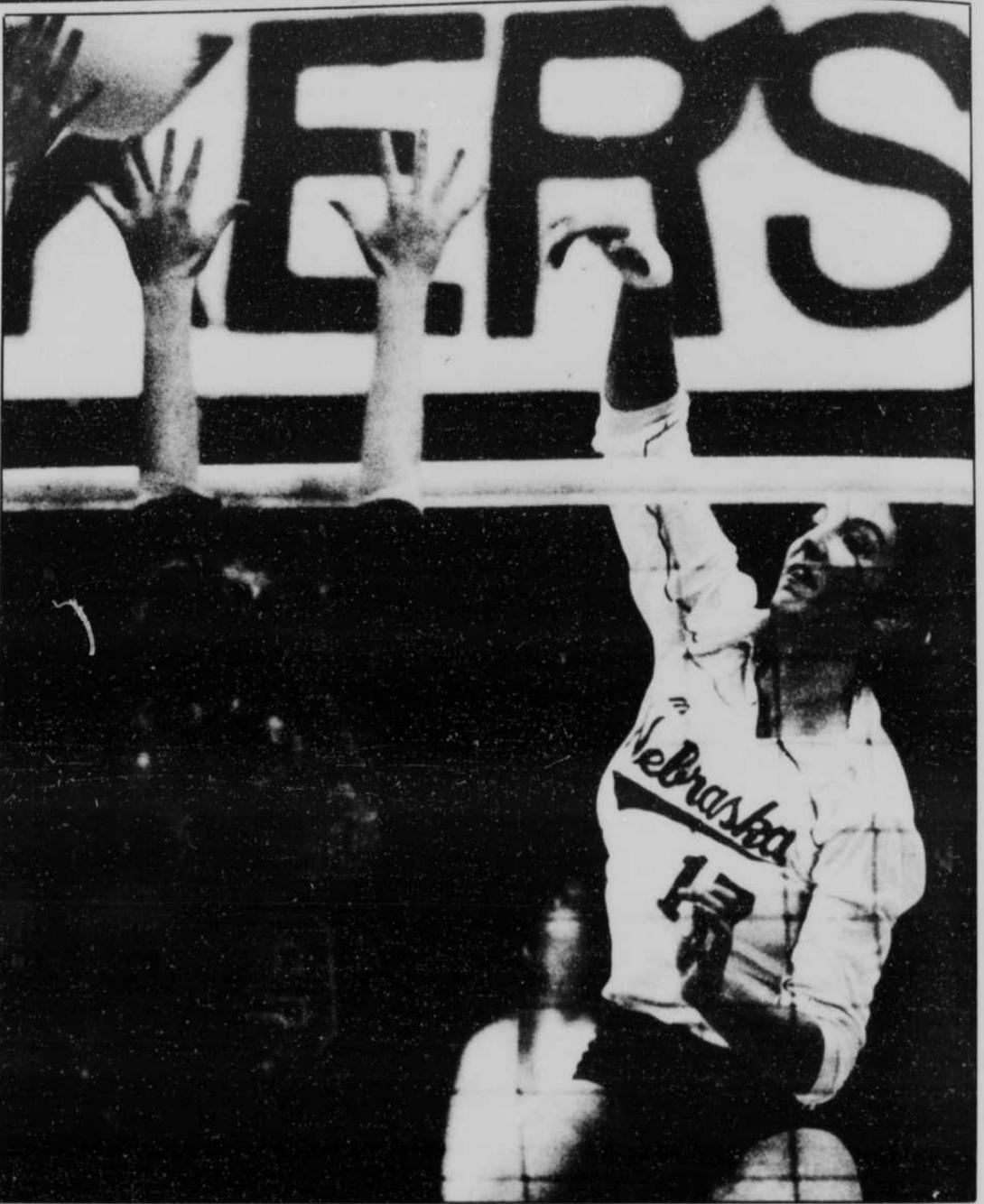
"I didn't necessarily think we were playing that well," he said. "Once we got up 9-1, they just stopped making errors."

"For some reason I didn't see the intensity that I saw the night before."

### Notes:

- Nebraska junior setter Val Novak and sophomore outside hitter Janet Kruse earned first-team Russell All-America honors. Senior middle blocker Virginia Stahr, who was named to the first-team in 1988, was selected to the second-team.

- Final Four competition will be televised on ESPN this week, with the semifinals at 11 p.m. Thursday and the final at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday.



Nebraska's Janet Kruse executes a spike.

Eric Gregory/Daily Nebraskan

## Volleyball faithful spend late night by radio

The pizza, the pop, the blanket and pillows. The radio was on a station I never listen to.

Paul Domeier



I was staying up late to listen to a volleyball game -- a volleyball game, for goodness sake. The Nebraska Cornhuskers were set to take on the UCLA Bruins in the semifinals of the NCAA championships and the volleyball faithful within range of KRNU were gathered to listen to the broadcast.

I had never listened to volleyball on the radio before. The game goes too quick to keep score and I couldn't read and listen at the same time, so I

needed something to keep me busy. That's what the pizza was for.

The Huskers and Bruins are (or is it "were" now) similar teams -- big, powerful, in-your-face types. When two similar volleyball powers meet, they could trade side-outs for weeks, like Illinois and Nebraska did earlier this year.

And the game started at 12:30 a.m., so a match ending at 3:30 a.m. was a possibility. That's what the pop was for.

But the Huskers kicked sand in the faces of the Bruins. They swept the No. 2 team in the country, and made it sound easy. The UCLA announcers doing the game kept saying the Bruins were having trouble with Nebraska's versatility and power.

The match was even boring in the third game, when UCLA made so many errors that Cris Hall couldn't set the Nebraska three-game kill record. That's what the pillows and blan-

ket were for.

Early in the morning the 15-13, 15-11, 15-6 victory was completed. Huskers win! Huskers win! Huskers win! A national championship is coming back to Lincoln!

Long Beach State? Bah Humbug! So what if they beat Hawaii and Pacific and blazing-hot Texas-Arlington to reach the finals. They were a one-woman team with a 5-foot-2 setter. Hall would slam spikes over the miniature Sheri Sanders, if the Husker sophomore didn't step on the 49'er senior first.

All Nebraska had to do was side-out with Co-Player-of-the-Year Tara Cross in the front row, and wear down the 49'ers when Cross was tucked away in back.

No pizza, pop, pillows or blankets for the finals. The radio was back on to the station I never listen to, but the extras weren't necessary. The finals started at 11:30 p.m. our time, and the

match would be short.

The Huskers and the 49'ers were different types of teams. While Nebraska relied on waves of outside slams, Long Beach State rode on the shoulders of 5-11 Cross and her NCAA-record kill total.

If Nebraska could keep Cross out of the clouds, the Huskers probably would win in three. If Cross could do whatever she pleased, Nebraska would be dead in three. Either way, I could get some sleep.

And Nebraska started strong. They went up 9-1 in the first game. Six more points, and one-third of the national title would be in the hands of Coach Terry Pettit and company.

But the 49'ers came back with point after point after point. According to the announcer, the Huskers were having trouble with passing and setting again, and service errors and Cross' excellence killed any Huskers' hopes. Long Beach State won the

game, 15-12, and the match was over. Nebraska was skunked in the second game. The third game was academic.

We should have known the Huskers couldn't keep playing like the national team. They crushed Illinois and UCLA, and they were doomed to come down eventually.

Virginia Stahr and Carla Baker wrapped their careers in a pair of second-place finishes. The rest of the team can look forward to next fall.

Pettit returns two first-team All-America selections in Val Novak and Janet Kruse. He returns Hall, who will challenge for Tara Cross-status if she keeps improving. He returns future superstars Eileen Shannon and Stephanie Thater. He returns leadership in Becki Bolli. Where do Sue Hesch and Linda Barsness fit in, and what about Novak's likely successor, Valerie Vermuellen?

See REMINISCE on 10

## NU wrestlers 'mature' in victory against Iowa State

By Chuck Green  
Senior Reporter

Talent wasn't the only factor in the Nebraska wrestling team's 21-16 dual win against Iowa State in Ames, Iowa, Saturday.

Maturity may have been the deciding factor, Cornhusker coach Tim Neumann said.

Nebraska faced adversity against Iowa State, losing a 12-3 lead and wrestling in front of almost 3,000 highly partisan fans at the Hilton Coliseum.

Neumann was worried about Iowa State's tradition affecting his team.

"I have a lot of guys from Iowa and Minnesota that grew up respecting Iowa State wrestling," he said. "There's so much tradition there, but it didn't seem to affect them."

Iowa State's fans didn't affect the Huskers either, Neumann said.

"After we won the first two matches of the day, that kind of took them right out of it," he said.

But the fans wouldn't be "out of it" for long.

At 150, Nebraska's Paul Herrera lost 14-6 to Torre Jackson, giving the Cyclones a major decision and four points.

"Paul was leading 6-1 after the

first period," Neumann said. "In the second, he was taken down to his back (for 5 points) and the crowd really got into it."

Neumann said Herrera lost his concentration and composure after that.

"If we'd have won at 150, things would have gone pretty much as planned," he said. "But our lead was only by five points after that."

After the next match, at 158, Nebraska's lead was gone. Iowa State's Steve Hamilton, ranked No. 2 in the nation, pinned Dan Harrison, giving the Cyclones a 13-12 lead, and

Neumann's concerns of an Iowa State comeback seemed to be unfolding before his eyes.

"We've been in situations like that before and have folded," Neumann said. "But it didn't happen this time."

The teams traded decisions in the next two weight classes before Nebraska's Chris Nelson beat Iowa State's Jim Nelson 8-6 at 190.

"We figured (Chris) Nelson would win that match," Neumann said. "But (Iowa State's) guy was 11-1 on the season, so we weren't overconfident."

"Basically, those two guys had a

war."

In the heavyweight class, Nebraska's Joe Malecek decisioned Todd Kenney 7-3.

"I knew that if we were within three points going into the heavyweight class, we'd win with Joe out there," Neumann said.

Overall, Neumann said, the Huskers performed well.

"Technique-wise, we didn't wrestle as good as we have before, or as good as we'd like," he said. "But as far as maturity goes, this was the best showing this team's ever had."

"We took a step further than any other time this year."