



Michelle Paulman/Daily Nebraskan

Volleyball matches free for students

From Staff Reports

Regular season volleyball matches at the NU Coliseum are free to University of Nebraska-Lincoln students who show their student identification cards at the door.

Nebraska, which returns four starters from the 1989 team that finished No. 2 in the nation, plays 15 regular season home matches this year.

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Nebraska All-American setter Val Novak works on her technique that helped her lead the nation last year in set assists.

Huskers' setter won't look past subtle challenges

By Cindy Wostrel
Staff Reporter

Nebraska's Val Novak is not going to get caught looking forward to this year's NCAA Tournament and a possible chance of returning to the Final Four.

Novak, a 1989 first-team All-America selection after leading the nation with 13.74 set assists a game, said she "really feels good" about playing on a team that has the ingredients to contend for a national championship.

The 5-foot-10 senior from Oak Lawn, Ill., is one of four starters and several other experienced players returning from a team that finished second in the nation last year with a 29-4 record.

Novak said the experience and pressure of playing for the national championship would benefit this year's team. Cornhusker coach Terry Pettit added that the three weeks of extra practice the team spent preparing for last year's NCAA tournament were more intense and more stressful than anything during the regular season.

With Novak playing the role of quarterback, Nebraska's hitting percentage of .3101 led the nation in 1989.

Novak, who took over the setting job from former Husker All-American Lori Endicott last season after playing outside hitter, said there was room for improvement.

With the move from outside hitter to setter, Pettit said, last year was a critical time for Novak.

She responded by being named to the All-Big Eight and All-Mideast Regional teams. She was a most valuable player of three tournaments, and was named to the All-Tournament team of another, in addition being an All-American.

She did a tremendous job proving that she could play setter, Pettit said, but this year she must try to "jump up another level," in her performance.

"I think the challenges are a little more subtle," he said.

That means that this year she will be making improvements only her teammates might see, he said, such as increasing finesse, making better, quicker decisions and placing sets better.

And, he said, with plenty of weapons to go to, "she certainly has a lot of opportunities to do that this year."

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