

Buckeyes use balanced attack

## Freshmen shine in match

By David Moyer  
Staff Reporter

The Midwest Regional volleyball championship match was an open-and-shut case. Ohio State handed Nebraska a loss Saturday night, and the Buckeyes did it with a balanced attack.

The Ohio State Buckeyes closed the door on Nebraska's season and made reservations for the Final Four after a 9-15, 15-9, 17-16, 15-7 victory over the Cornhuskers.

They did it despite being out-hit .248 to .205 by the Nebraska attack. The Buckeyes also weathered a 30-kill attack by the Huskers' Cris Hall.

The Buckeyes were able to counter Nebraska's physical abilities with defense and a balanced scoring attack, which included two seniors and two freshmen.

With Nebraska relying on Hall to come up with most of its offensive big plays, Ohio State got 24 kills from senior Julie Chellevoid and 17 kills from senior Leisa Wissler.

The Buckeyes also scored 16 kills from freshman Gabriele Jobst and 70 set assists from freshman setter Laura Davis.

Jobst said the ability of Ohio State to use a balanced attack was impor-

tant for the win.

"I think it helped," Jobst said. "They can't just block one person so it definitely helps."

Wissler, the Big 10 player-of-the-year, said the ability of Davis to set so many effective passes was a major factor in the Buckeye domination.

"(Passing) is what dictates how well we play," she said. "Our passing came on, and once that starts we began to click, and we just rolled after that."

Many of Davis' passes found their way to Jobst, who added another dimension to the already potent Buckeye attack.

Ohio State Coach Jim Stone said he wasn't shocked by the amount of poise that the two freshmen showed in such a big match.

"They've been doing that all year so I'm not surprised," he said. "They are playing at a level beyond most freshmen."

Now those freshmen will move Ohio State on to another level when it faces UCLA in the Final Four in Los Angeles. The Bruins were the only other team to defeat Nebraska in the Bob Devaney Sports Center this year.

Jobst said winning the Midwest Regional and moving on to the Final

Four was a great feeling.

"It's awesome," she said. "I knew the team was good when Laura and I came in, but I was never definitely sure of how far we could go. But as the season progressed we just got better and better."

The team is now going to set its sights on winning the national championship, she said.

"We've got nothing to lose," Jobst said. "Now that we are in the Final Four, we can only keep doing the things we have been doing and, hopefully, that will be good enough."

"We are definitely an underdog because we haven't been ranked in the top four, so we are just going to play hard and play our best."

The Final Four will be a going-away party for All-Big 10 performers Wissler and Chellevoid. Chellevoid said it was the best going-away present she could have.

"I think it's a great way to go out as a senior," Chellevoid said. "I mean, it can't get any better than this. Working hard all four years, whatever the outcome is (in the Final Four), we made it."

"There's going to be other teams sitting at home watching, and we are going to be there."

## NU seniors finish with fire

By John Adkisson  
Staff Reporter

The only non-senior Nebraska volleyball captain watched Saturday as her two co-captains bowed out with fire.

Cornhusker sophomore setter Nikki Stricker had nothing but praise for seniors Cris Hall and Janet Kruse, her co-captains, after Nebraska was eliminated by Ohio State in the NCAA Midwest Regional Final.

"I feel so bad for Cris and Janet," Stricker said. "They worked so hard all season, and tonight they were unstoppable."

Unfortunately for Nebraska, Ohio State was unstoppable longer. The Buckeyes earned a trip to next weekend's Final Four in Los Angeles by beating the Huskers 9-15, 15-9, 17-16, 15-7 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Nebraska finished with a 27-5 overall record, but the loss ended a two-year streak of Final Four appearances by the Huskers.

"I just wish that things would have worked out a little bit better for them," Stricker said of her graduating co-captains. "They deserved to go, but we didn't pull through for them."

Hall and Kruse both put on big-

time farewell performances. Hall blasted a career-high 30 kills and hit .349 while Kruse added 12 kills, made 17 digs and finished the match with a .267 hitting percentage.

Stricker, who finished with 63 set assists and 12 digs, said the Buckeyes' aggressiveness was the key to Ohio State's win.

"It was their night," she said. "They were aggressive the whole match, and they never let up for a second."

Stricker, juniors Eileen Shannon and Stephanie Thater, and freshman Kim Tonniges are starters who will return next year. But gone are Nebraska's top-two outside hitters in Hall and Kruse.

Having come so close to reaching a third consecutive Final Four will make the Huskers even more determined to return next season, Stricker said.

"Being a sophomore, I can look ahead," she said. "We can look at the role model the seniors gave us this year, and say that they worked this hard for this, so we have to work this hard or harder for next year."

Stricker said she expects next year's team to be as successful as this year's.

"We'll be back," she said.

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## Final

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third game, but rather the second game, in which Nebraska lost an 8-4 lead to lose the game 15-9.

"I think that was the key to the match," he said. "We just didn't play well from that point (leading 8-4) through the 14th point of the next game."

Ohio State cruised in the fourth game, jumping out to leads of 6-0 and 13-4 on what were mostly Nebraska errors.

The Buckeyes sealed the win and their first ever trip to the Final Four when Chellevoid pounded her 24th kill into the back corner of the Nebraska court.

Chellevoid was one of three Buckeyes with a double-figure kill total. Senior Leisa Wissler nailed 17 kills for Ohio State, while freshman Gabriele Jobst added 16. Buckeye freshman setter Laura Davis also notched 70 set assists.

Stone credited the Ohio State defensive effort as a major key to the victory.

"We wanted to try to get into situations where the points and rallies were extended," Stone said. "Our players showed a great deal of patience."

Nebraska dominated in every match statistic except the scoreboard. The Huskers out-hit the Buckeyes .248 to .205 and outblocked Ohio State 17-7.

Stone said the difference was that his team won the points that counted.

"This team all year long has had the ability to win big points," he said. "Winning big points is a big part of our game."

Pettit agreed.

"It's rare to lose a match when you out-hit a team," Pettit said. "But there were streaks, and all of our errors were at the same point. It's when you do what you do."

Nonetheless, Hall said that the loss had been a case of Ohio State just playing better on a particular night.

"If we'd come back and play again tomorrow, the outcome may be different," Hall said. "And I still think that if we would have the opportunity to come back, we could still win a national championship."

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