

Swedish hitter to fill gaps on volleyball team

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team needed help at the outside hitter position for next year.

Cornhusker coach Terry Pettit may have found the help his team needed when Maria Hedbeck of Sollentuna, Sweden signed a national letter of intent.

Hedbeck is a 5-foot-10 outside hitter and was the left-side starter on the Swedish Women's National Team. She is a senior at Rudbecksskolan High School and will graduate this spring.

Pettit said Hedbeck's signing came at just the right time because of injuries to outside hitters Kim Tonniges and Laura Luther.

Both Luther and Tonniges had reconstructive shoulder surgery after the end of last season.

"(Hedbeck) does a lot of things. She's a good ball handler and very strong in ball handling skills," Pettit said. "We're very shallow at the outside hitter position with the graduation of Eileen Shannon and the injuries to Tonniges and Luther."

Pettit said he was hoping that Hedbeck could play right away next season.

"We had to have a player who could step in and play," Pettit said. "We anticipate her being ready to play for us next year."

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Pettit said the Swedish National program was different from the program in the United States. Hedbeck's international experience will help, he said.

"The Swedish program is much

like the United States basketball team," he said. "They practice for two or three weeks in intervals. It's not as sophisticated or as developed as the program here in the United States."

"But international play at its lowest is higher than college play at its highest," Pettit said.

Hedbeck contacted Pettit about a scholarship, Pettit said. She sent videotapes of several of her matches to Pettit before he had her evaluated by some international contacts.

Hedbeck is the third and final recruit to sign with the Huskers. She joins Jennifer McFadden of Dubuque, Iowa, and Kate Crnich of River Forest, Ill.

Pettit said it was too early to tell

how good this recruiting class would be. He said he expected early contributions from all three athletes.

"The two with the best shot at contributing next year are McFadden and Hedbeck," he said. "They have more experience than Crnich does."

With the graduation of Stephanie Thater, Eileen Shannon and Debbie Brand, Pettit had a few holes to fill, and he said he thought those holes could be filled by the current Huskers and the three recruits.

"I think we filled (the holes)," he said. "We had a spring tournament last weekend, and our team played very well. Peggy Meyer and Kelly Aspegren have significantly improved and Allison Weston and Billie Winsett are on their way to becoming great players."

Huskers lose two conference tennis duals

By Chris Hain
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's tennis team has had its share of close matches this season, and the Cornhuskers dropped another one this weekend.

The Huskers have had four 5-4 duals during the season and have lost the last two, including the one to Iowa State Saturday at Boulder, Colo.

"We've lost a few heartbreakers," NU coach Scott Jacobson said.

After the loss to Iowa State, the Huskers fell 8-1 to Colorado on Sunday.

Jacobson said his team should have beaten Iowa State.

"On paper we're a better program than Iowa State, in my eyes," Jacobson said. "You have to give them credit. They just outplayed us."

Jacobson said the Colorado dual, while not as close, might have been closer.

"We had chances — it could have been close," he said. "Colorado is a little stronger program than us at this point, and they were a little better in the clutch."

As postseason play approaches, Jacobson said he hoped his team would get a chance to avenge some of the close losses, like the one to Iowa State.

"Hopefully we'll get to play them again in the Big Eight Tournament," Jacobson said.

The Huskers are on the road this weekend, playing at Oklahoma and at Oklahoma State. Jacobson said his team would use the two duals as preparation for the conference tourney.

"We have nothing to lose," Jacobson said. "On paper (Oklahoma and Oklahoma State) are expected to win. There is no reason for us not to play loose."

"We just need to focus on (the two duals) to prepare for the Big Eight tourney."



Kiley Timperley/DN

Nebraska's Ann Flannery returns a shot in a match earlier this year. After dropping matches to Colorado and Iowa State last weekend, the Huskers will face Oklahoma and Oklahoma State this weekend.

Men's tennis team defeats Cyclones, falls to Colorado

By Beau Finley
Staff Reporter

As the Nebraska men's tennis team enters the home stretch, Coach Kerry McDermott is hoping for a little more than just good showings.

But that's just what the Cornhuskers got this weekend.

The Huskers lost 5-2 to Big Eight leader Colorado in Boulder Sunday after defeating Iowa State 5-2 the previous day.

McDermott said although his team looked good, the effort simply wasn't enough.

"It was a close match," McDermott said. "I thought we could get the doubles point and played well enough to win. But they played exceptionally well in doubles. . . . They rose to the occasion when it mattered."

After losing the first point of the match, the Huskers closed the gap with victories by Matthias Mueller and Jan Andersen.

But the Buffaloes, who are tied with Kansas atop the Big Eight standings, slammed the door on the Huskers with a pair of three-set victories over Karl Falkland and Andy Davis.

McDermott said the team did not step up its performance against Colorado after dismantling Iowa State.

"You can't afford mental lapses against a team like Colorado," McDermott said. "You'll end up walking off the court thinking, 'I just lost 6-3, 6-3.'"

Playing too conservatively may have cost the Huskers in the match, McDermott said.

"They need the attitude that something needs to happen," McDermott said. "When you play a Kansas or a Colorado, you have to gamble a bit."

The Huskers, now 10-5, lost to the Jayhawks a week ago in a close match in Lincoln.

McDermott said he was concerned about the unaggressive play of his team over the last two weeks.

"I don't feel like the guys are taking the initiative to put pressure on their opponents," McDermott said.

The lack of intensity, McDermott said, may place the Huskers in a difficult position to win the Big Eight Tournament and earn a trip to the NCAA Championships.

In addition, McDermott said the two losses placed the Huskers in a must-win situation against their next opponents, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State.

A loss to either would place Nebraska in the same bracket with Colorado in the Big Eight tourney April 23-25, McDermott said the team did not want that position.

But the team realizes the situation it is in, McDermott said.

"Oklahoma State is going to be a dogfight," McDermott said. "They know it gets hard when you lose a dual."

The Huskers will travel to Stillwater, Okla., to play the Cowboys on Saturday and then conclude the regular season by facing Oklahoma Sunday in Norman.

Rockies suffer from grounds conditions

DENVER (AP) — From the pock-marked outfield turf to the apparent lack of manpower to move screens and batting cages, Colorado Rockies manager Don Baylor is less than pleased with the condition of Mile High Stadium.

"We're fighting not to look like an expansion team," Baylor said Monday, shaking his head at what he regards as bush-league accommodations in certain areas of the stadium operation.

"This has been a minor-league ballpark in the past," Baylor said. "Guys at the big-league level want the field a certain way."

"Guys have complained about the batter's box. The basepaths from second to third are not real good. Guys have been slipping. It's not dangerous, it's just not a real good infield. It doesn't have clay under all of it the way it should."

— “**Instead of worrying about managing, I have to go out there and be the groundskeeper.**

— Baylor

"It's all kinds of things. Instead of worrying about managing, I have to go out there and be the groundskeeper."

When the Rockies are ready to take infield practice before games, Baylor said, he and his coaches have to drag screens and nets into place because there are no members of the grounds crew in evidence.

"Coaches shouldn't have to do that," he said. "We say we're going to take infield at a certain

up his words, no matter how brash.

And he has expected that since the Fab Four first set foot on campus.

"If I'm not going to go out and blast teams, I don't even want to be there," Allen said during

time, and no one's around."

While they were in spring training in Tucson, Ariz., the Rockies were aware of some of the potential problems at Mile High. The team reportedly offered the city \$38,000 to re-sod right field but was told the city didn't have the manpower to do the job.

Gary Jones, stadium manager, said the uneven condition of the turf is not unusual for this time of year. He said grounds crews simply did not have enough sunny days prior to the home opener to get the grass growing properly.

Dirt around the batter's box and the first-base line has been dug up and repaired, apparently to the Rockies' satisfaction.

But the club is growing impatient. "I expected these things to be done when we got here," Baylor said, "so they're already behind schedule."

the Fab Four's freshman year. "This group will compete with the best. And they will win."

On Friday, his prediction will come true.

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Cooper

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Allen has always expected his gymnasts to be good. He has always expected them to back