

Blocker sets sights on national crown

By Tim Pearson
Senior Reporter

Before the season started, Nebraska middle blocker Allison Weston was mentioned by "Volleyball Monthly" magazine as one of the best players in the country.

Weston didn't believe it then.

And she doesn't believe it now, even though Cornhusker coach Terry Pettit and Colorado coach Brad Saindon both said Weston could be one of the best in the country.

Pettit and Saindon said their praise is based on the sophomore's accomplishments so far this season.

Consider Weston:

- Set a Nebraska school record for kills in a four-game match with 35 against Georgia.
- Leads the Big Eight in hitting percentage.
- Leads the Cornhuskers in kills.
- Earned four all-tournament team selections this year, including being named Most Valuable Player of the First Tier Invitational.
- Was named the American Volleyball Coaches Association national player of the week and the Big Eight player of the week earlier this season.

● Improved her career highs in almost every statistical category.

But, Weston said, there's still room for improvement.

"With the way I've been playing lately, there's a lot of room for improvement," she said. "When I put my mind to it, I can play well."

"But it's a matter of putting my mind to it."

Saindon said Weston, who had 31 kills against his Colorado team in the Buffs' five-game win last week, would follow in the likes of Stephanie Thater, a three-time Husker All-American who graduated last season.

"I'm not sure we did much to contain her," he said. "She's a dominant net player. She's the next in line of the great Nebraska players."

"You look at Thater and the others over the years and Weston's going to be another great one."

Pettit said consistency made Weston—who has played only a year and a half of college volleyball—successful.

"She's very quick," he said. "She just wears on you. She's not like other players who stay on one side. Weston goes from antenna to antenna."

Although she's just a sophomore, Weston said, she has assumed a leadership role on this year's young Husker team. Nebraska's only senior is setter Nikki Stricker.

"Between Nikki and I, we're the leaders of the team," Weston said. "In order for the team to be successful, Nikki and I have to be going well."

Last season, Weston was one of six players named to the "Volleyball Monthly" Freshman All-America team. She was the Big Eight Conference Co-Newcomer-of-the-Year and an honorable mention All-Big Eight pick.

After last season, Weston said, she knew she would be stepping into a leadership position on the team. She has taken over Thater's position at middle blocker.

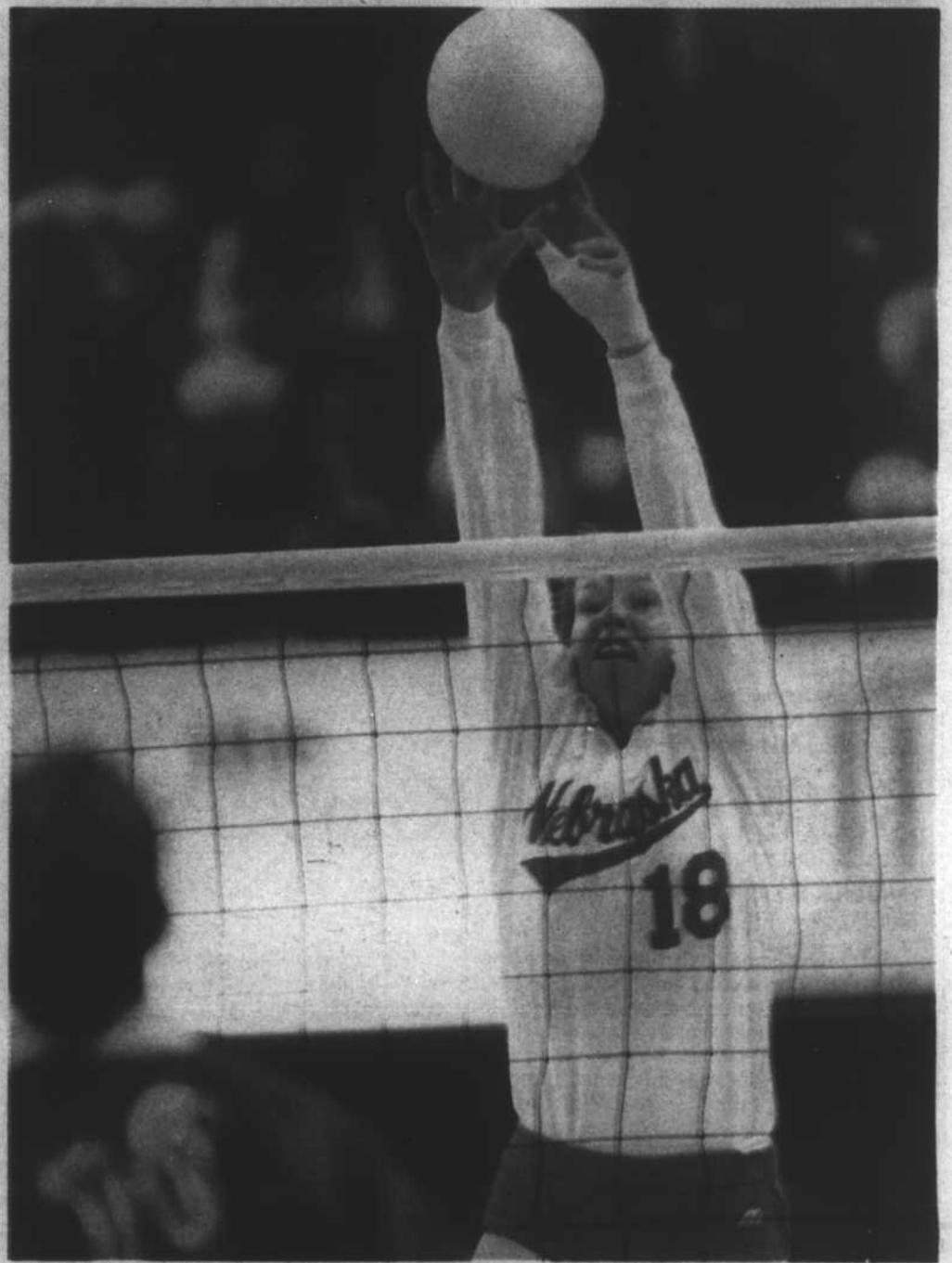
"After last year and knowing Stephanie Thater was graduating, I knew and expected to be in this position," she said.

With two years of eligibility remaining after this season, Weston said, she hopes to help Nebraska to its first national championship this year. And if not this year, then she wants to see it in the next two years.

Weston said her main focus was on Nebraska winning a national title, not individual honors.

"First of all, I want to win a national championship," she said. "I think I can become an All-American some time in the near future."

"Individual honors are nice to have but I'm more concerned with the team."



Shaun Sartin/DN

Nebraska middle blocker, Allison Weston, attempts a block during the Cornhuskers' win over Kansas Saturday night. Weston said she was looking to lead the Huskers even though she's just a sophomore. Earlier this season, Weston became the first Husker to be named AVCA National Player-of-the-Week.

Equity

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Nebraska's athletic department is the only department in the Big Eight and one of only a few in the country that supports itself entirely, Osborne said. That makes the money generated from football even more important to the athletic program, he said.

"If you cut the football program too much, it is like robbing Peter to pay Paul," Osborne said. "If the number of total scholarships was cut to 60, we would definitely suffer."

When the number of scholarships is reduced next year to 85, Byrne said, Nebraska can only hope for a healthy team.

"When injuries start adding up, this cut is going to hurt," Byrne said.

Unlike the National Football League, which has a roster limit of 50 players, a developmental squad from which to pick players and a waiver list to acquire replacements, Osborne said, college teams start and finish the season with the same players.

Osborne said many college freshmen and sophomores weren't physically ready to play football—a prob-

'Robbing Peter to pay Paul'

The NCAA has required college football programs to reduce scholarships gradually since 1986 in an effort to achieve greater equity between women and men on scholarship.



David Badders/DN

lem the NFL didn't have.

If additional cuts are made, Osborne said, major college football, as it is known today, will cease to exist.

"I think if you look at the Ivy League, you can see what can happen if you cut scholarships too much,"

Osborne said. "At one time, the Ivy schools were the big-time football schools. But they cut back, and today their popularity and quality have decreased significantly."

Staff Reporter Sam Snyder contributed to this story.

Equity affects everyone, NU football players say

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

While Nebraska football players have seen the effects of gender equity on their own team, they realize that every Cornhusker athletic program is affected.

"I know we bring in a lot of the money," senior defensive tackle Kevin Ramaekers said. "But I look at it like this: This whole university is one big family. If you're going to take something away from one member, you've got to take it away from the next."

"I think it's all a cycle. Even though we might be getting cut, there's somebody else getting cut, too."

In addition to the football program, the Nebraska baseball team and the men's swimming, track and field and gymnastics teams have also suffered scholarship cuts in recent years.

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said football couldn't afford

to be cut any further. Since 1986, the number of scholarships available to the football program has been cut from 105 to 88. Next year, it will be reduced to 85.

Osborne said the football program provided the majority of the revenue, and by cutting football, the entire athletic department was hurt.

Senior outside linebacker Trev Alberts agreed.

"Why take away from the thing that fuels the entire university?," he asked.

Football brings in more than \$13 million of the athletic department's \$17.5 million budget. Men's basketball brings in more than \$4 million. The next closest revenue-producing sport is volleyball, which brings in \$87,491.

Although Alberts does not support cutting football, he also said he did

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Wildcats burn Husker defense; passing questions rage

There are two words on everybody's mind these days: Nebraska's defense.

Everywhere, Cornhusker fans are wondering what's wrong with the Nebraska defense.

After giving up a Big Eight-record 489 yards passing to Kansas State quarterback Chad May in the Huskers' 45-28 win over the Wildcats, fans are now wondering if the new 4-3 Husker defense was all it was cracked up to be at the beginning of the season.

At the start of the season, players said it was a change for the better. It utilized the team's tremendous athletic ability and speed.

Husker defensive coordinator

Charlie McBride said the new defense would take advantage of the Huskers' speed.

So why didn't this great formation work against the Wildcats?

Before the season, when McBride was explaining the new defense, he also added that the long pass would hurt Nebraska in the new 4-3 defense. It put more pressure on the secondary to cover receivers one-on-one.

Well, the Huskers have been hurt by the long pass more than once.

Against Kansas State, the Blackshirts were hurt several times. And if it weren't for a couple of Wildcat turnovers here and there, Kansas State would have sneaked out



Tim Pearson

of Lincoln with a win.

Before the game, not many had ever heard of Chad May. I'll admit that the name May didn't mean much to me. May's a month, not a name.

But the transfer from Cal-State Fullerton came into Memorial Stadium and shocked the 76,000 people clad in Husker scarlet and cream.

Except for the confident and faith-

ful group of Wildcat fans in the southwest corner of the end zone, no one had an inkling that the Husker defense would be shredded to pieces by May and Co.

Here was a team that scored just 10 points against Kansas, which was sixth in the conference in total defense.

And the Husker Blackshirts entered the game with a reputation for being one of the best defensive teams in the conference. They entered the game ranked first in total defense and second against the pass.

Husker fans were licking their chops when Kansas State arrived.

But their tailgate party ended early when the Wildcats scored a touch-

down to tie Nebraska at seven.

This wasn't supposed to be happening.

The defense was supposed to be stuffing the Wildcat offense and the Husker crowd was supposed to be doing the wave towards the end of the first quarter.

But it didn't turn out that way. May kept lofting pass after pass into the chilly Lincoln air. And most of the time, those passes came resting down into the warm hands of Kansas State receivers.

Husker Tyrone Williams came down with a key interception of Wild-

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