

SPORTS

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Volleyball team wins First Tier Invitational

Husker coach says serving, defense led to weekend victory

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Reporter

For the first time in Nebraska volleyball history, the Cornhuskers won their first five matches of the season without losing a single game.

In its sixth match of the year, Nebraska dropped a game but still rolled over eighth-ranked Arizona State before a crowd of 3,281 at the University of Nebraska Coliseum on Saturday night.

The second- and fifth-ranked Huskers, 6-0, topped the Sun Devils 15-12, 15-7, 11-15, 15-9 in the final game of the First Tier Invitational.

On Friday, Nebraska beat Bowling Green State 15-1, 15-0, 15-9. The Huskers defeated Wyoming 15-7, 15-9, 15-6 earlier Saturday.

Despite the lopsided wins, Husker coach Terry Pettit said Nebraska was not playing at the top of its game.

"We didn't connect on middle attack," Pettit said. "We are a great middle attack team. We did not connect on blocks, and we are a great blocking team. And yet we still won. We won with defense, and we won with serving."

"It was a real good tournament. The level of play was much higher than last week. I saw some good things."

Junior All-American Allison Weston, who was named the invitational's most valuable player, said the Huskers did not expect to win so easily.

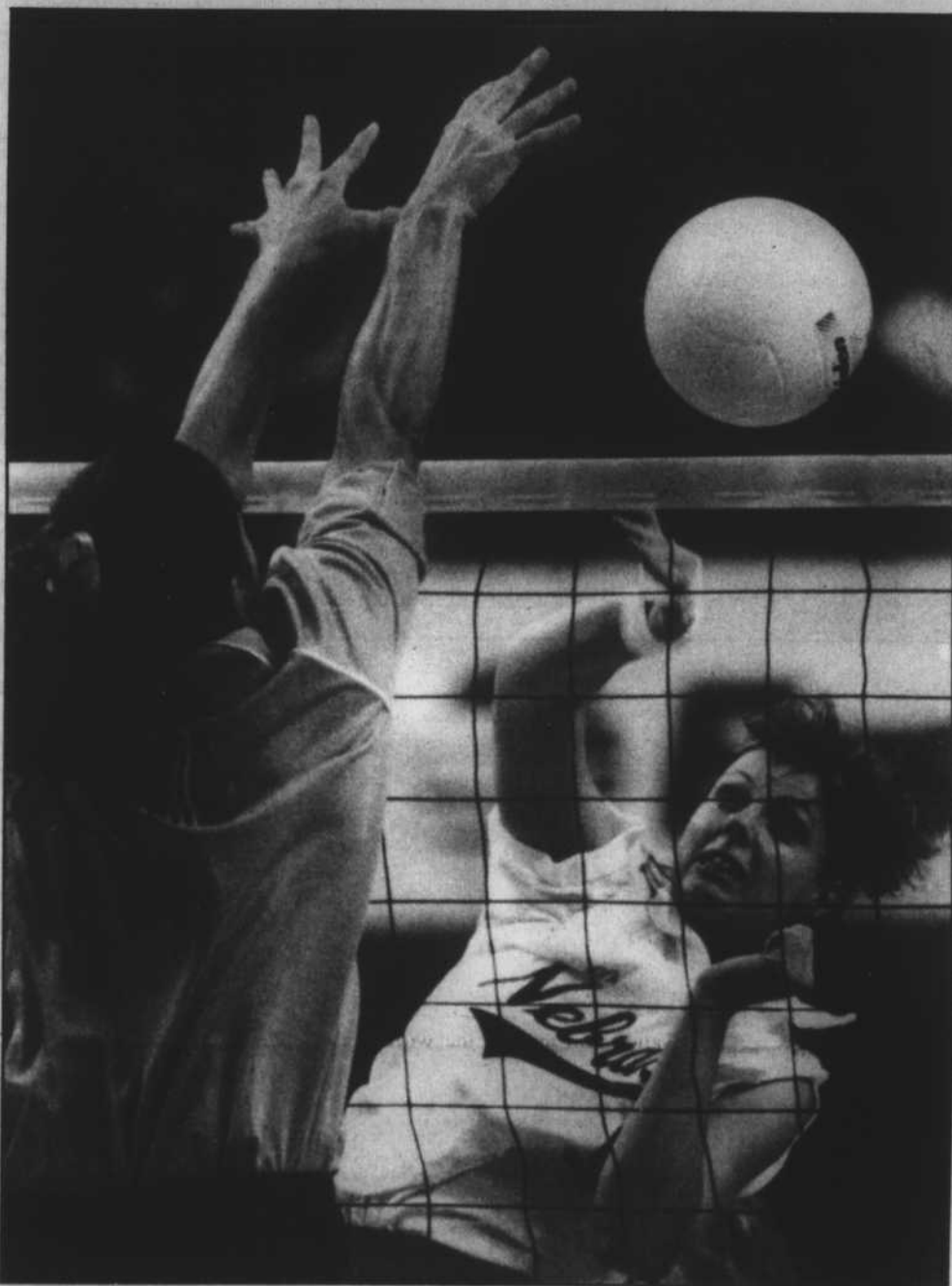
"We were real confident," the 6-foot-3 middle blocker from Omaha said. "We had a real good week of practice, so we came into the tournament feeling real strong about the way we were playing."

"But we didn't expect to walk all over the first two teams, and we expected a little more fire from Arizona State."

With the efforts of all-tournament selections Kelly Aspegren, Christy Johnson and Weston, Nebraska opened Saturday evening's contest against the Sun Devils strongly.

Nebraska established an early 5-0 lead in the first game before the Sun Devils scored four straight points. With junior outside hitter Billie Winsett serving, Nebraska scored three points to take an 8-4 lead and cruise to a 15-12 win.

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Nebraska setter Christy Johnson goes for a kill in the Huskers' win over Arizona State on Saturday night. Johnson, who had 58 set assists, was named to the all-tournament team.

Shaun Sartin/DN

ASU coach says 'comedy of errors' contributed to loss

By Todd Walkenhorst
Staff Reporter

Arizona State volleyball coach Patti Snyder said her eighth-ranked Sun Devils did not have enough to beat a balanced Nebraska team.

No. 2 Nebraska completed a three-match sweep this weekend in the First Tier Invitational, despite losing its first game of the season.

The Cornhuskers defeated Arizona State in the final match Saturday night 15-12, 15-7, 11-15, 15-9 to raise their record to 6-0. Arizona State dropped to 5-2.

"They are a very balanced team," Snyder said. "They have got one of the nation's finest players in Allison Weston."

Weston was named the invitational's most valuable player. She collected 37 kills, including 16 against Arizona State.

Snyder said junior outside hitter Billie Winsett was another impact player for the Huskers.

"She passes, she digs, she hits the shots — she is just really consistent," Snyder said.

Winsett, a 5-foot-11 outside hitter from Boonville, Ind., had 16 kills and a game-high .314 hitting percentage.

Besides the play of Weston and Winsett, Snyder said Nebraska benefited from a vocal home crowd.

"This is a tough environment to play in," she said. "There's wonderful fan support. It's loud, it's aggressive, and you can't afford to make little errors."

Nebraska was aided in the fourth game of the match by Sun Devil miscues, which allowed the Huskers to take a 7-0 lead. That was the story of the match, Snyder said.

"We serve out, we get aced twice and make two hitting errors. We make all of the points for Nebraska," Snyder said. "It was a comedy of errors on our side."

Injuries cause player shuffling

Third quarter injury ends season early for starting free safety

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Reporter

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said there were several players the Cornhuskers could not afford to lose to injury.



Minter

With a little more than four minutes remaining in the third quarter of Thursday night's 42-16 win over Texas Tech, Nebraska lost one of those players.

Free safety Mike Minter, a 5-foot-10, 175-pound sophomore from Lawton, Okla., fell out of bounds along the Texas Tech sideline while chasing a receiver downfield.

When Minter hit the turf and the Raider wide receiver fell on his leg, the anterior cruciate ligament in Minter's left knee snapped.

The Huskers' starting free safety and designated field general — Nebraska's fastest player in both the 10-yard dash and the 40-yard dash — is out for the season.

Coupled with the loss of Sedic Collins, who quit the team last week, Minter's injury leaves the Nebraska secondary in a bind.

"That's a very bad break for us," Osborne said. "We have only three safeties who can play. Tony Veland is probably only 85 percent, and he is going to have to play now."

Veland, a quarterback until last spring, will assume the starting free safety spot.

The junior from Omaha has been injured twice since arriving in Lincoln two years ago. He broke his collarbone after being penciled in as the No. 1 quarterback prior to the 1992 season.

Last year, Veland shared backup quarterback duties with Brook Berringer before rupturing his right patellar tendon in the Texas Tech game.

In the spring, Veland switched to free safety and has seen significant playing time in both of Nebraska's games this season.

Redshirt freshman Matt Aden will play behind Veland.

Defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said No. 3 right cornerback Eric Stokes will move to safety in order to add depth behind Veland and Aden.

Osborne said Stokes also might be used as a backup to Karcem Moss at the rover spot.

In addition, McBride said, the No. 2 Huskers probably will be forced to play true freshman Octavious McFarlin and Michael Booker, a first-year player.

Booker, a sophomore, was academically ineligible to play last season.

McBride said the coaches had hoped

to redshirt both Booker and McFarlin.

"It will probably pull both of them out (of a redshirt year)," he said. "Minter is a great defensive back and a real field general. It's going to really put us in a pinch right now."

"That will hurt us against UCLA. We are going to have to work hard with those young kids, McFarlin and Booker."

Nebraska Drops to 2nd

The top 25 teams in the Associated Press college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses. Nebraska is still No. 1 in the CNN/USA today poll.

Rank	School	Pts.	Rec.
1	Florida (27)	1,492	2-0-0
2	Nebraska (22)	1,483	2-0-0
3	Florida St. (5)	1,384	2-0-0
4	Michigan (2)	1,370	2-0-0
5	Miami, Fla. (1)	1,283	2-0-0
6	Penn St. (2)	1,239	2-0-0
7	Colorado	1,116	1-0-0
8	Notre Dame	1,095	1-1-0
9	Arizona (2)	1,091	2-0-0
10	Wisconsin	1,006	1-0-0
11	Auburn	918	2-0-0
12	Alabama (1)	877	2-0-0
13	UCLA	792	2-0-0
14	Texas A&M	785	2-0-0
15	Tennessee	649	1-1-0
16	North Carolina	582	1-0-0
17	Texas	575	2-0-0
18	Virginia Tech	473	2-0-0
19	Washington	346	1-1-0
20	Southern Cal	335	1-1-0
21	Oklahoma	233	1-1-0
22	Brigham Young	197	2-0-0
23	Ohio St.	150	1-1-0
24	Washington St.	130	2-0-0
25	N. Carolina St.	128	2-0-0

DN graphic

NU cross country teams have fresh look, potential

By Clay Short
Staff Reporter

Nebraska cross country coach Jay Dirksen has two teams with completely different looks.



Dirksen

Experience is expected to anchor the men's team, while Dirksen is looking for youth to lead the women's team to a berth in the NCAA championships.

Led by American Theresa Stelling, last year's Cornhusker women's team finished 20th at the NCAA championships.

But Stelling is gone, and Dirksen is looking for a No. 1 runner to replace her.

"It will be different this year, because last year we had one star and a supporting cast. This year it will really be a group competition."

The strength of the women's team is youth. Five freshmen, three sophomores, three juniors and four seniors all have a shot to help the Huskers this season.

Team captain Kris Ellenbecker was the No. 2 runner last year but has been slowed by mononucleosis.

"Kris is getting back into the running. By the end of the year, I look to her to be our catalyst," Dirksen said. Seniors Julie Mazzitelli and Olivia



Sanchez also will compete for the No. 1 position.

"We have four or five runners who will compete for our No. 1 position. We recently ran a timed trial, and I was very impressed by the results," Dirksen said. "We had times in our trial that were close to what our top runners ran last year."

The men's team also will have a different look this season, Dirksen said. This year's team doesn't have one star runner; instead, it will operate with more of a team concept.

"We don't really have a front-runner we traditionally have had, but we are much stronger as a group," Dirksen said. "Anybody that beats us is going to have to be good."

Returning from last year's team are seniors Chad Jansen, Kevin Miller, David Draheim and Renier Henning, along with juniors Brady Bonsall and Mike Myers.

Dirksen said the experience of the men's team could lead the Huskers to a higher finish than their fourth-place ranking in the Big Eight last year.

"This is our best team since 1989, not only on the course but off as well. They are as close of a team as any that I have had," Dirksen said.