

Nebraska hopes to exploit Weston's talent in title run

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Editor

Unfortunately for Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit, Allison Weston can't be in two places at one time.

Because if she could, Pettit would not only have one of the nation's most dominant middle blockers, he would also have another premier outside hitter.

At the U.S. Olympic Festival in Denver last month, Weston, a two-time first-team All-American middle blocker, led all players in hitting percentage and kills — while playing outside hitter.

Pettit said it required a special player to shift roles after three years at one spot.

"It would be like taking a center and putting her at shooting guard," Pettit said. "I think that says something about her versatility. She's certainly as talented a player as there is in college volleyball."

Weston still will be listed on the Cornhuskers' roster as a middle blocker, but her duties will include many of those of an outside hitter.

"The position that she will play will be unique in that she'll be a primary passer in most rotations," Pettit said, "which means she may be outside; she may be in the middle. We will just try to exploit all the things she can do."

Weston's switch was prompted by the successful recoveries of two injured middle blockers. Jen McFadden — who suffered knee and back injuries last year — is back, and so is Stacie Maser. Maser redshirted after tearing an anterior cruciate ligament before the season.

As a junior, Weston registered 514 kills, the fourth-best season in Big Eight history, and was named the conference player of the year. With a repeat performance, she would eclipse the conference kill record, held by



Tanna Kinnaman/DN

Nebraska's Allison Weston should be double trouble for opponents this season.

Colorado's Karrie Downey. Weston said the Cornhuskers' 1994 motto, "take the Eight," would be revised before the end of the month.

"We haven't decided yet what it's going to be, but we are concentrating more on the national title," Weston said. "The Big Eight is a steppingstone. This is probably the best group of seniors we've had in a long time."

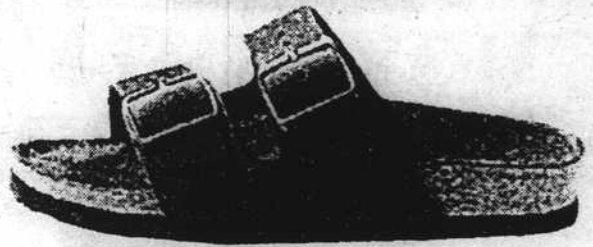
Nebraska, ranked No. 2 in the pre-season polls, won its first 31 matches last season before losing to Penn State in the Midwest Regional finals of the NCAA Tournament on Dec. 10, in Lincoln.

On Aug. 25 at the NU Coliseum, the Huskers begin their season against Penn State in the opening match of the inaugural National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators Volleyball Classic.

The Huskers, rarely tested and never taken to five games all year, were ranked No. 1 for the season's final month.

"It really didn't mean anything," Weston said. "We weren't No. 1 in the country. It was too bad they ranked us up there. It was nice, but we weren't worthy of it, and it showed in the last match."

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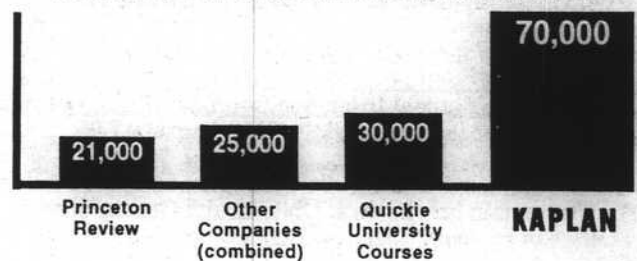
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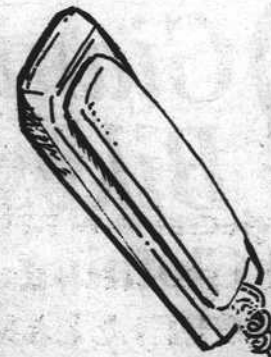
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