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Spartans prepare to face NU

By Trevor Parks Senior Reporter

Two hours after returning from winning the Mountain Regional final in Honolulu, Michigan State volleyball coach Chuck Erbe was already busy preparing for Nebraska.



Erbe

That's because other than a few names, the Spartan coach said he knew nothing about the No. 1 Cornhuskers, who swept UCLA Saturday night to advance to the Final Four.

Erbe has less than five days to dissect Nebraska. At 4:30 p.m., Thursday in Amherst, Mass., the two teams meet in a national semifinal match at the Mullins Center on the campus of the University of Massachusetts.

Michigan State, 34-2, advanced to the Final Four by handing Hawaii its first loss of the season Friday night. The Spartans rallied to win 6-15, 8-15, 15-10, 15-7, 15-12.

Traveling to Hawaii for regionals may be a disadvantage for Michigan State because of the travel, Erbe said.

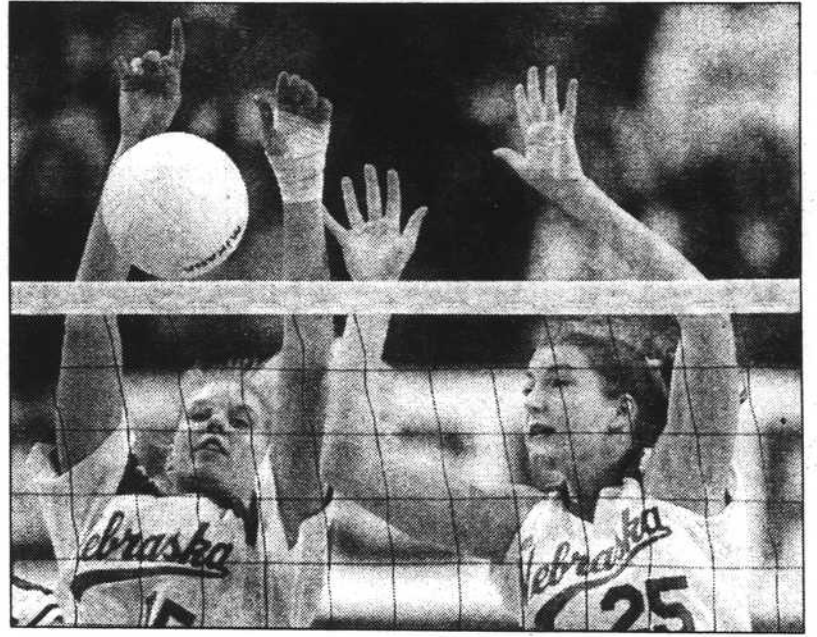
Erbe has been to the NCAA Final Four three times, and as the coach of Southern Cal, he won the inaugural NCAA Tournament title in 1981. But he said this trip means more to him.

"It's more exciting for me because I'm more emotionally involved with this team than the others in the past," Erbe said. "This is truly a group of no-name kids and to see them get to this level is great."

Nebraska coach Terry Pettit said Erbe had done a great job in only three years as the Spartans' coach.

"They are a very solid team, and they run a quick, up-tempo offense," Pettit said. "The fact that they had to win at Hawaii in an environment similar to this (the NU Coliseum) indicates they are a very strong team."

Courtney DeBolt, Michigan State's setter, averages 13.52 assists a game.



Scott Bruhn/DN

Jen McFadden and Lisa Reitsma team up for a block Saturday night against UCLA. The Huskers won in three games, advancing to the Final Four.

Jenna Wrobel, a freshman outside hitter, averages a team-high 4.66 kills a game and 3.2 digs a game.

Veronica Morales, an outside hitter, averages four kills and three digs a game. Val Sterk, a middle blocker, averages 3.38 kills a game and 1.4 blocks a game. Middle blocker Dana Cooke averages a team-high 1.59 blocks a game and 3.18 kills a game.

"My kids may be star struck because they will be playing teams that they read about in Volleyball Magazine," Erbe said. "We'll just have to deal with it and keep our feet on the ground."

In the other semifinal, Thursday at 7 p.m., Texas and Stanford will meet for the second time this season. Earlier this season, Texas beat Stanford in five games, but the Cardinal were without their top two players, Kristin Folk and Cary Wendell.

The defending national champion Cardinal beat Nebraska 8-15, 15-11,

15-13, 17-15 in the State Farm/NACWAA Volleyball Classic on August 26. UCLA Coach Andy Banachowski said a Nebraska-Stanford final would be a great match. The Bruins lost twice this season to Stanford.

"We haven't seen Stanford in awhile and they are an awful good team," Banachowski said. "Nebraska doesn't have any glaring weaknesses and I don't see any glaring weaknesses in the Stanford team either."

Erbe said the Final Four would be a good chance to gauge his team against the elite programs in the nation.

"Stanford is the defending national champion, so you have to favor them," Erbe said. "Nebraska has a quality program and they have to be right there. Texas has to be third and we have to be just an afterthought."

"I'm sure people are wondering, 'Michigan who?'"

Top wrestlers not yet pegged for first meets

By Antone Oseka Staff Reporter

Nebraska wrestling coach Tim Neumann still isn't sure who is going to wrestle for the first half of the season.

As the third-ranked Cornhusker wrestlers prepare for the holiday break, Neumann said he would take 10 starters and five potential starters on the road for four dual meets.

Nebraska opens its schedule on Dec. 17 with a three-team dual against 20th-ranked Ohio State, and follows immediately with Ohio University. Two days later, the Huskers face No. 25 West Virginia in dual competition and wrestle Pittsburgh on Dec. 21.

"You'd think No. 3 should beat them easy," Neumann said, "but upsets make duals awful close."

The Huskers return to the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Jan. 6 to host the Great Plains Open. This is the trial run for a competition of this kind. It will consist of an open individual tournament running simultaneously with a team invitational.

The open tournament gives all wrestlers a chance to see action without representing a specific team. No team points will be kept. It is also an opportunity for the redshirt members of a team to see college competition.

NU defeats Colonels with total team effort

By Mike Kluck Senior Reporter

Since all 14 Nebraska women's basketball players participated in the Cornhuskers' 107-38 victory over Nicholls State, perhaps the ceremonial game ball should go to the scheduler of the contest.

"This is a case of good scheduling," Nebraska coach Angela Beck said. "We needed to have a rout today."

A rout is what they got, handing the Colonels their 22nd consecutive loss and setting a new Nebraska record by allowing only 10 points in the second half.

The Huskers also set a Bob Devaney Sports Center record for largest margin of victory and fewest points allowed in a game.

The game enabled Beck to play 11 players for more than 10 minutes, and have 12 different players score.

"I think the game was a little confidence builder for a lot of our players," Beck said.

Because of final exams, the Huskers don't play again until Dec. 19, when they open play in the Carolina Holiday Beach Classic

against Southern Alabama.

Beck said she was pleased with the defensive intensity throughout the game, especially in the second half.

After halftime, the Huskers held Nicholls State to 3-of-21 shooting. The Colonels shot 27 percent for the game, committed 36 turnovers and made only 13 total field goals.

"I felt like defensively, we obviously controlled everything," Beck said. "I'd rather do that than score."

Nebraska opened the game with a 30-6 run and finished the first quarter with an 8-3 run to lead 54-28 at break.

The 28 points scored by Nicholls State in the first quarter surprised Colonel coach Louise Bonin.

"I think they (Nebraska) just played tremendous team defense," Bonin said. "That kind of defensive pressure is something these freshmen have not seen before. We knew coming in Nebraska was a fine ballclub."

Nicholls State scored its first bucket of the second half with 16:59 left in the game, but did not score again until Amy Restovich scored with 5:26 to play. During that stretch, Nebraska had scored 24 points to make the score 87-32.

Final 4

Continued from Page 9

Billie Winsett and a service ace by Weston tied the game.

Nebraska took a 14-13 lead on a kill by Weston. UCLA fought off one match point and tied the game at 14 on a kill by Jenny Johnson.

Weston, who along with Reitsma led Nebraska with 17 kills, managed a kill for a sideout. A bad set by Kelly Flannigan to Jenny Johnson gave Ne-

braska a 15-14 lead. The Huskers won the game and the match 16-14 when Crnich and Weston blocked Flannigan.

"While the first two games were marvelous, the third game showed our mental toughness," Pettit said.

He said McFadden finally felt comfortable returning from a torn anterior cruciate ligament that she suffered last season against Illinois. The 6-foot-2 junior middle blocker recorded 10 kills and seven blocks.

The Huskers held UCLA to a hitting percentage of .167, and

outblocked the Bruins 28-20.

NOTES:

• Johnson, Weston, Reitsma, UCLA's Milling and Kim Krull and Penn State's Terri Zemaitis were named to the Central Regional all-Tournament team.

• Weston, Florida's Aycan Gokberk and Stanford's Cary Wendell were named as the three finalists for the "Ricoch Name to Know" player-of-the-year.