

# NU volleyball team boasts depth, experience

**DEPTH** from page 22

Tonia Tauke return. Korver, the Big 12 newcomer of the year, hit .307 last year and led the team with 1.6 blocks per game. Tauke was second with 127 blocks. Both were used primarily in the front row last season.

Still recovering from a knee injury, sophomore Lisa Avery, along with freshmen Angie Oxley and Jahnke, who redshirted because of a knee injury in 1996, add depth to the position.

"Megan certainly was our most versatile blocker, and Tonia was in the top 10 in blocking as a freshman," Pettit said.

"Katie Jahnke had a great spring and she's going to compete to be on the court somewhere.

Nepo, the Husker captain, said the added depth should not lead to individual distractions.

"People within the same positions know they're going to be challenged," Nepo said. "They know that it's up to them to work harder and do whatever they can to get that position. It anything, the depth will just push us more."

The overall team depth and experience at the setter position should

allow the Huskers to improve offensively this season. Nebraska hit .260 as a team last season. The mark led the Big 12 last season but didn't match the NU standard set in previous years.

"I've been working at lot with the middles," Nepo said. "Its really a key to balancing our offense."

More opportunities for the middle blockers will lead to less offensive responsibility for Reitsma. Reitsma's 12 attacks per game and 1,486 total attacks broke nine-year-old Nebraska records.

"This year we are going to be a more balanced team," Reitsma said. I have confidence that we can go to any player and they are going to put the ball down."

Although the offense will be improved, Pettit said, NU will still emphasize defense. The Huskers led the conference in blocking with 3.4 per game and recorded 1,886 digs last season.

"For us to be a great team, it will have to come from our blocking and defense," Pettit said. "We'll be better offensively, but I really believe that for us to compete and get back to the Final Four, we will need the defense and blocking."

## Volleyball Top 25



Bellow are the USA TODAY/AVCA Top 25 College Rankings

Rank	School	Record
1	Stanford	31-2
2	Penn St.	31-3
3	Nebraska	30-4
4	Florida	37-2
5	Long Beach St.	33-3
6	Michigan St.	26-7
7	Washington St.	27-6
8	BYU	27-7
9	Texas	23-7
10	Pacific	26-7
11	Hawaii	35-3
12	UC Santa Barbara	23-9
13	Texas A&M	25-8
14	Ohio St.	27-6
15	USC	21-9
16	Loyola Marymount	26-3
17	Notre Dame	22-12
18	Wisconsin	25-8
19	Washington	23-8
20	Arizona	20-10
21	UCLA	17-14
22	South Florida	27-5
23	Colorado	19-10
24	Colorado St.	23-11
25	Arkansas	26-11

## Volleyball Schedule



Date	Opponent	Time
Aug. 30-31	Florida invite	
Aug. 30	Loyola	11 a.m.
Aug. 30	Miami	5 p.m.
Aug. 31	Florida	1 p.m.
Sept. 5-6	First Bank invite	
Sept. 5	Arkansas	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 5	George Mason	11 a.m.
Sept. 6	Pacific	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 12-13	Arby's Classic	
Sept. 12	Oral Roberts	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 13	Tennessee	10:30 a.m.
Sept. 13	Ohio St.	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 19-20	Big Ten-Big 12 Challenge	
Sept. 19	Penn St.	5 p.m.
Sept. 20	Wisconsin	7 p.m.
Big 12 Conference Schedule		
Sept. 26	at Kansas	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 27	at Kansas St.	7 p.m.
Oct. 3	Iowa St.	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 4	Missouri	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 8	Colorado	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 10	at Oklahoma	7 p.m.
Oct. 17	at Texas	7 p.m.
Oct. 18	at Texas A&M	7 p.m.
Oct. 24	Baylor	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 25	Texas Tech	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 29	at Colorado	8:30 p.m.
Nov. 1	Oklahoma	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 7	at Missouri	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 8	at Iowa St.	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 14	Kansas St.	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 15	Kansas	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 21	at Texas Tech	7 p.m.
Nov. 22	at Baylor	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 26	Texas A&M	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	Texas	7:30 p.m.

## Husker setter Nepo brings leadership

By SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Assignment Reporter

Every movement Fiona Nepo made on the volleyball court last year characterized her debut season as Nebraska's starting setter.

Whether it came as a quick-flying shoot-set to the outside, a vicious jump serve, or a dominating block from the 5-foot-9 setter, Nepo displayed leadership through her actions whenever her hands touched the ball.

Now, after a successful year of growth and maturation at the setter position, Nepo hopes to lead by more than just her actions.

"I need to show more presence on the court," Nepo said. "I am going to try to be more vocal. It was really difficult for me to do last year because I didn't feel that confident, not in my playing, but I didn't feel that I had the right to tell my team what to do.

"I was worrying too much about what I was doing. I felt that if I couldn't do the things I had to for me to perform well, then it wasn't right for me to ask my teammates to do the same."

The pressure of following the long line of Husker setters—including All-Americans Christy Johnson, Val Novak, Lori Endicott, and present NU assistant coach Cathy Noth—added to the burden of attempting to make the position her own.

Statistically, Nepo handled the situation well. Her 13.6 assists per game placed second in the Big 12 Conference last season. Nepo tied for second on the team with 32 service aces and was third on the team with 268 digs.

Nepo's marks and NU's success earned her first-team All-America status in 1996. Her continued high level of play, Coach Terry Pettit said, will indirectly lead to an increased leadership role.

"Vocal leadership is only helpful if you've worked so hard that you've gained everybody's respect," Pettit said, "Otherwise, nobody listens to you. But Fiona works hard. She's disciplined, she's committed, and I think she understands what we need to do to win."

Improving her court awareness and decision making and having better communication with her blockers are things Nepo said she must do to help the Huskers improve this season.

"I think that's the key to bal-

Please see NEPO on 26

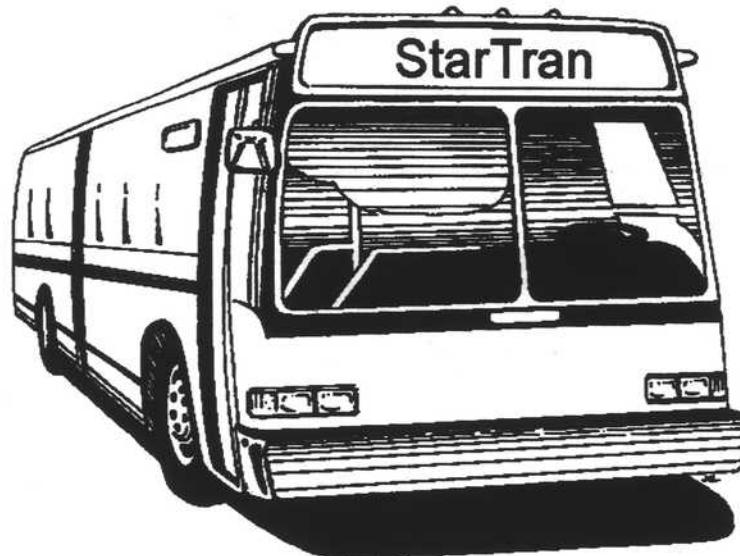


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