

# First Bank I

## Volleyball Notebook

Several members of the Nebraska volleyball team established careers highs this weekend at the First Bank Invitational. Friday night during the Cornhuskers' five-game victory over Arkansas, NU setter Fiona Nepo posted a career-high 82 assists while outside hitter Mandy Monson pounded 13 kills, bettering her previous high of 12.

Saturday against Pacific, middle blocker Megan Korver had a career-best 22 kills, while Denise Koziol hammered 10.

Pacific may have lost more than just a match Saturday night. Late in the fifth game, junior Elsa Stegemann jumped for a kill attempt, yelled in pain and fell to the floor as she injured her left knee.

The junior outside hitter led Pacific in almost every offensive category in 1996, including attacks (1,068) and kills per game (4.19). Stegemann was selected to the All-Big West first team last year and competed with USA Volleyball's World University Games team this summer.

A total of 11,451 fans attended the Huskers' three victories this weekend at the NU Coliseum. Saturday night's attendance mark of 4,318 was the 14th largest total in NU history. Nebraska also improved its nation-leading home winning streak to 36 matches.

Nebraska's depth proved to be a factor in its success this weekend. NU coach Terry Pettit used 14 different players. Freshman Kim Behrends recorded her first kill in the third game of the Huskers' victory over George Mason on Saturday morning, and freshman Jill McWilliams served the final two points of the match.

Pettit also substituted often, using Koziol and Katie Jahnke a great deal in the Huskers' win over Pacific. Monson spent much of Saturday night's match on the bench after starting and playing every game Friday night and Saturday morning.

NU's Lisa Reitsma has a habit of performing well against Southeastern Conference teams.

The senior outside hitter surpassed the 30-kill mark for the third time in her career and for the second time against Arkansas Friday night with 32 kills. The only other time came against Florida in 1995, also a five-game match won by Nebraska.

Nepo and Reitsma were selected to the all-tournament team along with Pacific's Stegemann, Addie Hauschild, George Mason's Olga Matejickova and Arkansas's Jessica Field and Yarleen Santiago.

Nepo was named the tournament's most valuable player.

Volleyball Notebook compiled by assignment reporter Shannon Heffelfinger, staff reporter Andrew Strnad and senior reporter David Wilson.



## Huskers sneak by Pacific

Five-game win over Tigers caps perfectly dramatic weekend for NU

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Assignment Reporter

Against all odds, the Nebraska volleyball team gambled and won this weekend at the First Bank Invitational.

Twice the fifth-ranked Cornhuskers tempted fate with missed opportunities, nearly slipping for the second time in as many days Saturday night before a packed NU Coliseum.

Nebraska, which has not lost a match in the First Bank Invitational in five years, squeaked by No. 25 Arkansas (4-2) in five games on Friday night. The Huskers regained their footing during a three-game sweep of George Mason Saturday morning and held the momentum in a fast two-game start against seventh-ranked Pacific later that night.

After soundly defeating Pacific (5-1) in the first two games 15-12, 15-6, the Huskers appeared poised to sweep the Tigers with the score tied at seven in game three. But NU could not overcome senior middle blocker Addie Hauschild and junior outside hitter Elsa Stegemann, who combined for seven kills driving Pacific to a 7-0 run and tripping up the Huskers.

Pacific's comeback in the third-game transformed the match from what seemed to resemble a sure victory for NU into a two-hour, 40 minute, down-to-the-wire battle. The Huskers (5-1), who have not lost a home match

after a 2-0 start since 1978, eventually wrapped up a 15-12, 15-6, 12-15, 10-15, 17-15 victory, escaping their second near loss of the weekend with the help of 4,318 screaming fans. On Friday, Nebraska defeated No. 25 Arkansas 15-5, 12-15, 15-11, 14-16, 15-13.

"It was one of the most intense matches I ever played in," Pacific outside hitter Liina Veidemann said. "Both teams played with a lot of heart."

In the final game of the marathon Pacific match, Lisa Reitsma pounded her 67th kill of the weekend to give Nebraska a 15-14 advantage.

Pacific's Sara Bronson tied the score for the seventh time with her first kill of the night in the rally-scoring game, but Reitsma responded once again with a kill. Leading 16-15, the Huskers finally found the winning touch when Megan Korver and Denise Koziol blocked Tracy Chambers for the victory.

"I don't know if I've ever said this before in a match, but the fans were the MVP tonight," NU coach Terry Pettit said. "I really believe they were the difference from about the 10th point (of the fifth game) on. They gave us energy. They were an intimidating presence. It was incredible. If we hadn't gotten that transfusion from the fans, I don't know that we would have gotten up off the floor."

Pettit said the fan support and the overall tone of the match reminded him of NU's five-game victory over



Penn State in the NCAA East Regional championship at the coliseum last year, a match in which Korver dominated at times. Saturday, the Huskers relied heavily on the 6-foot-1 junior, who recorded a career-high 22 kills. Friday against Arkansas, Korver's 18 kills tied her previous high.

"Megan Korver kept us in the match," Pettit said. "She was our go-to person in the latter half of the match. She and Denise (Koziol) really kept us in it offensively."

Korver posted 14 of NU's 40 kills in the third and fourth games. The Huskers tried to keep Pacific off balance, switching Reitsma to the middle

to block and middle blocker Katie Jahnke to Reitsma's natural position on the right side. With her 28 kills Saturday, Reitsma moved up to seventh on Nebraska's all-time kill chart, surpassing former Husker star Stephanie Thater.

"I've become more confident playing in the middle," Reitsma said. "I have to work at it. I had been playing so bad all night that I just wanted to get the ball so I could put it down."

Despite NU's offensive effort, Pacific blocked the Huskers 11 times in the fourth game and reeled off eight straight points to send the match to a

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