

# NU volleyball satisfied with its spring season

By JASON MERRIHEW  
Staff writer

The Nebraska volleyball team will look different from the Final Four team of last year.

Coach Terry Pettit beefed up the coaching staff in February by adding Wisconsin's Coach John Cook as an assistant coach.

Last week, the Cornhuskers wrapped up their six weeks of spring practices.

"We are allowed six weeks of spring practices, and in those six weeks we have four play days where we can play other colleges," Cook said.

The Huskers played some tough competition during the four days. NU stayed in Lincoln for two of the days, and traveled to California and Texas for the other two.

Pepperdine, San Diego, Fresno State, Florida, Texas and Colorado State were the top competition for the NU.

Nebraska used these games to give junior-to-be Jill McWilliams some valuable experience at setter, where McWilliams is replacing All-American Fiona Nepo.

"One of our goals for the spring was to give Jill McWilliams lots of opportunities in game-like situations and see how she would respond," Cook said. "We feel pretty

good with the progress she made."

McWilliams has the unenviable task of filling Nepo's shoes. McWilliams has spent her two seasons with Nebraska as Nepo's back-up.

Along with Nepo, gone are Jaime Krondak and Megan Korver. These three seniors take away with them a lot of experience.

"Fiona and Jaime started all four years, and Megan started the three years she was here, so you are talking about a lot of experience that graduated," Cook said.

"A lot will be determined between now and August who will be on the court," Cook said.

Nancy Meendering, who was recently named Nebraska's Husker Power female athlete of the year and was a 1998 All-American, will be the most experience player returning.

"One thing Nebraska learned last year is that you can't rely on one player to beat the great teams, it has to be a team effort," Cook said.

Besides Meendering and McWilliams, Kim Behrends, Jenny Kropp and Katie Jahnke have stood out this spring.

"Kim Behrends made a lot of progress this spring, and Jenny Kropp took some steps toward being a major contributor to the team, and Katie Jahnke got a lot of playing time over the spring," Cook said.

# Marshall, Koziol lead Nebraska despite injuries

SENIORS from page 10

want to get back to where I was."

Over his career, Koziol's taken lumps everywhere on his body, from shoulder to biceps, from back to legs. He took a medical redshirt in 1997 due to shoulder surgery.

He came back to the lineup in 1998 and placed fourth on rings at the NCAA Championship to earn All-American honors. But the hits came back this season.

In a Feb 5 meet against Oklahoma at home, Koziol's legs cramped up on the rings, forcing him to sit out the rest of the meet. Then, three weeks later at Oklahoma, he tore his left biceps mus-

cle. "I have no doubt that Jim would have contended for the (national) all-around title if he were 100 percent," Allen said.

And although he has been able to compete in almost every meet, Koziol has been unable to compete as an all-arounder or put up the Hardabura-level scores he has the potential for most of the season.

"(The injury) drives me more," Koziol said. "It's been a disappointing year because I know I'm an all-arounder. I haven't been able to show what I have..."

"But I just keep plugging away. You've got to pace yourself. I knew I

couldn't do all-around in all 14 events, so I've waited to the end. I'm glad I did that. Now, I'm excited and ready to go. This is the healthiest I've ever been."

And Koziol, a third-team academic All-American who is known more for his quiet confidence and solid actions more than his words, made the most powerful one-word statement of the day when asked if he thought he might just surprise some people this weekend.

"Yeah," a steely-eyed Koziol said. Maybe the only member of the 1999 squad to experience a team final (in his freshman year of 1995) knew something nobody else did - that he's not down for the count yet.

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