
The Service Line

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club
Vol. IX No. 1
August 2003

Coaches Rank Spartans Number 3

For the second year in a row, the Big Ten volleyball coaches have picked the Spartans to finish third in the conference. Defending champion Minnesota was their unanimous choice to win this season's title and Penn State was favored to repeat their second-place finish.

The coaches ranked MSU two spots higher than their fifth-place finish in the 2002 season, the largest upward move of any team in the conference.

Congratulations are due Jenny Rood, who earned recognition from the coaches for the first time in her career, as she was named to the pre-season all-Big-Ten team. Minnesota and Penn State dominated the squad, filling five of the twelve spots, but overall there was a record number of nine schools represented. Only Iowa and Purdue failed to place a player on the team.

Coach Chuck Erbe says the conference will once again be among the best in the nation, with solid, tough competition. "You can compare conferences by looking at only the top few teams, or you can look at the strength of the conference as a whole. Top-to-bottom, the Big Ten compares to anybody."

Chuck cites Ohio State as the biggest question mark this year. He comments, "With the loss of Draeger, Stiling and Virtue, they will be a young team, which makes them very unpredictable. On the other hand

Indiana looks to be on the way up, and even Purdue could see a renaissance starting with their hiring of a new coach."

Big Ten Pre-Season Coaches' Poll

Rank	School	2002 Finish
1	Minnesota	1
2	Penn State	2
3	Michigan State	5
4	Wisconsin	2
5	Indiana	6
6	Ohio State	4
7	Michigan	6
8	Northwestern	6
9	Illinois	9
10	Iowa	10
11	Purdue	10

Pre-Season All-Conference Team

Player	Year	Pos	School
Lisa Argabright	Sr	MB	Illinois
Christina Archibald	Jr	O	Indiana
Erin Moore	Sr	MB	Michigan
Jenny Rood	Sr	M	MSU
Cassie Busse	Sr	OPP	Minnesota
Paula Gentil	So	L	Minnesota
Lindsey (Vander Well) Taatjes	Jr	S	Minnesota
Erika Lange	Sr	MB	Northwestern
Stacey Gordon	Jr	OH	Ohio State
Cara Smith	Sr	M	Penn State
Sam Tortorello	So	S	Penn State
Morgan Shields	Sr	S	Wisconsin

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Team Notes

With one last addition, the roster for 2003 is now complete (see page 7). In addition to the four new recruits we told you about in April, **Traci Bellwood**, Marley's sister, will be joining the team. Chuck says this will be the first time he has coached sisters.

Kristy Snell and **Courtney Williams** are not returning to the team this season, putting the size of the roster at eighteen, the same as last year.

Depending on how you look at it, the large size of the roster the last few years is either a result of **red-shirting** or has made red-shirting possible. The Spartans now have six players who have used a red-shirt year, the largest number ever. That number will only grow in 2004, since Chuck says that red-shirt status is at least under consideration for every one of this year's freshmen.

Careful study of the roster shows that two players are taller than last year, one of them by two inches! You may also notice that **Caroline Belich** is now listed as a potential middle, and **Michelle Kopka** is listed at opposite.

Seniors **Nikki Colson** and **Emmy Miller** have been named the captains of the 2003 squad. Nikki becomes the first Spartan volleyball player to serve as captain three times.

Maren Witzel is back in Spartan colors, but this

time wearing coach's apparel. She will be MSU's volunteer assistant coach this year.

Several Spartans were recuperating from injuries in the off-season, but all are doing great as we approach the start of the season:

Sara Villwock was diagnosed with an impingement in her right shoulder, a common rotator-cuff injury for athletes in sports that use an overhead arm motion. She had arthroscopic surgery to relieve this, and is about 85% recovered.

Jenny Rood stayed away from the court for six months to let a stress fracture heal, but is now ready to go for fall.

Emmy Miller thought she was just suffering from sore muscles, but it turned out that she had a torn ligament in her hip. She had it 'scoped and is close to a 100% recovery.

And in **alumni news**, Courtney Debolt's Exterminators team was the top team at the USA Volleyball Nationals this year, winning the Gold Division of the Women's Open class.



Emmy Miller joins Nikki Colson as senior co-captain this year

Photo: Chris Wolf

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Schedule Notes

The fall schedule has changed again, with the Spartans now scheduled to travel to Washington D.C. for a tournament at American University on September 20 rather than hosting Ball State at home. For the first time since 1994, the team will not play at

home (other than the Green&White exhibition) prior to the start of the Big Ten season.

When Ball State cancelled their date here, Chuck had to find another opportunity for play. The NCAA limits the number of play dates to 28, and MSU already had 27 days scheduled, so they could not play in another two-day tournament. American University had extended an invitation to MSU earlier in the year, and Chuck found out that they were willing to run it as a one-day tournament, so that filled out the schedule nicely.

MSU will start the season at College Park, Maryland, providing a homecoming for Daune Koester, who played for the Maryland Terps from 1993 to 1996.

The following weekend features a visit to South Carolina, a trip which the Spartans were supposed to make in September 2001. That tournament was cancelled after the events of 9/11. MSU narrowly defeated South Carolina last year in East Lansing, and the two teams finished the year only a few spots apart in the polls. The Spartans will also face North Carolina, who advanced to the sweet 16 for the first time in program history last season. At one point in the season the Tarheels were ranked number 11, the highest spot ever for an Atlantic Coast Conference team, and they finished the season at number 12.

The big pre-conference test for the Spartans comes in the tournament at Nebraska. The Cornhuskers nearly made it to the Final Four last year and, even though they graduated three All-Americans, they are expected to be a top team again in 2003. Both Santa Clara and Georgia Tech finished 2002 in the top 20, ahead of Michigan State, and Georgia Tech was responsible for one of the Spartans' losses last year.

Chuck is clearly not thrilled about opening the season with four consecutive road trips, but he's treating it as an opportunity. "It will be very challenging, but it's what we have to do this year", he says. "We've been a good home team in the past, but have struggled a bit on the road. This will give us four weekends to practice being a good road team."

The revised schedule for fall has eliminated all of the 7:30 starting times that were shown on the preliminary schedule. The Minnesota match was moved to 8:00 pm because of competition with both

basketball and hockey that night; the other 7:30 matches were changed to 7:00.

SideOut Club Activities for Fall

Annual Meeting on August 23

Members are encouraged to participate in the Annual Meeting on August 23 just after the Green and White Game. Meet in the stands near the SideOut Club sales area. Important agenda items include: election of new board members, review and discussion of club activities, and whatever members wish to discuss. This is the time you can really feel part of the membership. We need your ideas! Plan now to participate! If you have questions or suggestions, contact Jenny Bond at jbond@msu.edu or at (517) 676-2676.

Tailgate Party—October 18

Do not miss this event! The tailgate last year was great, with many participants, great food and drink, and good friends of MSU volleyball including parents, families and coaches. The team thought it was really special to have our own tailgate, and so will you! Put the date on your calendar now; the match with Northwestern will follow. More details will follow.

Make a Date for the Bus Trip

A bus trip is in the planning stages for November 14 to the Ohio State match. Julie Carmichael will provide more information later. This match was selected due to the success of the two recent trips to OSU, plus, we anticipate that the match will be a key one for our team near the end of the season. Get the date on your calendar, arrange to take the day off or whatever else you need to do to participate. Do not miss this special Club activity.

Renew Your Membership

Now's the time. An application form was mailed on July 22 to all members who need to renew. If you did not receive it, contact President Jenny Bond at jbond@msu.edu or at (517) 676-2676. Do not miss a single newsletter or SOC member correspondence.

Luncheons with Coach Erbe Scheduled

The coach's luncheons have been a favorite event for SideOut Club members in the past. Coach Erbe provides an update on the team and discusses

volleyball topics related to the Big Ten and the national scene. He entertains all questions from the participants. Come one time and we think you will be "hooked" on these sessions. Coach's luncheons are scheduled on:

Friday, September 26 Friday, October 3
Friday, October 31, and Saturday, Nov. 22

Luncheon's are at Damon's East Lansing, 1601 W. Lake Lansing Road near US-127, starting at 11:30 am. The cost is \$10 which includes a meal, non-alcoholic drink, tax and gratuity.

David Martz and Chuck Riley reviewed a number of options before Damon's was selected, primarily because we can enjoy a private dining room there. Friday dates were chosen when necessary to avoid conflicts with home football games. You should feel free to come when you can and leave when you must. If for some reason you are unable to eat, there will still be a place for you.

Plan it and they will come!! We have it planned. Put these dates on your calendar and come. We do not think you will regret it.

President's Corner

by SideOut Club President Jenny Bond

Remember when you were a child and it seemed that a special day like your birthday or a holiday would never arrive? That is how a number of volleyball fans feel today—regardless of our ages. We last saw our team in a match in Jenison in late November, 2002. I feel like a TV announcer promoting a movie in August that is scheduled for January or later. Only difference is, I know I have a very special product to offer you. No need for hype and special effects. The 2003 MSU volleyball season should be very exciting. The seniors (Nicki, Jenny, Emmy and Stephanie) are ready to give their best as they have for the last three years. Sara Villwock must be ready for a great season after the injury-forced redshirt last year. And are we ever ready to see the continued development of Marley, Michelle, Brooke, Kim, Diana, Megan, Mickey and Caroline. We know they are excelling in the classroom and are proud of that. But, we are **READY** to see them on the court again.



We hope to see Sara, Jenny and Nikki whooping it up again this year.

Photo: Chris Wolf

Plan to attend the Green and White Game on Saturday, August 23 and the SideOut Club Annual Meeting following it. We need your input. It will be a short and informative (hopefully) meeting. Exercise your right and responsibility as a member to help elect the new Board members and to offer suggestions for SOC activities.

The first 2003 home match is not scheduled until September 26 with Penn State. Plan now to participate in the August 23 event or it is really going to be a long time between matches. I would guess that the team misses the "home crowd" as much as we miss them.

The SideOut Club Board has planned the 2003 activities. The Board accepted the resignations of two long-time and valuable members recently, Dave Pike and Bob Potter. Dave has retired and moved to the Northwest. Bob will be busy serving as President of the Rotary Club of West Lansing but has promised he will continue to work with the club on the 50/50 drawing.

The treasury had a "transfusion" as a result of Dave Pike's donation of a used car to the SideOut Club. It worked out well for him as it will provide a tax deduction as the SOC has 501 c3 status. Jim Ellis

worked to get the titles transferred, etc. and Ron Springer advertised and sold it. After they did the work, I happily deposited the \$\$\$ in our account as the treasurer was out of state at the time. We estimate that we would have to sell 200 hooded sweatshirts to realize what we made on the 1995 vehicle. Thanks to Dave Pike for his creative thinking and the donation. Thanks to Ron and Jim for making this whole thing work. The timing could not have been better as the Club had made an emergency contribution on the members' behalf to the volleyball program this summer due to budget problems. As each of you has probably heard, the MSU budgets are tight, including volleyball.

Several of you have commented on my remarks in the last newsletter about our members and their activities so I want to share more with you about our "family". Sadly, we lost one of our most faithful members, Randy Ward in April. I was unaware of his death at the time or would have sent a card to his family for SOC. Randy was a regular at matches and coach's luncheons.

On a lighter note, Board Member Jim Ellis has made two trips to Ghana during the summer to teach. Peter Morris's book *Baseball Fever: Early Baseball in Michigan* is in bookstores. I had a chance to attend his presentation at a local one and found the history very interesting. Wonder what he knows about the history of volleyball and if that will be his next topic. Rick Szczepanski, a SideOut Club member from Grand Rapids, initiated a "Never Give Up" Multiple Sclerosis scholarship program at three high schools in the area. Two college scholarships per school are awarded to a male and a female senior who raises the most money for Multiple Sclerosis—to date five scholarships have been awarded and more than \$8000 raised for MS. And one of these recipients is a MSU student. We commend Rick on his efforts. I am sure many of you are involved in similar and significant activities. Let me hear from you. SOC members are special people!

Val Sterk and Tammy Vonderheide had a new role this summer—as brides. Thanks to Julie Carmichael who sent a congratulatory card to them on behalf of the SOC. Finally, after graduation we are able to do something for them!

The Michigan Women's Historical Museum and Hall of Fame highlighted 30 years of Title IX at the annual picnic and fund raiser recently. A number of special guests were present including Judy Brown the 1984 Olympic Silver Medallist. I was especially impressed with Jean Omelenchuk, a Member of the US Olympic Speed Skating Team in 1960, 1968, and 1972. She was also a Bike National Titleholder five times between 1952 and 1980. Another special guest was Red Simmons who started the U of M Women's Track and Field Program and is now in his 90s. The most meaningful comments on Title IX and the value of sports for girls and women were (in my most unbiased opinion) from Coach Chuck Erbe in the midst of a sudden summer storm. He was succinct (can you believe that?) and on target. I was proud of him and our program. Assistant Coach Daune Koester, Trainer Lianna Lee Hadden and #1 fan and supporter Becky Erbe also attended.

Plan now to be more active in the SideOut Club this year. Invite a friend to one of the matches. The income generated by the SideOut Club for the volleyball program is directly related to the attendance. Come meet the team on August 10, see the Green and White Match, attend a coach's luncheon, and/or plan to make the bus trip to Ohio State on November 14. You do not want to miss out on the opportunity to support—with your participation, time, financial resources and caring—this very special group of young women in a very special university.

Go State!

The Referee's Stand

The Referee's Stand was introduced as a semi-regular feature in 1996, with each column trying to explain one aspect of the rules of volleyball to new fans. We've gained a lot of new members since then, so we're going to drag out those old columns and update them to reflect recent changes in rules.

This introductory installment will cover the game officials and their duties.

The official on the stand above the court opposite the team benches is called the *first referee*. The official on the playing floor in front of the scorekeeper's table

is the *second referee*.

Rules violations committed during play are known as *faults*, and one of the duties of the referees is to stop play with a whistle if they see a fault committed. Certain faults may be whistled *only by the first referee*. These include: a) faults by the server, b) position faults by the serving team, c) faults in playing the ball (e.g. a lift or double contact), and d) the ball contacting the floor. In addition, only the first referee may issue penalties for misconduct.

The second referee watches for and whistles: a) position faults by the receiving team, b) players touching the net, c) players crossing the center line into the opponent's court, and d) balls hitting the antenna or crossing the net outside it. He also authorizes time-outs and substitutions.

If the second referee sees a fault that is out of her jurisdiction, she may use discreet signals to indicate this to the first referee, but may not whistle. You will see this when, for example, the first referee's view of a lift or a ball hitting the floor is blocked by a player.

The *scorekeeper* records information about the play of the match as it progresses. The scorekeeper also reports three types of faults—a) when a coach tries to take too many timeouts, b) when an illegal substitution is attempted, and c) when the wrong player serves the ball.

Two *line judges* at opposite corners of the court signal to the first referee in four situations—a) line violations at service (either the server commits a foot fault or a non-serving player touches the floor outside the court), b) a ball lands inside or outside the court near their lines, c) a ball touches, crosses over or passes outside the antenna, and d) a ball contacts a player before going out of bounds on that player's side.

Immediately after a whistle is blown to signal the end of a rally, the referees indicate the decision with hand signals. In particular, the first referee always makes one hand signal indicating why the rally ended, and then makes a second signal to indicate which team earned the point.

Knowledgeable fans always watch for the referee's signal immediately after a whistle. Sometimes in

televised games the announcers report the calls wrong, because they go by what they think they saw, rather than what the referee actually signals. In later columns on specific rules, we will include graphics of the corresponding hand signals.

The first referee has complete authority over the teams and the other officials, and has the power to decide any matter involving the game, including those not provided for in the rules.

Fans often complain about the referee "overruling" a line judge, especially when it goes against their team. One referee explained this situation as follows: "Line judges are a very important part of the officiating team. However, I do not 'overrule' line judges, because they do not make rulings. They signal to the referee their view of what happens on certain plays. I use that information in addition to what I see in order to make a ruling, which is ultimately my responsibility."

That responsibility is a difficult one. When a referee makes a call you don't like, remember that it's much easier to make the calls when you're sitting in the crowd than it is up on the referee's stand.

Rules Changes for High School

Within the next two years, high school volleyball will follow all other forms of organized volleyball in adopting rally scoring. Combined with some other rules changes, this will mean that volleyball rules and scoring for the first time will be essentially the same in high school, juniors clubs, college, international competition and professional leagues.

The Volleyball Rules Committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) announced the changes in January, following experimentation with rally scoring in a number of states last fall. The NFHS has been under fire for years for sticking with a rule set that lagged far behind the changes in other areas of the sport. In spite of this, Sheryl Solberg, chair of the Volleyball Rules Committee and assistant to the executive secretary of the North Dakota High School Activities Association, did not cite compatibility as a reason for the changes.

The press release focused instead on spectators. "It is

felt that one of the positives in the introduction of rally scoring is it will generate more spectator interest," said Solberg. "This can only be a positive for our young athletes to know they are involved in an even more exciting sport where people attend and appreciate the athleticism and competitiveness of the players."

These changes will be welcomed by college coaches. Currently high school players are taught one way to play on their club teams, only to find that some things they learned, such as open-hand serve reception, are illegal in high school competition. Now they will essentially be using college rules throughout all of their pre-college play.

High school games will be played to 25 points, and matches will now be best three-of-five rather than two-of-three. Time outs will be limited to two, and the timing of timeouts will be consistent with college play. Net serves will be allowed, as will multiple contacts (with or without finger action) on the first team hit. Considerations of "intent" have been removed from the back-row attacker rule. The few college rules that still do not apply include the use of

a libero, the pursuit rule, and contact with the ball below the waist.

Fund-raising Campaign Coming

It's hard to pick up a newspaper or turn on the TV without hearing about another budget shortfall; they're affecting institutions from all levels of government and all sizes of businesses. College sports and, in particular, MSU volleyball, are certainly not immune.

Static budget allocations, combined with increased costs for travel, the need to keep up technologically, and other expenses, have depleted the Ralph Young Fund reserves for volleyball. Chuck Erbe says he will soon be appealing to supporters for renewed assistance via a fund-raising campaign.

Team members have told us over the years how much they appreciate the support of Club members; now is the time for you to demonstrate that support anew!

2003 Spartan Volleyball Roster (listed by year of eligibility)

No.	Name	Year	Ht.	Pos.	Hometown/High School
6	Nikki Colson	Sr./Sr.	5-10	S	Lincoln, NE/Pius X
15	Stephanie Knopp	Sr./Sr.	6-0	DS	Cupertino, CA/Monta Vista
18	Emmy Miller	Sr./Sr.	5-8	L	Okemos, MI/Okemos
8	Jenny Rood	Sr./Sr.	6-2	M	Ada, MI/Rockford
5	Michelle Kopka	Jr./Jr.	6-2	OPP	Scarborough, ON/Cedarbrae Collegiate
14	Kim Schram	Jr./Jr.	6-2	OH	London, ON/Oakridge Secondary
1	Diana Steplyk	Jr./Jr.	6-0	OH	Libertyville, IL/Libertyville
10	Sara Villwock	Sr./Jr.	6-2	OH	Fort Collins, CO/University of Colorado
17	Marley Bellwood	Jr./So.	5-8	L	Battle Creek, MI/Lakeview
12	Mickey Davis	Jr./So.	5-9	S	Villa Hills, KY/Notre Dame Academy
7	Brooke Langston	Jr./So.	6-2	M	Germantown, TN/Evangelical Christian
13	Megan Wallin	Jr./So.	6-3	M	Sarasota, FL/Cardinal-Mooney
4	Caroline Belich	So./Fr.	6-1	M/OH	Burr Ridge, IL/Lyons Township
19	Traci Bellwood	Fr./Fr.	5-8	DS	Battle Creek, MI/Lakeview
3	Andrea Hanson	Fr./Fr.	6-3	M	Andover, MN/Anoka
2	Jessica Hohl	Fr./Fr.	6-0	OH	Waterville, OH/Anthony Wayne
11	Katie Johnson	Fr./Fr.	6-3	OH/OPP	Brooklyn, MI/Columbia Central
16	Miken Trogdon	Fr./Fr.	5-7	DS	Lisle, IL/Wheaton St. Francis

2003 Schedule

(All home matches are played in Jenison Field House. All times listed are Eastern.)

8/23	ALUMNI/GREEN & WHITE	6:30 pm	10/17	ILLINOIS	7:00 pm
8/29-30	@Maryland Tournament		10/18	NORTHWESTERN	7:00 pm
	Tennessee, Villanova, Maryland		10/24	@Iowa	8:00 pm
9/5-6	@South Carolina Tournament		10/25	@Minnesota	8:00 pm
	North Carolina, South Carolina		10/31	INDIANA	7:00 pm
9/12-14	@Nebraska Tournament		11/1	PURDUE	8:00 pm
	Santa Clara, Georgia Tech, Nebraska		11/5	@Michigan	7:00 pm
9/20	@American University Tournament		11/8	@Wisconsin	8:00 pm
	Harvard, San Diego, American		11/14	@Ohio State	7:00 pm
9/26	PENN STATE	7:00 pm	11/15	@Penn State	7:00 pm
9/27	OHIO STATE	8:00 pm	11/21	MINNESOTA	8:00 pm
10/1	MICHIGAN	7:00 pm	11/22	IOWA	8:00 pm
10/3	WISCONSIN	7:00 pm	11/28	@Northwestern	8:00 pm
10/10	@Purdue	8:00 pm	11/29	@Illinois	8:00 pm
10/11	@Indiana	8:00 pm	12/5-12/8	NCAA 1 st & 2 nd round	
			12/12-13	NCAA Regionals	
			12/18-20	NCAA Championships in Dallas, TX	



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