
The Service Line

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club
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High Hopes for the Class of 2004

Chuck Erbe is very excited about the latest Spartan volleyball recruits, announced February 2.

"Along with the 1997 class, this is one of our best recruiting classes at Michigan State," said Erbe. "We got great kids who are going to be great players for us in the future. We were able to bring in four solid players with tremendous athletic ability and who, collectively, have a lot of volleyball experience. Those were our two main objectives for the 2000 recruiting class."

Nikki Colson, a 5'10" setter from Lincoln, Nebraska, is probably the most-honored new recruit. She played for Jake Moore at Pius X High School where she led the team to three Class B State Championships (1996, '97, '98) and was named to the 1999 Nebraska Super State first-team.

Nikki set a new Class B state career record for assists, and would have broken the All-Class record if she had not assumed some hitting duties her senior year, as part of a 6-2 offense. This change demonstrated her well-rounded skills, and was a chance at some variety which she says she really enjoyed.

She earned All-America status from Volleyball Magazine in 1999. She is a two-year starting setter for the Nebraska Juniors' top 18-and-under volleyball club, coached by Gwen Egbert, and will

play club ball this season with fellow MSU signee Amy Sibbernsen. She won All-Tournament honors at the 1999 Junior Nationals.

"Nikki was the No. 1 setter on our list," said Erbe. "She represents everything we wanted in a setter. She has a tremendous volleyball background and has been a winner in everything she's done. Nikki is an outstanding athlete with excellent leadership skills. We couldn't be more pleased that Nikki has become a Spartan. The setting position is in great hands."

Nikki had dreams of playing for her hometown Nebraska Cornhuskers, but her timing wasn't right; they were not looking for a setter this year. Her four-year teammate at Pius X, middle-hitter Anna Schrad, also one of the top recruits in the country, committed to Nebraska, and Nikki was considering walk-on status there in order to continue playing with her. She was also talking very seriously to Mary Wise at Florida, but eventually decided on MSU.

In contrast, our other new recruit from Nebraska, Amy Sibbernsen, says she saw college as an opportunity to go to another part of the country. "I've always had a dream of going away, to experience new things and be out on my own," she said.

Amy is a 6'0" outside hitter from Omaha, Nebraska. She led Marian High School, coached by Rochelle Kohlf, to the 1999 Class A State Championship and earned a 1999 first-team Nebraska Super State selection. Just a few months later, her Marian basketball team won the 2000 Class A State Championship.

A 1999 Volleyball Magazine High School All-American, she will play for coaches Deb Frafent and Gwen Egbert on the Nebraska Juniors' top 18-and-under club team with fellow Spartan signee Nikki Colson. She also competed in both track and basketball.

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"In the dictionary under the word competitive you will find Amy Sibbersen," said Erbe. "She is a great team player who hits with a lot of power and will raise the competitive level in our gym about four notches next season."

Jenny Rood is a 6'2" outside hitter/middle from Ada, Michigan. Rood, a 1999 first-team all-state selection, played for Linda Smith O'Malley at Rockford High School. The 1999 Gatorade State Player of the Year, Rood plays club volleyball for the Kalamazoo Dead Frogs 18-and-under, where she is the starting outside hitter for coach Jack Magelessen.

"Jenny is a terrific athlete who plays with athleticism and competitive fervor," said Erbe. "Jenny is one of the most dominating net players in her recruiting class. Her potential has just begun to be revealed."

Naomi Taylor is a 6'2" middle from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Taylor, who plays for coach Krista Hiebert at Mennonite Brethren Collegiate (MBCI) was the 1999 Manitoba Provincial Player of the Year and a '99 Provincial All-Star. In 1998 she was named the Manitoba Class 4A MVP. She plays club volleyball for University of Winnipeg/Club West, coached by Steve Densmore. Taylor was also a member of the 1999 Manitoba Juvenile Provincial team.

"Naomi has the most developed blocking technique of any player I've ever seen at her age," said Erbe. "She also has outstanding attacking skills. Naomi

brings a great combination of winning, competitiveness and athleticism to the middle position. We are very excited to have Naomi join us at Michigan State."

Roster Enhanced with Walk-Ons

The Spartan volleyball roster will swell to at least eighteen players for 2000 with the addition of freshman walk-on players.

Multi-sport athlete Emmy Miller will be familiar to many for her role as an outside hitter on the Okemos High School volleyball team. She is also a national-level diver, earning the title of Michigan's high school Miss Swimming for her senior year.

Emmy is a lifelong MSU fan, who has dreamed of playing as a Spartan. As a result she decided to concentrate on volleyball and join the team as a walk-on.

Stephanie Knopp comes to MSU from Cupertino, California, where she played outside hitter for the Monta Vista High School Matadors, winning numerous honors. Her decision to come east may have been influenced by her mother, who is an MSU alumna.

Division I Finals Move East

The NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championships move back a little closer to us for 2000. The location for the December 15-17 matches is the Richmond Coliseum in Richmond, Virginia, with Virginia Commonwealth University as the host institution.

Ticket orders are being taken now, at a cost of \$30 for both semi-finals and the final. You can place an order by telephone at (804) 828-7267, or get more information from their web page at <http://www.vcu.edu/vcurams/volleych amp.html>

Championship sites for the next four years have also been announced:

2001—San Diego, California, December 13 & 15

2002—New Orleans, Louisiana, December 19 & 21

2003—Dallas, Texas, December 18 & 20

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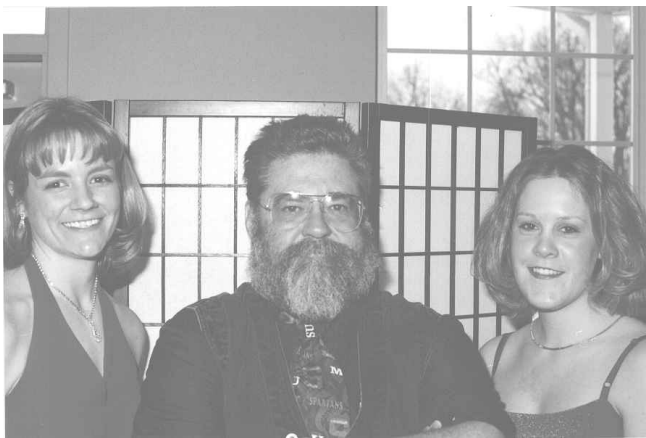
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2004—Long Beach, California, December 16 & 18

MSU put in a bid to host a championship in East Lansing, but it was rejected. “In order to accommodate the AVCA convention, as well as the fans, any candidate location must have a convention hotel of a certain size as well as a minimum number of rooms within a given radius”, Chuck explained. “The Lansing area doesn’t meet those requirements.”

Spartan Volleyball Banquet



Seniors Tammy Vonderheide and Kayleen Cook (above, with SideOut Club member Randy Ward) made their last appearance in front of the fans at the Michigan State Volleyball Banquet, held at Hawk Hollow Golf Course on January 23. Proceedings followed the familiar format, consisting of award presentations and commentary on the past season, with master of ceremonies Tim Berkey. An interesting addition was the auction of two-foot tall promotional cutouts of the 1999 team members.

Stan Levandowsky II, president of L&L Food Stores, presented the L&L Most Valuable Player award to Sarah Gustin (photo, top of right-hand column). Sarah showed her all-around talents by winning the Top GPA award as well.

The Andrea DeLuca Spirit Award went to Vicki Basil and the Captain’s Award to Tammy Vonderheide. Jessica Sanborn was the winner of the Hitting Efficiency Award.

The SideOut Club Service Award went to Board member Kay Schmid for her enthusiastic



(Photos: Jack Carmichael)

contributions to Spartan volleyball.

★★Volleyball Trivia Question★★

At this year’s Volleyball Banquet, which award went to the same Spartan player for the second year in a row? See the answer on page 5.

Recap of 1999 Awards

The banquet reminded us that MSU Spartans won an impressive array of individual awards this season.

Lisa Ashton: Academic All-Big Ten

Vicki Basil: Big Ten Player of the Week, Academic All-Big Ten

Sarah Gustin: First-Team All-Big Ten, All-Tournament Team—UMass Invitational, Academic All-Big Ten

Erin Hartley: Big Ten Player of the Week, Academic All-Big Ten

Christie Landry: All-Tournament Team—UMass Invitational

Angela Morley: Big Ten All-Freshman Team, Big Ten Player of the Week, All-Tournament Team—WMU Invitational

Jessica Sanborn: AVCA All-District Team, First-Team All-Big Ten, Big Ten Player of the Week, MVP at UMass Invitational, All-Tournament Team at L&L Volleyball Classic and WMU Invitational, GTE Academic All-District Second Team, Academic All-Big Ten

Tammy Vonderheide: Academic All-Big Ten

Maren Witzel: Academic All-Big Ten

Spring Tournaments

Spartan volleyball will not be hosting a tournament this spring, due to scheduling and facility conflicts. However, the team is excited about traveling farther from home than usual for spring competition, with several matches against top national rivals.

Spring opponents will include three of the sixteen top-seeded teams from the 1999 NCAA tournament (Florida, Nebraska, and Clemson), plus two other NCAA tournament participants (Michigan and Louisville).

The most accessible tournament for Spartan fans is the one on April 1 at Cliff Keen arena in Ann Arbor. It will be a three-team tournament, with the University of Toledo joining MSU and U-M.

The tentative schedule in Ann Arbor is as follows:

10:00 am	MSU vs. Michigan
12 noon	Michigan vs. Toledo
1:30 pm	MSU vs. Toledo
3:00 pm	MSU vs. Michigan

One interesting feature of the tournament is that each contest will be a full-length match, rather than the abbreviated competitions that are typical of spring tournaments. The two matches we play against Michigan will use different scoring formats. The

morning match will use Chuck Erbe's proposed timed format composed of two eleven-minute games and a tie-breaker. The afternoon match will be played under the current FIVB format, which will be in effect for the Olympics. This consists of a three-out-of-five match with all rally scoring. The first four games are played to 25, and the fifth is a 15-pointer. The FIVB format will also include a libero player position. (For those unfamiliar with the libero, it is basically a very specialized back-row-only player with no substitution restrictions.)

The other tournament dates include:

March 25 at Butler University (Indianapolis) with Florida, St. Louis and Louisville.

April 8 at South Carolina with Florida and Clemson.

April 15 at Nebraska with Creighton and the Nebraska Juniors.

The Nebraska Juniors team features both Nikki Colson and Amy Sibbernsen, two of the new Spartan recruits.

NCAA Experimental Scoring

The NCAA Division I Volleyball Committee has requested that Division I teams test a new scoring format during spring practice. A March 1 memo to coaches outlined the proposed format. The earliest any changes in scoring would be enacted would be the 2001 season.

The experimental format calls for two-out-of-three matches during spring tournament play, but would be three out of five if adopted for regular season play.

Scoring is point per play ("rally") to 35, with a winning margin of two points required. If a deciding game is required, it uses a "shootout" format, where teams alternate serving each point. This game is played to six points, but still requires a two-point margin. You may recognize this as very similar to a tie-break in tennis.

In the memo, the chair of the committee asserts the belief that the 25-point FIVB format may be too short. They hope that increasing the length of the regular games to 35 while shortening the tie-breaker

game to six, will produce an acceptable range of match lengths.

SideOut Club Gets Its Own Internet Domain Name

The SideOut Club has a new address on the web—www.msusideout.org. The site hasn't actually moved; Andy Kurtz still maintains it on his server. The Club has simply chosen and purchased its own domain name. A domain name can be assigned to any server, so even if the home page eventually moves to a different computer, the domain name will still work correctly. If you're still using the old name, perhaps via a bookmark or favorite, switch to the new one, because at some time in the future the old one may not work.

Team Notes

Spring practice is underway, so things are hopping at Jenison Field House.

P Unfortunately, Maren Witzel began suffering pain in her left foot, which has been diagnosed as a stress fracture. She will be sidelined for the spring.

P Some good news is that Chuck Erbe says Christie Landry is recovered from her ACL repair, with her leg back at 100% strength.

P Starting with spring practice, the coaching staff has initiated a new award program for the team. It's called the "Spartan of the Week", and is awarded to the player who shows the greatest accomplishments for the week.

Accomplishments may be in any area that is part of being a student-athlete. This might include outstanding work in class, performance on the court, dedicated training regimen, community efforts, and more. Players nominate their teammates for the award each week, and the coaching staff makes the selection. The first two winners were Maren Witzel and Lisa Ashton.

★★ Answer to Trivia Question★★

Sarah Gustin won the award for Top GPA both of the last two years.

European Trip Update

At its March meeting, the SideOut Club Board of Directors approved a \$5,000 contribution toward the cost of the team's trip to Europe in June. However, this is only a small portion of the total cost of the trip. A letter was sent to volleyball fans last month, asking for additional help to cover the costs of the trip.

All fourteen players from the 1999 season will go on the trip, with the entire party numbering around twenty-four. "It will be an expensive undertaking", says Chuck Erbe, "but it will be a huge enhancement to our program."

If you want to make a contribution toward the trip, or have any potential donors in mind, contact Chuck at 355-4705.

Reservations are set for a flight to Amsterdam leaving May 31, and the return from Paris on June 19. The exact itinerary and match dates have not been determined yet, and probably will not be until late April.

Annual Membership Meeting Set for August 13; Candidates Sought for Board of Directors

The MSU SideOut Club annual membership meeting will be held in August this year, in conjunction with the start of fall practice. The date will be Sunday, August 13, in the late afternoon, and the location will be Jenison Field House. The August newsletter will have full details, but add this to your calendar now.

Terms expire for four seats on the Board of Directors, with at least two of the incumbents not running for office again. So we need some enthusiastic, energetic Club members who are interested in running for a seat on the Board. Potential Board members should have time to attend one meeting per month, and an interest in organizing or operating a Club activity (50/50 raffle, coach's luncheon, bus trips, meet-the-team supper, etc.).

If you have questions about the election or about service on the Board, please contact Club president Dave Martz at (517) 521-4907.

Tentative 2000 Schedule

(All home matches are played in Jenison Field House)

8/26	GREEN & WHITE	7:00 pm	9/29	@Purdue	
9/1-2	L&L/MSU VOLLEYBALL CLASSIC		9/30	@Illinois	
Friday	Northeastern vs. Eastern Washington	5:30 pm	10/6	PENN STATE	7:00 pm
	MSU vs. Rutgers	7:30 pm	10/7	INDIANA	7:00 pm
Saturday	Eastern Washington vs. Rutgers	10:00 am	10/13	@Wisconsin	
	MSU vs. Northeastern	12:00 noon	10/14	@Northwestern	
	Northeastern vs. Rutgers	5:30 pm	10/20	MINNESOTA	7:00 pm
	MSU vs. Eastern Washington	7:30 pm	10/21	IOWA	7:00 pm
9/8-10	Notre Dame/adidas Invitational		10/27	@Indiana	
Friday	MSU vs. UCLA	1:30 pm	10/28	@Penn State	
	Notre Dame vs. Nebraska	4:00 pm	11/3	ILLINOIS	7:00 pm
Saturday	MSU vs. Nebraska	4:30 pm	11/4	PURDUE	7:00 pm
	Notre Dame vs. UCLA	7:00 pm	11/8	@Michigan	
Sunday	UCLA vs. Nebraska	12:30 pm	11/11	OHIO STATE	7:00 pm
	MSU vs. Notre Dame	3:00 pm	11/17	@Iowa	
9/15-16	University of San Diego Invitational with UCSD, Georgetown, Hofstra		11/18	@Minnesota	
9/20	MICHIGAN	7:00 pm	11/22	NORTHWESTERN	7:00 pm
9/25	@Ohio State		11/25	WISCONSIN	7:00 pm
			12/2-3	NCAA - 1st and 2nd Round	
			12/9-10	NCAA Regionals	
			12/14-16	NCAA Final Four in Richmond, Virginia	

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