
The Service Line

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club
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It's Time...For an Outstanding Season!

The 2000 Spartan volleyball team has the makings of an outstanding season, if they decide they want one. Some of the critical elements pointing toward success this year include:

PThree pre-season all-conference picks (Erin Hartley, Christie Landry, and Jessica Sanborn), and a fourth (Sarah Gustin) who should have been (see related story on page 3).

PA sophomore (Angela Morley) who was on the freshman all-conference team last year, and nearly won the Big Ten Freshman of the Year award.

PFive seniors (Gustin, Landry, Sanborn, Vicki Basil, and Maren Witzel) who came here in 1997 acclaimed as MSU's best recruiting class of all time. The last three seasons have not turned out as well as many expected, and these five players know this is the critical year for them.

PExceptional incoming players (Nikki Colson, Stephanie Knopp, Lucy Lee, Emmy Miller, Jenny Rood, Amy Sibbersen, and Naomi Taylor), some of

whom will be competing for starting positions this year. Chuck says that every one of the freshmen can already play at a high level, and they are coming in with an aggressive attitude, ready to step on the court immediately. Volleyball Magazine named Colson and Rood to their 2000 Fab 50 list of top recruits, and ranked MSU's overall recruiting class number 10 in the nation.

PReturnees Kyla Smith, Emily Engel and Lisa Ashton, who are anxious to get some playing time if any of the regulars can't handle their duties.

PTwo assistant coaches (Todd Dagenais and Laura Abbinante) who now have a year of experience under their belts. The demands of Division I coaching must be tough for those in their first year—now Todd and Laura can consider themselves veterans.

PHead coach Chuck Erbe, who vows that any player giving less than her best will wind up on the bench. "I'm letting them know that no one is guaranteed of staying in the game. If a player can't perform, I'll put someone else on the court", he explained.

PA team that is still savoring a special perk—a three-week playing tour of Europe. As Jessica Sanborn said "This has been one of the most interesting experiences of my life, and it has brought our team a lot closer together."

Given all these positives, the major determining factors for success this year could be staying free of injuries, and working hard to improve.

PChristie Landry was playing at 80 to 85 percent of capacity during spring practice and the trip to Europe. Her knee is expected to be completely rehabilitated by fall, but only time will tell.

PMaren Witzel's foot is reported to be "just stable", after being diagnosed with a stress fracture last winter.

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Perin Hartley has been having some pain in her left leg, largely a result of a hitting style that has her landing on one leg instead of two. Chuck says she's working to correct this, and that overall, physically, she's now showing that she can dominate the floor against any opponent. "Erin could prove herself to be one of the two best right-side players in the nation", he added.

The tour of Europe was great for building team spirit, but was less successful as pure volleyball training. The travel schedule didn't always allow enough time for intense practice sessions, and sometimes the facilities available were not optimum. In contrast, when the 1995 team traveled to Japan, they stayed in one location where they were able to practice, work out, and scrimmage just as if they were at home. On the other hand, the competition in Europe was certainly helpful for some players, such as Sarah Gustin, who showed a new ability to deal with huge blockers by hitting over, around and off of them.

The players' attitude is critical, according to Chuck. "They have to decide how much they want to be good, and how hard they will work to be good. They have all the potential in the world, but there are also a lot of question marks." As an example, he brings up the issue of how hard they train and practice over the summer. "The coaches aren't allowed to be around them for this period. They have to motivate themselves to hit the weight room, and head into the gym for drills."

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Come to the Membership Meeting and Then Meet the Team

Sunday August 13th will kick off the 2000 season for MSU volleyball fans, when the MSU SideOut Club holds its fourth annual Meet-the-Team event in Jenison Field House. This year, it will be combined with the SideOut Club annual membership meeting.

The schedule for the afternoon is as follows:

Team practice starts at 3:30 pm and is open for viewing whenever you want to get there. This is the first day of practice for the season.

The membership meeting starts at 5:00 pm; the agenda includes election of five Board members, with two incumbents running for re-election. Nominations (including self-nominations) will be accepted at the meeting. For more information about serving on the Board, please contact Club president Dave Martz at (517) 521-4907.

The chance to meet the team comes at 6:30, when practice ends and free food and drink are served.

The event will serve as a membership drive, so please bring friends, neighbors and relatives who may be interested in MSU volleyball. There is no charge for the event, but we will accept donations to cover the costs of food.

No Spartans on the Olympic Team

For a short time during the past year, the MSU Spartans had the distinction of being the only college program to have two players—Val Sterk and Jenna Wrobel—on the U.S. National Team. Unfortunately, it did not last, and neither player will represent the U.S. in the 2000 Olympics.

Jenna was cut from the team in April, and immediately signed up with the United States Professional Volleyball League (USPV) (see story on page 4). Val continued on the team until July, but did not quite make the cut when the team was reduced to the final twelve players for the Olympics. Her immediate plans were not known at press time.

MSU Leads Big Ten With Three Players on Pre-Season Team

Seniors Christie Landry and Jessica Sanborn and junior Erin Hartley have been chosen by Big Ten coaches for the 2000 pre-season all-conference volleyball team. This represents quite an honor for MSU, considering that Penn State was the only other school to place three players on the team.

Jessica was a member of last season's All-Big Ten and All-District teams, while this is the second consecutive pre-season All-Big Ten honor for Erin. Christie was an honorable mention all-conference player in 1998.

However, it's a mystery how the coaches overlooked Sarah Gustin. Only eight months ago they named her to the 1999 all-conference team, after she moved from the middle to the left side and became the team's go-to hitter and kill leader. It's almost unimaginable that she would not be included in the pre-season picks.

Player	Year	Pos	School
Nicole Branagh*	Sr	OH	Minnesota
Katie Schumacher*	Jr	OH	Penn State
Betsy Spicer*	Sr	MB	Illinois
Lindsey Berg	Jr	S	Minnesota
Jenny Maastricht	Sr	OH	Wisconsin
Sherisa Livingston	Jr	MB	Wisconsin
Mishka Levy	So	MB	Penn State
Christie Landry	Sr	S	MSU
Erin Hartley	Jr	OH	MSU
Jessica Sanborn	Sr	MB	MSU
Amanda Rome	Jr	OH	Penn State
Shadia Haddad (tie)	Jr	OH	Illinois
Katie Virtue (tie)	So	S	Ohio State

* unanimous selection

As a team, the Spartans were picked to finish fourth in the conference. It's hard to figure how the coaches came up with this. Considering their own picks of three Spartans as all-conference players, the proven

abilities of Sarah and Angela, combined with the tenth-rated recruiting class in the country should find MSU competing for the conference title.

Instead, the coaches expect Penn State, Minnesota and Wisconsin to snag the top three spots, exactly the way they finished last year. However, the top four teams were bunched more closely in the voting than usual. In fact, fourth-place MSU was nearly as close in votes to first-place Penn State as they were ahead of fifth-place Michigan.

Penn State's first place selection is quite an accomplishment given that they lost multiple-year All-Americans Lauren Cacciamani and Bonnie Bremner, as well as key hitter Carrie Schonveld.

The Wolverines made the biggest move upward to fifth, after being ranked tenth at the beginning of the 1999 season and finishing the year in eighth. At first this seems surprising since U of M had no all-conference players on last year's team or this year's pre-season team. The fifth-place ranking may be largely due to the overall balance of their returning crop of seniors and juniors. It also shows respect for coach Mark Rosen, who in his first year took the Wolverines to the second round of the NCAA tournament.

Illinois and Indiana fared the worst, each dropping three spots from their 1999 finish, probably because both teams lost significant senior players.

Rank	School	Votes	1999 Finish
1	Penn State	117	1
2	Minnesota	109	2
3	Wisconsin	96	3
4	MSU	91	5
5	Michigan	67	8
6	Ohio State	65	5
7	Illinois	63	4
8	Indiana	46	5
9	Purdue	32	8
10	Iowa	24	10
11	Northwestern	16	11

Volleyball Magazine Rankings

In the September Volleyball Magazine Dennis Steers rates the Spartans number 12 in the nation for 2000. Penn State and Minnesota are the only Big Ten teams he ranks higher, with Wisconsin just behind us at 17 and Ohio State at 19. His top ten are UCLA, Long Beach, Penn State, USC, Hawai'i, Stanford, Arizona, Pacific, Pepperdine and Minnesota.

A Chance Meeting in Milwaukee



Photo: John Farina

June 23 in Milwaukee saw an unusual get-together of current and former Michigan State players and staff, all of whom were members of the Spartan volleyball program during Laura Farina's stint in East Lansing. Pictured above, from left to right: Matt Darling (1996 team manager), Sarah Gustin, Courtney DeBolt, Val Sterk, Laura Farina and Jenna Wrobel.

As Sarah explained, "I went to Milwaukee to visit Laura because she is a very special person to me and played a key role in my life my first two years at MSU. We have remained great friends." Coincidentally, Val was there at the same time visiting Courtney, who of course is Laura's assistant coach at Marquette University.

Sarah continued, "Jenna was there with some friends to watch the USA mens volleyball team play a World League match against Spain. Since we were all there we of course had to meet and see each other for a little bit. It was kind of funny that we were all there, but it wasn't planned."

SideOut Club Bus Trip to Illinois

The SideOut Club will offer a bus trip to the University of Illinois in Champaign on the second weekend of the 2000 Big Ten season. The trip will cost \$50, including the cost of a ticket for the match.

Departure is Saturday September 30th at 11 am from the Okemos Road and I-96 Park-and-Ride lot. The bus will return to East Lansing immediately following the match.

You can sign up for the trip by contacting Julie Carmichael at 676-5211 or at the SideOut Club counter at home matches.

Coming Soon—Professional Women's Volleyball

Starting in January 2001, the United States will have a new professional women's indoor volleyball league. United States Professional Volleyball (USPV), the brainchild of Chicago entrepreneur Bill Kennedy, plans to start play with six to ten teams located in the Midwest.

Specific cities have not been announced, but some of the locations being considered include Chicago, Grand Rapids, Indianapolis, Louisville, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Omaha, and St. Louis.

Several other professional indoor volleyball leagues have been tried starting as far back as the 1970's, but all of them folded after a few years. The USPV claims it will be different than the others. They claim to have a better business foundation than any of the previous attempts, a foundation based on five years of research and planning.

Instead of just opening league play cold, USPV started an eighteen-month promotional phase in early 1999 with the creation of the U.S. Dream Team. This team is composed of top recent college graduates who have been practicing, competing and promoting the league in preparation for the kickoff.

The Dream Team is coached by volleyball legend Arie Selinger, the only coach in any sport to take both a women's team (the 1984 U.S. squad) and a men's team (the 1992 Netherlands squad) to the

gold-medal round at the Olympics. Players include many recent college stars, such as Jenna Wrobel, Penn State's Bonnie Bremner, Lindsay Anderson, and Christy Cochran, Kalamazoo native Therese Crawford, and Florida's Jenny Manz.

The competition schedule for the Dream Team has included a fall 1999 tour against top college teams, matches against the U.S. National Team, as well as exhibitions against foreign national teams, such as Australia, Japan, and Poland.

League founder Bill Kennedy is CEO of The Kennedy Group of Companies, a consortium of independent, customized home builders, land developers and property managers throughout the United States. As a result, the league appears to be on solid footing financially. Kennedy is also the father of former Wisconsin All-American middle blocker Kelly Kennedy, who is a member of the Dream Team.

You can learn more about the USPV at uspv.com.

State Farm Tournament

The 2000 State Farm Women's Volleyball Classic will launch the college volleyball season on the East Coast for the first time, and will feature East/West matchups in both of the first round matches.

Participating teams for the tournament in Gainesville, Florida will be Penn State, UCLA, Colorado State, and Florida. All four teams are expected to be ranked in the top ten nationally this year. Penn State is last year's national champion, and Florida handed them their only loss of the 1999 season during the 1999 State Farm Classic.

The tournament, presented by the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA), opens Friday August 25 with Penn State playing UCLA, followed by Florida versus Colorado State. The consolation and championship matches follow on Saturday.

The opening matches will be broadcast on ESPN2 at 12:30 and 2:30 pm on Saturday August 26, with the championship on at 1:30 pm Sunday August 27.

The tournament web site can be found at:
www.gatorzone.com/volleyball/tour/nacwaa/2000/

MSU Attendance Down Again

The 1999 NCAA volleyball attendance figures were bad news for the Spartans, who saw home attendance fall for the third straight year, to an average of 911 fans per match. This happened in spite of the elimination of a second home pre-conference tournament, which has traditionally had low attendance and thus brings down the average.

Attendance is highly influenced by a team's won-lost record, so the result is not unexpected. Our attendance ranking for the year was 25th, which is right in line with the team's ranking during most of the season in the national polls.

	Team	Dates	Total	Avg.
1	Hawaii	21	149,918	7,139
2	Nebraska	19	71,577	3,767
3	Penn State	23	62,886	2,734
4	Florida	14	32,533	2,324
5	Illinois State	13	30,109	2,316
6	Stanford	16	36,253	2,266
7	Pacific	19	38,795	2,042
8	Wisconsin	15	29,586	1,972
9	Minnesota	14	27,513	1,965
10	Kansas State	11	21,381	1,944
25	Michigan State	14	12,753	911

Big Ten Coaching Changes

Keylor Chan, a former assistant volleyball coach at Northwestern, has been named head coach of the Wildcats. He replaces Kevin Renshler, who left in May for the head coaching job at Auburn University.

Chan was an assistant coach to Renshler at Kent State University in 1996, and joined him in a move to Northwestern the following year. In 1999 Chan took the head coaching job at Furman University, where he guided the team to a 13-7 conference mark. As assistant at Northwestern, he was responsible for development and implementation of drills and conditioning work, scouting and statistical analysis of opponents, scheduling and team travel.

The University of Minnesota has hired Janet Cobbs Mulholland as assistant coach. You may know her from her 1989-94 stint on the United States National Team, during which time she played in the 1992 Olympics. She also played professionally on the four-player beach tour, as well as indoors in Italy and Turkey.

A Minnesota native, Mulholland recently ended her professional career and returned to the Twin Cities area, which made her receptive to a job offer from Gopher head coach Mike Hebert. Mulholland will serve as the program's recruiting coordinator. She will also assist with the training of players, game planning, and tactics.

Minnesota made room for Mulholland by reassigning former assistant coach Nao Ikeda as the team's assistant program director. She will be responsible for their technical evaluation effort, performing video analysis of team and individual performance, while also acting as travel co-ordinator, among other duties.

Team Notes

MSU's roster is up to seventeen players this year, the largest it has been in recent years. However, examination of the various playing positions shows a lack of depth at middle blocker. While Jessica Sanborn and Angela Morley are solid starters, only freshman Naomi Taylor will be available in that position for backup. Normally you would expect to have four middle blockers on a team, both for depth on the bench and for team scrimmages. With Jessica graduating this year, we can probably expect to see a couple of middles among next year's recruits.

Another interesting note from this year's roster is that Jessica Sanborn and Erin Hartley are now both listed at 6' 3", an inch taller than last year.

Note that the Green and White match will be at 6:30 pm this year. It will run until approximately 8:00 pm. It will be followed by an invitation-only reception for those donors who supported the team's European trip.

2000 Spartan Volleyball Roster (listed by year of eligibility)

No.	Name	Year	Ht.	Pos.	Hometown/High School
9	Vicki Basil	Sr./Sr.	5-10	S	Bay City, MI/Bay City Central
12	Sarah Gustin	Sr./Sr.	6-3	OH	Hesperia, CA/Hesperia Christian
1	Christie Landry	Sr./Sr.	6-2	S	Naperville, IL/St. Francis
5	Jessica Sanborn	Sr./Sr.	6-3	M	Colbert, WA/Mead
10	Maren Witzel	Sr./Jr.	6-0	OH	Palmer, AK/Colony
4	Lisa Ashton	Jr./Jr.	5-10	OH/DS	Watervliet, MI/Watervliet
7	Erin Hartley	Jr./Jr.	6-3	OH	Midland, MI/Midland
2	Angela Morley	Jr./So.	6-4	M	Holland, MI/West Ottawa
11	Emily Engel	So./So.	5-10	OH/DS	Bay City/Bay City Central
17	Lucy Lee	So./So.	5-7	DS	Kalamazoo, MI/Comstock
3	Kyla Smith	So./So.	6-0	OH	Colmax, B.C./Highland
6	Nikki Cokson	Fr./Fr.	5-10	S	Lincoln, NE/Pius X
15	Stephanie Knopp	Fr./Fr.	5-10	OH	Cupertino, CA/Monte Vista
18	Emmy Miller	Fr./Fr.	5-8	DS	Okemos, MI/Okemos
8	Jenny Rood	Fr./Fr.	6-2	OH	Ada, MI/Rockford
13	Amy Sibbersen	Fr./Fr.	6-0	OH	Omaha, NE/Marian
16	Naomi Taylor	Fr./Fr.	6-2	M	Winnipeg, Manitoba/Mennonite Brethren Collegiate

SideOut Club Report

Membership Renewal Time

Members who need to renew for 2000 will find the renewal form inside this issue. The SideOut Club membership year runs from July 1 to June 30, but for those who join during the "off-season" (between January 1 and June 30) we extend the membership to the following year.

Volunteers Needed

As always, we need lots of volunteers to sell merchandise and raffle tickets during home matches. If you can spare some time to help out (and have some fun to boot) at one or more home matches, please call Jim Ellis at (517) 323-3566.

MSU SideOut Club Financial Summary - Year Ending June 30, 2000

	Income	Expense	Net Income
1999 Starting balance			\$7,820.62
Value of merchandise on hand as of 6/30/99			\$2,699.46
Membership dues	3,310.00		3,310.00
Member Benefits			
Courtside Seat Raffle		117.00	(117.00)
Newsletter		456.59	(456.59)
Spring tournament and fall picnic	298.00	392.47	(94.47)
Pins, decals and memo boards		114.80	(114.80)
Total Member Benefits	298.00	1,080.86	(782.86)
Donations to Club	25.00		
Merchandise sales	8,845.93	5,089.10	3,756.83
50/50 raffle	2,869.00	1,883.80	985.20
Coach's Luncheons	610.51	700.95	(90.44)
Credit union interest, fees	197.35	14.00	183.35
Other office supplies, copying, postage		493.55	(493.55)
Taxes		496.96	(496.96)
Miscellaneous expenses		80.00	(80.00)
Contributions to MSU Volleyball			
European Trip		5,000.00	(5,000.00)
Digital Editing System		4,000.00	(4,000.00)
Media Package		2,500.00	(2,500.00)
Banners	1,300.00	1,335.00	(35.00)
Banquet Table Sponsorship		300.00	(300.00)
Ralph Young Fund		100.00	(100.00)
Total Contributions to MSU Volleyball	1,300.00	13,235.00	(11,935.00)
Total income and expenses	\$17,455.79	\$23,074.22	(\$5,618.43)
Balance as of 6/30/00			\$2,202.19
Value of merchandise on hand as of 6/30/00			\$3,109.76
Net worth as of 6/30/00			\$5,311.95

2000 Schedule

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

8/26	GREEN & WHITE	6:30 pm	9/29	@Purdue	8:00 pm
9/1-2	L&L/MSU VOLLEYBALL CLASSIC		9/30	@Illinois	8:00 pm
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	8:00 pm
	MSU vs. Northeastern	12:00 noon	10/14	@Northwestern	8:00 pm
	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	8:00 pm
Friday	MSU vs. UCLA	1:30 pm	10/28	@Penn State	7:00 pm
	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	7:00 pm
Sunday	UCLA vs. Nebraska	12:30 pm	11/11	OHIO STATE	7:00 pm
	MSU vs. Notre Dame	3:00 pm	11/17	@Iowa	8:00 pm
9/15-16	@University of San Diego Invitational with UCSD, Georgetown, Hofstra		11/18	@Minnesota	8:00 pm
9/20	MICHIGAN	7:00 pm	11/22	NORTHWESTERN	7:00 pm
9/25	@Ohio State	7:00 pm	11/25	WISCONSIN	7:00 pm
			12/2-3	NCAA - 1st and 2nd Round	
			12/9-10	NCAA Regionals	
			12/14-16	NCAA Championships in Richmond, Virginia	

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