
The Service Line

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club
Vol. VIII No. 4
December 2002

Spartans Get Best NCAA Tournament Draw Since 1996

MSU To Play First and Second Round Matches At Notre Dame

You could see the excitement on the faces of the coaches and players as they emerged from their private room at Damon's Restaurant in East Lansing Sunday night. "This is a very favorable draw for us, a great opportunity", Chuck Erbe said with a big smile.

The unexpectedly good news was that the Spartans will be going to South Bend, Indiana to play the first and second rounds of the 2002 NCAA tournament. The first match will be against George Mason University at 4 pm Saturday, December 7 at the Joyce Center on the campus of Notre Dame University. Notre Dame will play the College of Charleston immediately following MSU's match.

The two winners from Saturday will play on Sunday at 4 pm to advance to the West regional playoffs the following week, where the top seeds are Southern California, UC Santa Barbara and Pepperdine. The complete bracket is shown on page 7.

What is it about this draw that is so favorable to MSU? The first and second rounds of NCAA play are divided among sixteen sites, hosted by the top sixteen nationally-seeded teams. Notre Dame is the number 16 seed, so in theory their "sub-regional" is

CONTENTS

Spartans Get Best Tournament Draw Since 1996	1
Minnesota Claims 1st Big Ten Title	2
Angela Morley Chosen for All-Conference Team	3
Seniors Recall Memories at 2002 Banquet	3
President's Corner	5
Thanks to Special Members	6
2002 Schedule and Results	8

the easiest site in the entire tournament from which a non-seeded team such as MSU can hope to advance to a regional.

In addition, there are serious questions about whether Notre Dame deserves a number 16 seed. They were ranked #25 in the pre-season AVCA poll, but never made an appearance in the top 25 the rest of the year. The Ballicora computer rankings show them at #45 in the nation. There are any number of other strong teams that could have gotten that number 16 seed, and who would have made MSU's path to a regional much more difficult.

It looks as though the choice came down to geography, where the selection committee felt they needed another site in the central U.S. in order to minimize travel for the first weekend. They could even have justified giving the number 16 seed and the host privileges to MSU, because the Spartans have been ranked higher than Notre Dame all season. However, that would have meant five top 16 seeds for the Big Ten, which the committee probably felt was too much for one conference. Notre Dame was the next strongest team available that was centrally located, so they got the nod.

A lot of this good fortune can be attributed to the fact that MSU managed to hold onto fifth place in the conference. The three teams who tied for sixth—Michigan, Indiana and Northwestern—have much tougher hosts than we do for the opening weekend, greatly reducing their chances of advancing to a regional. On the other hand, even Minnesota, the highest seeded Big Ten team, faces second-round opponent Georgia Tech, a stronger performer this year than Notre Dame.

First- and Second-Round Opponents

Of course, the favorable draw does us no good

unless our team takes advantage of it by playing their best. What can they expect to be facing on the other side of the net?

George Mason, located in Fairfax Virginia, is the champion of the Colonial Athletic Association conference and, as such, gets an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament. They are ranked number 97 in the Ballicora computer rankings, which puts them on par with Purdue and Iowa. The last six teams from the CAA to enter the NCAA tournament, including four conference champions, have been ousted 3-0 in the first round of the tournament.

George Mason's top player is Aline Pereira, a 5-10 junior outside hitter from Sao Paulo, Brasil. She has been named conference Player of the Year two years in a row, and she leads all Division I schools with 6.6 kills per game. In fact, this year Pereira took more swings per game than Stacey Gordon! Another Patriot player, Jesica Umansky, from Buenos Aires, Argentina was named conference Setter of the Year, and coach Pat Kendrick was chosen co-Coach of the Year.

George Mason played two top-25 teams (Northern Iowa and Georgia Tech), losing to both of them in three games. MSU also lost to Georgia Tech, our only common opponent with George Mason this year.

We would have to guess that MSU will spend more of their time preparing for **Notre Dame**. The two

teams met last year in the first round of the NCAA tournament in Madison, Wisconsin, and MSU came away the victor.

Notre Dame won the Big East conference championship tournament for the seventh time in eight years, although they dropped the last two matches of the regular season.

As of November 24, the Irish were tied with Nebraska as the Division I leaders in blocks per game. Surprisingly, their big wall is due primarily to a pair of freshman middle blockers—6-3 Lauren Brewster who has been among the top five in the nation in individual blocking and 6-1 Lauren Kelbley who hit .433 and was named Big East Rookie of the Year. Sophomore outside hitter Emily Loomis led the team in kills with 3.6 per game and was named to the all-conference team.

The Irish have one win over a top-25 opponent (Pepperdine) this year. They also have victories over Michigan and Northwestern, but lost to Purdue. They have one other opponent in common with the Spartans, with both teams earning 3-0 wins over Georgetown.

Minnesota Claims 1st Big Ten Title

The 2002 weirdness in the Big Ten continued right through the last weekend of the season. For example, Minnesota clinched the Big Ten title at the 16-1 mark, and then proceeded to lose two out of their last three matches 0-3! This made them the only champions since the early eighties to have more than two conference losses. They were, of course, the surprise of the conference, leaping from sixth place last year to number one this year. This was the biggest improvement since the Spartans' jump from seventh to first between 1994 and 1995.

Ohio State, however, could be the strongest team in the conference right now. If you look at only the last fifteen matches of the season, after OSU got past some of their injuries, the Buckeyes had the best record in the conference—13-2 as compared to 12-3 for Minnesota. They should be positioned well heading into the NCAA tournament.

The Service Line

©2002 by the MSU SideOut Club, the official support group of Michigan State University women's volleyball.

Published five times per year, in March, August, October, November and December

<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	<i>Chris Wolf</i>	<i>(517) 332-4353</i>
<i>President:</i>	<i>Jenny Bond</i>	<i>(517) 676-2676</i>
<i>Vice-president:</i>	<i>Julie Carmichael</i>	<i>(517) 676-5211</i>
<i>Secretary:</i>	<i>Ron Springer</i>	<i>(517) 203-0612</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Jim Ellis</i>	<i>(517) 323-3566</i>

MSU SideOut Club, P.O. Box 80491, Lansing MI 48908
Email: jimandeileenellis@prodigy.net
Web site: www.msusideout.org

Indiana made the second largest improvement this year, moving from ninth place up to sixth, a more typical finish for them. Northwestern continued the climb they began last year to achieve their best record since 1988, including wins over Penn State and Wisconsin. Illinois continued their yo-yo pattern, finishing in fourth place in 1999, dropping to tenth in 2000, back up to fourth place last year, and now in ninth place for 2002.

2002 Finish	School	Big 10	Overall	Preseason Poll	2001 Finish
1	Minnesota	17-3	30-5	6	6
2	Wisconsin	14-6	23-8	2	1
-	Penn State	14-6	24-7	4	3
4	Ohio State	13-7	19-10	1	2
5	MSU	11-9	19-11	3	4
6	Indiana	10-10	20-12	9	9
-	Michigan	10-10	16-14	7	7
-	Northwestern	10-10	17-15	8	8
9	Illinois	7-13	13-16	5	4
10	Iowa	2-18	8-22	10	10
11	Purdue	2-18	12-21	11	10

Angela Morley Chosen for All-Conference Team

Only one Spartan player distinguished herself statistically in 2002, and she was the only one to win post-season honors from the conference coaches. Angela Morley's 1.41 blocks per game was good for second place in the conference and she finished seventh in hitting percentage at .309. As a result, she was named to the All-Big-Ten team, after earning an honorable mention in 2001.

One notable feature of the first-team selections this year is the inclusion of a libero, Paula Gentil of Minnesota. No defensive specialist has ever been chosen for first-team honors before and Gentil, as good as she is, could not have changed that if she had been limited to playing as a regular substitute. The libero position allowed her to make a major contribution to Minnesota's success, and the coaches have acknowledged that with this award.

2002 All-Big-Ten Volleyball Team

Melissa Brewer, INDIANA, Jr, MB
 Erin Moore, MICHIGAN, Jr, MB
Angela Morley, MICHIGAN STATE, Sr, MB
 Cassie Busse, MINNESOTA*, Jr, OPP
 Paula Gentil, MINNESOTA, Fr, LIB
 Lindsey Vander Well, MINNESOTA, So, S
 Erika Lange, NORTHWESTERN*, Jr, MB
 Stacey Gordon, OHIO STATE*, So, OH
 Cara Smith, PENN STATE*, Jr, MH
 Mishka Levy, PENN STATE, Sr, OH
 Erin Byrd, WISCONSIN*, Sr, OH
 Morgan Shields, WISCONSIN, Jr, S
 *unanimous selection

Honorable Mention: ILLINOIS: Sue Webber;
 INDIANA: Katie Pollom, Christina Archibald; OHIO
 STATE: Shelly Draeger, Katie Virtue, Suzie Stiling;
 PENN STATE: Robyn Guokas, Sam Tortorello

All Freshman Team

Paula Gentil, MINNESOTA, LIB
 Jessica Byrnes, MINNESOTA, MB
 Stephanie Higgins, OHIO STATE, MB
 Sam Tortorello, PENN STATE, S
 Renata Dargan, PURDUE, S
 Sheila Shaw, WISCONSIN, MH

Player of the Year: Stacey Gordon, Ohio State

Defensive Player of the Year: Paula Gentil,
 Minnesota

Freshman Player of the Year: Sam Tortorello,
 Penn State

Coach of the Year: Mike Hebert, Minnesota

Seniors Recall Memories at 2002 Volleyball Banquet

There was plenty of emotion, but somewhat fewer tears this year, as the Spartan volleyball family gathered at Hawk Hollow on November 30 to say goodbye to its seniors. The theme for the seniors was how they have grown and changed with the help of the program here.



All seven of our sophomores together at the volleyball banquet

Emily Engel listed her top ten memories of her time at MSU, including her personal achievement of playing the front row against Iowa this year, as well as the team glory of defeating Ohio State and Penn State last year. She also singled out seniors from past years who were especially helpful to her.

Angela Morley joked about her public speaking ability, and then proceeded smoothly through the rest of her speech without the benefit of notes. She talked about coming in as not only a raw player but also a raw person, and developing into a different individual through her experiences at MSU.

Kyla Smith was the most serious of the three, speaking about how she has matured, and offering advice to the younger players about setting goals and striving for them.



The award winners for 2002—Michelle Kopka, Nikki Colson, Emily Engel, Kyla Smith and Angela Morley

This year's award winners were as follows:

Andrea DeLuca Spirit Award	Kyla Smith
Captain's Award	Emily Engel
Top GPA	Michelle Kopka
Hitting Efficiency Award	Angela Morley
Coca-Cola/MVP Award	Nikki Colson

The SideOut Club Service Award went to Dave Pike. Dave was elected to the Board of Directors in 1995, at which time he served as treasurer. He left the Board in 1998 due to time constraints, but then was re-elected in 2000. He was instrumental in starting up and operating the 50/50 raffles for the Club.

The attendance at the banquet was the highest in several years, and we had a large number of sponsorship donations, listed below:

Table Sponsors

Dr. Gordon Guyer
 Fran and Jerry Rood
 Hawk Hollow Golf Course and Banquet Facilities
 SideOut Club

Player Sponsors

Charles L. Ballard
 Jenny and John Bond
 Julie and Jack Carmichael
 Betty and William Colby
 Eileen and Jim Ellis
 Diane and Tom Hill
 David Kirkby
 Beth and Greg Langston
 Rita Richardson and Thom Law
 Anna and Mike Miller
 Deb and Rick Morley
 Katie Mitzner
 Peter Morris
 Sarah Paterson
 Anne Purvis and Dave Pike
 Alan and Kay Schmid
 Linda and Ron Springer
 Randall Ward
 Anne and Claude Watson
 Joyce and Ron Williams
 Jamie and Paul Zimmer

**Multiple Sponsorships

President's Corner

by SideOut Club Board President Jenny Bond

What an exciting time to be a Spartan volleyball booster! Our team will appear in the NCAA again. Hopefully some of you will be able to attend the first two matches at Notre Dame. Several team members emphasized the importance of the fans in the outcome of the Northwestern home match last weekend. Emily Engel in her senior speech at the banquet Sunday listed as one of the Top Ten memories she has during her career the fact that SOC members took the bus to Ohio State to support the team in their win last year. Fans do make a difference!

Just finished the banquet.. The SOC was in charge of arrangements, a major undertaking. The crowd was larger than last year and very enthusiastic. Members attending the banquet had a chance to sit with parents and volleyball support staff. One of the major perks when SOC is in charge of the banquet is we determine seating arrangements. The team looked absolutely great in their finery. They were really tall in their heels. I hardly knew some of them with their fancy hair styles and make-up. Angela Morley wore a wide-brimmed red hat and showed that she can do comedy. Parents from British Columbia, Ontario, Illinois, Colorado, Nebraska, Florida, Kentucky and Maine attended to honor their daughters. I was also pleased that we had a number of families and Court Crew in attendance. The child's plate option at half the price of the adult, new this year, facilitated this.

I was pleased that SOC could present Chuck with two checks for the program—one for the \$3,500 that we have donated to the new locker room and \$3,500 in new monies. These represents much hard work from a number of SOC members. Thanks to all of you who have made this possible by paying your dues, buying SOC merchandise and 50/50 tickets and your donations. In Chuck's remarks yesterday he emphasized the many contributions of the club. He values the support as much as he does the monetary contributions.

As a professor, one of the things that pleased me about the team at the banquet was the

acknowledgment of their scholarship. These young women are real students! Michelle Kopka has a 4.0 GPA.(4.0 Scale). Six players are in the Honors College. Six players were Academic All Big Ten in 2001—Erin Hartley, Emily Engel, Angela Morley, Stephanie Knopp, Emmy Miller and Jenny Rood. The total volleyball team was recognized for the highest GPA of any team on the MSU campus. Chuck has commented at several coach's luncheons that young women who are smart in the classroom are also more likely to be smart on the court. What a team—talented, smart and attractive! They serve as excellent role models for the youngsters who follow them and stand in line for their autographs.

The dedicated SOC Board have been phenomenal this year—Julie Carmichael, Ron Springer, Jim Ellis, Kay Schmid, Kathy Lovell, Jim Constant, Dennis Eagle, Bob Potter, Dave Pike and Dave Martz. Shirley Garrity and Chuck Riley the newest members immediately jumped in to assist with the banquet. Those attending the banquet showed their appreciation for these efforts with a very long applause.

The SOC newsletter is frequently cited as the model for quality and coverage in a booster club publication. We congratulate Chris Wolf on his continued efforts to keep all of us informed.

Members have already inquired about SOC plans for the NCAA matches. Julie Carmichael will consider the travel and housing options for the trip to South Bend. The trip will be about 150 miles-definitely one of the closest sites in recent years. Call or email Julie if you are interested in attending—517-676-2676 or jccarmichael@yahoo.com Do not contact me as I will in Africa from December 5-16. Julie excels in the excursion planning area.

Again this year, the bus trip to Ohio State was financially neutral as a result of a \$200 contribution by the same anonymous donor as 2001. Once again, thank you, Anonymous!

The coach's luncheons have been successful and have attracted new participants this year. We all learned more about the MSU program and volleyball as a dynamic sport at the most recent one. Chuck said the game has changed tremendously in the last 7 years or so. The most recent changes have

involved the 30-point rally scoring and the libero. We are fortunate to support a program that is at the cutting edge of change. Todd and Daune contribute much to Chuck (and he acknowledged this in his remarks at the banquet) in implementing these changes. By the way, Daune is now engaged. The good news is that her fiancé is a coach in the track and field area at MSU so we are pleased she will not be leaving the area.

I have sent email messages to the team several times over the season as the representative of the entire SOC membership—especially at the low points of the season. It was important to let them know we are behind them and to encourage them to never give up. I am proud that they never did and are now in the NCAA. I also encouraged the non-starters to push the starters hard in practice and to let them know we watch them carefully in warm-ups. For example, John and I predicted that Megan Wallin would be a real player from watching her in warm-ups last year. Fortunately we saw what she could do this season. And she has three more years!

The SOC Board is interested in your concerns, issues and comments. Just contact me—email is easiest but phone and US mail work too.

The SOC email list continues as a major communication link for our members. If you have email and have not received messages from me within the last two weeks, we do not have your correct address. Please, email me at jbond@msu.edu to get on the list.

Thank you for your support this season. I am sure that we will be ready for the Spring tournaments—it is a loooooo-ng time between seasons. We are so fortunate to have these outstanding young women and their parents as part of our program. Thank you for supporting them as you do.

This is a long column but I wanted to bring you up to date and to share the banquet with you. May you enjoy safe and happy holidays.

Thanks to Special Members

The SideOut Club would like to acknowledge the members who through their membership give extra monetary support for MSU women's volleyball.

Lifetime Members

Becky and Chuck Erbe	Lowell McCann
Denise and Jeff Jones Sr.	Mick Kelly
Bob and Kathy Lovell	David Kirkby
Jim and Betsy Pifer	Tom Minnema
Lyle and Jeanne Montgomery	Mike Ward
Sarah and Stu Patterson	Laura Peters
Al and Kay Schmid	Nancy Hammond

2002-03 Supporting Members

Laura and Lee Beller	Nona and James Anderson
Larry and Diana Mitchell	Fran and Jerry Rood
Stephen and Laurie Taylor	Jenny and John Bond

We would also like to thank the Club members listed below, who contributed their time to SideOut Club activities this season. Please excuse any omissions or misspellings.

Amy Eagle	Becky Erbe	Shelley Snell
Howard Snell	Eileen Ellis	Fran Rood
Jim Pifer	Ann Purvis	Laura Willard
Betsy Pifer	Kay Schmid	

Fran Rood was a first-year raffle-ticket seller this season, but took to it so naturally that we had complete sell-outs a couple of nights that she was working! Please come back next year, and recruit some other volunteers!

Not included above are the names of Board members, all of whom worked for the Club at matches in addition to the many hours they put in as Board members. Those who organize the most visible of the Club's efforts include:

Jim Constandt and Dennis Eagle	<i>merchandise</i>
Dave Pike and Bob Potter	<i>50/50 raffle</i>
Jim Ellis	<i>volunteer co-ordinator</i>
Julie Carmichael	<i>membership promotion, bus trips</i>
Jenny Bond	<i>banquet organizer</i>

1 USC

San Diego

Utah

Texas A&M

Michigan State

George Mason

College of Charleston

16 Notre Dame

9 Pepperdine

Cal Poly

UCLA

Long Beach State

Santa Clara

California

Fresno State

8 UCSB

5 Florida

UCF

Florida State

South Florida

Temple

Manhattan

Pennsylvania

12 Penn State

13 Washington St.

Oral Roberts

Michigan

Kansas State

Missouri

Northwestern

Wisconsin-Milwaukee

4 Northern Iowa

West Region

East Region

2002 NCAA Division I Tournament

Central Region

Pacific Region

3 Nebraska

Tennessee-Martin

Arizona State

Cincinnati

Miami (FL)

Duke

Alabama A&M

14 Wisconsin

11 North Carolina

Winthrop

American

South Carolina

Washington

Colorado State

Western Kentucky

6 Hawai'i

7 Minnesota

New Hampshire

Florida A&M

Georgia Tech

Texas

Indiana

Texas Arlington

10 Arizona

15 Ohio State

Robert Morris

Ball State

Louisville

Pacific

Nevada

Sacramento State

2 Stanford

2002 Schedule and Results

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

8/30	W	Georgetown	30-25, 30-13, 30-24	10/18	L	Wisconsin	25-30, 35-33, 23-30, 25-30
8/30	W	Oakland	30-24, 30-20, 30-18	10/19	W	Northwestern	30-26, 29-31, 30-19, 30-17
8/30	W	South Carolina	20-30, 31-29, 33-31, 34-32	10/25	W	PURDUE	30-23, 30-23, 30-19
9/6	W	Western Michigan	30-21, 30-27, 30-28	10/26	W	ILLINOIS	38-40, 30-22, 30-21, 25-30, 16-14
9/7	W	Depaul	30-25, 30-17, 30-20	10/30	L	MICHIGAN	24-30, 27-30, 30-24, 18-30
9/7	L	Wright State	30-26, 25-30, 30-25, 22-30, 11-15	11/1	W	PENN STATE	31-29, 20-30, 28-30, 30-24, 15-13
9/13	L	Georgia Tech	22-30, 32-30, 28-30, 23-30	11/8	L	Indiana	27-30, 26-30, 26-30
9/14	W	Kansas State	31-29, 30-25, 22-30, 30-27	11/9	L	Ohio State	25-30, 31-29, 17-30, 18-30
9/14	W	South Florida	27-30, 35-33, 30-23, 30-24	11/15	W	IOWA	30-20, 30-26, 30-17
9/20	W	NORTHERN ILLINOIS	30-20, 30-25, 30-19	11/16	L	MINNESOTA	24-30, 30-27, 27-30, 21-30
9/27	L	Minnesota	23-30, 27-30, 28-30	11/22	W	Illinois	22-30, 30-27, 30-28, 32-30
9/28	W	Iowa	30-26, 30-25, 19-30, 30-27	11/23	W	Purdue	30-15, 21-30, 30-19, 30-25
10/4	W	OHIO STATE	30-27, 23-30, 30-28, 26-30, 17-15	11/29	W	NORTHWESTN	29-31, 30-19, 27-30, 31-29, 15-9
10/5	W	INDIANA	31-29, 30-25, 30-18	11/30	L	WISCONSIN	24-30, 19-30, 27-30
10/9	L	Michigan	25-30, 20-30, 24-30	12/7		George Mason (@Notre Dame)	4:00 pm
10/12	L	Penn State	19-30, 24-30, 27-30	12/8		Notre Dame or College of Charleston	4:00 pm
				12/12-15		NCAA Regional	4:00 pm
				12/19-21		NCAA Championships in New Orleans, LA	



**P.O. Box 80491
Lansing MI 48908**