

VOLLEYBALL NEWS

October 2000

Volume 2 Number 3

Coach's Corner

[by Coach Rose]

As we look at the final results of the 2000 season, we have to be pleased with a number of areas of development and the identification of challenges that we need to focus on if we want to continue to compete with the nation's finest teams.

We now know how it is to serve as the defending national champion, and how each and every opponent that you play has the attitude that they want to take some of your luster away. I thought we handled being a new and different team well, and minus a few occasions where we lost our heads and composure, we were able to navigate a difficult schedule-and again as shown in the NCAA's compete in the nation's toughest conference.

Our victory over national runner-up Wisconsin showed that our up side is good and our loss to Northwestern showed that we still have some growing pains that need to be nurtured. Our final ranking of 5th is a tremendous accomplishment for this team and should prove to lay a solid foundation for the future.

Our playoff performance was both the good and bad of Penn State volleyball in 2000. In starting with James Madison, we saw a team with emotion that even in defeat played the game with a passion that our team rarely embraced. The next evening we played much more inspired and beat a good Washington State team that had earned victories this past season against UCLA, and Stanford. Our trip to the West Coast was both good and bad as we didn't play with the same focus and energy that we needed and even though we escaped with a victory against a very good higher seeded Colorado State team, we were aided

by their missing 24 serves. I would have hoped that dodging a bullet would have served as a wake-up call to our team but the next night against USC we were outplayed and only a few players had the type of effort and focus needed to earn a spot in the Final Four.

The lessons that we needed to learn have been identified and now it will depend on the players to make a committed effort to improve in the necessary areas. I feel that we could have done a little bit more as a staff and maybe if we had just.....

I'll save the rest for the banquet and wish all of our devoted fans and supporters a happy and healthy holiday season.

Coach Rose

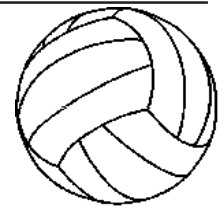
On the Road in the Big Ten

[by Doug O'Neal]

Over Thanksgiving (later this week, as I write this), I'm heading west to see Penn State's matches at Illinois and Purdue. They'll be the fourth and fifth road Big Ten matches I've attended this season. My current location in Western Pennsylvania gives me the opportunity to travel to see these matches against some of our Big Ten opponents.

Inside

Banquet Information
Nominating Committee Report
Coaches Corner
Booster Club Information
Traveling with the Team
Big Ten
2000 Penn State Women's Volleyball Results



On a Friday in early October, I left work after teaching my last class, and started the nearly seven-hour drive to East Lansing. Upon arrival, I had dinner with four MSU boosters whom I'd gotten to know on-line, through our Big Ten volleyball e-mail list. This included Miguel Ballicora, a Michigan State biochemistry professor who does computer rankings for Division I volleyball teams. Before the match that night, he had the honor of escorting one MSU player onto the court during "Faculty Appreciation Night". It was Miguel's tenth wedding anniversary, but both he and his wife preferred to start the night at the volleyball match. For the match, I sat with a group of about ten Penn State fans. The Spartan volleyball team plays in the old Jenison Fieldhouse, where Magic Johnson played basketball in the late 70's. The match didn't start out well for the Lions, but after losing the first game, our play improved and we won in four. The MSU boosters I'd met were gracious in the loss.

Soon I was off to my motel in Jackson, Michigan, an hour south of Lansing (and an hour west of the next day's match in Ann Arbor). Arriving in Ann Arbor in mid-morning, I walked around town, shopped at some bookstores, and met with another on-line friend who would accompany me to the match. Michigan's home court is a converted natatorium that has seats on only three sides and holds only about 1500 people. For this match, the attendance was only around 700 after seeing some of the other home courts in our conference,

I have a better understanding of Penn State's home court advantage in Rec Hall. Before the match, I talked with Gary Pittenger, another member of our Big Ten fans' e-mail list and father of one of the State came back to win in the fifth. I arrived home (Washington, PA) at 3am after a five-hour drive. My late night trips back

from volleyball matches definitely cut down on my Sunday morning church attendance in the fall!

Two weeks later, I went to Penn State's match in Columbus against Ohio State. From my home in Washington, it's actually a slightly shorter trip there than to Penn State. When I got there, I found that practically every highway in Columbus is under construction, making travel in and around the city that much harder. The Buckeyes play in the spacious and historic St. John Arena, where they played basketball until only a couple years ago.

Pictures of their old basketball teams including the 1960 national champions, featuring a guy named Bob Knight still adorn the walls of the concourse. The capacity of St. John is about the same as that of the Bryce Jordan Center, but at St. John the upper deck is almost right on top of the lower. Again I met with a member of our Big Ten e-mail list, in this case the OSU sports information assistant for volleyball, D. C. Koehl. We had a small Penn State rooting section, including Erin Iceman's parents. The Lions and Buckeyes split the first two games, then PSU fought off a game point to win an intense, nerve-wracking third game, 16-14.

The Lions would win in five games again, my trip was more than rewarded with an exciting match. Before I left, D.C. gave me a printout of the match stats. This time, I arrived back home a little before 1am.

This is the first year I've been to a Big Ten road match at any place other than Ohio State.

Depending on how my job search goes, I may not have much of an opportunity in the future so I'm glad I

traveled to these matches this year. This coming weekend (Thanksgiving), I'm staying with my friend Alex Richman, who first introduced me to PSU volleyball and who recently started working at Purdue. I'm looking forward to two more exciting matches though hopefully not so exciting as the tense five-game thrillers I witnessed before.

Doug O'Neal

Nominating Committee Report

[by Lynn]

The nominating committee has completed filling the slate of officers for election at the annual meeting in January.

As follows:

President	Dwight Tothero
Vice President	Anne Ard
Secretary	Shelly Aina
Treasurer	Linda Echard

We had a large number of people to select from that were either suggested to us by others or by people who declared their interest in serving. I sincerely believe that organizing task committees will be very successful since we had so many volunteers.

Thanks,
Lynn Palmer

Annual Banquet Information

Date, Time and Location Set

The banquet is being held at the Elks Country Club in State College on Jan 20 starting at 5:30. Nominations will be held at 5:00.

Coming in Upcoming Newsletters

Notes from the Field

Interviews with Lauren Cacciamani and Teri Zemitis
Coach's Corner
New Officers Information

Big Ten vs. Other Conferences 2000

Doug O'Neal (Big Ten in NCAAs in parentheses)

MAC	15-0	(1-0)
Big East	14-0	(1-0)
C-USA	11-0	(1-0)
America East	5-0	
Patriot Lg.	4-0	(1-0)
Big South	3-0	
Big Sky	2-0	
MCC	2-0	
TAAC	2-0	
OVC	2-0	
Northeast	2-0	(1-0)
SWAC	1-0	
Ivy Lg.	1-0	
MAAC	1-0	
Midw. Col.	4-1	(1-0)
MVC	7-2	(1-0)
SEC	7-2	
Mtn. West	3-1	(1-0)
ACC	4-2	
Atlantic 10	2-1	
Colonial	2-1	(1-0)
West Coast	1-1	
Pac 10	5-7	(4-3)
Big West	2-3	(0-1)
Big 12	3-6	(1-2)
WAC	1-2	

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Address Service Requested

LET'S GO LIONS!