
THE SERVICE LINE

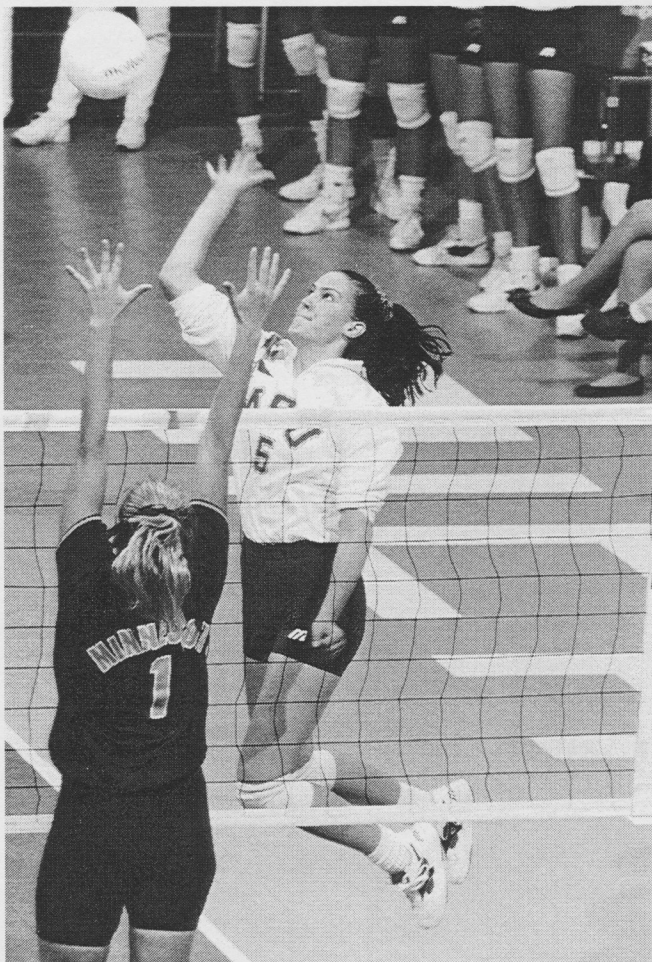
Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club

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Cooke Named NCAA Player of the Week

Spartans 21-1, Undefeated in the Big Ten!



Dana Cooke, National Division I Player of the Week

MSU has finished the first half of the Big Ten volleyball season in stellar fashion, with back-to-back victories over Ohio State and Penn State, their main rivals for the conference title. The Spartans have held onto first place for the entire season, with a perfect 10-0 record, losing only four games along the way.

To cap it off, Dana Cooke was named NCAA National Division I Player of the Week for her outstanding performance. This is the first time an MSU player has earned this honor. Dana achieved a coveted triple double in statistics in the Penn State match with double figures in three categories, (19 kills, 12 blocks, and 21 digs). The night before she was just one block shy of the same feat, contributing 19 kills, 18 digs, and 9 blocks. She hit an average of .408 for the two matches, which is especially impressive coming at the expense of the 7th and 11th ranked teams in the country.

The superlatives go on and on. The Spartans are now ranked number 5 in both national polls. They have a record of 5-1 against Top-25 teams. The 10 Big Ten victories are the most ever for MSU in a season, as well as their longest Big Ten winning streak. They have won 15 consecutive matches, which is their longest streak since 1976. (For trivia buffs, 1976 was the year that MSU won the then-unofficial Big Ten title, but were eliminated from the national playoffs by Southern California. USC went on to win the national title that year, under the direction of first-year head coach Chuck Erbe.)

After Saturday's victory over Penn State produced a two-match lead for first place, Chuck said "I can't say I was ever more proud of a team. It was a total team effort tonight.", but warned "This is only the first half of

CONTENTS

Cooke Named NCAA Player of the Week	1
Team Notes	2
The New Attitude	2
Rules Changes	3
Big Ten Live TV Update	4
Volleyball on the Internet	5
SideOut Club Report	7

the Big Ten. They realize that other teams will be out to get them now."

This was the first time any team has swept a trip to the home courts of OSU and PSU. It also ended a 22-match home winning streak for Penn State.

Team Notes

Jenna Wrobel was named Big Ten Player of the Week on October 16th for her performance against Wisconsin and Minnesota the previous weekend. She will be a strong candidate for Big Ten (or even National) Freshman Player of the Year.

The starting time for two of MSU's home matches has been changed to 8pm. The November 18th match against Ohio State was switched because it will be televised live on SportsChannel. The Illinois match on November 4th was changed because of a late 3:30 start for the home football game that day.

Jenny Whitehead has been troubled by continuing problems with her hitting shoulder. This started while she was playing high school and juniors competition. She will be undergoing surgery October 26th to correct a shoulder impingement. She has been given red-shirt status for this season.

Courtney DeBolt celebrates her 21st birthday on October 25, the day of the Michigan match.

The Service Line

MSU SideOut Club

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

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The New Attitude

Every team has its own character, partly determined by the coaches, and partly by the players themselves. The following is a random sampling of observations on what's different about this year's Spartans.

Intense and Athletic on the Court

Every player on the team moves with a purpose and authority. Their confidence is partly based on physical dominance—you can see that many of the players are much stronger physically than they were last year. This may be due to individual resolve, intra-team competition for starting positions, or possibly the work of strength coach Steve Morgan.

But in addition, the Spartans are mentally and emotionally dominating their opponents. This is especially encouraging in a team that is up and coming. Many teams in that situation are able to win the easy matches, but tend to break down when the pressure is applied by a more experienced team. Such breakdowns have been rare for MSU this season.

In the mental aspect of the game, the team benefitted tremendously from their trip to Japan. Training with the Daiei club team was a whole new experience for them, according to Chuck Erbe. "We learned by example from their discipline and intensity. This was outstanding preparation for NCAA competition."

The self-assurance of the team is even apparent to new viewers of the sport. One such spectator said after the Wisconsin match "MSU's players are just amazing on the court; they completely out-classed the Badgers. It's thrilling to watch such awesome athletes."

Limited Substitutions

Last year, we got used to seeing players shuttling on and off the court at every MSU sideout. Chuck brought specialists in for back row coverage, tried out several players on the left side, as well as experimenting occasionally in the middle. Since the Big Ten season started this year, that's all changed. With one exception, the six starters have been staying in for the entire match. The exception comes when

Sarah Blakely or Julie Pavlus comes in for Corie Richard in the back row. In long matches, substitutions may stop entirely, with Corie remaining to play both front and back row after her third entry. (Starting players may leave the game and return only twice. If they leave a third time, they may not re-enter.)

The obvious disadvantage to this reliance on fewer players is that the non-starters don't get match experience. However, Chuck claims that until the trip to Ohio State and Penn State, both the starters and non-starters had found their intra-team practice matches to be more demanding than those against their opponents.

Val Plays Back Row

One of the reasons for the reduction in substitutions is that Val Sterk is now playing both front and back rows, and doing a great job of it. She ranks third in digs among MSU players, and fifteenth in the Big Ten. Val has already demonstrated her mastery of hitting and blocking, so it's wonderful to see her increase her versatility. Not incidentally, expertise in all facets of the game increases her viability as an All-America candidate.

Evenly Balanced, More Varied Offense

In 1994, Veronica Morales got 30 percent of the team's sets, considerably more than the 22 percent that went to the players who shared the other left-side position (Andrea Pollard, Amy Schloss, Sarah Smith). This year Morales is down to 23 percent of the sets, while Jenna Wrobel gets the attack opportunity 25 percent of the time. This balance in the attack is indicative of a stronger overall team.

We're also seeing a greater variety of plays this season. The slides, quick shoots, and combination plays are making things interesting. In addition, players are attacking from places other than their usual spot along the net. Corie Richard may hit from the middle on one play, and then crush one from the right side on the next play. This is keeping the opponents guessing as to who will be hitting the ball from where.

A lot of credit for this must go to Courtney DeBolt who is providing great leadership for the team in her

senior year. Courtney and the team really showed their adaptability in the Ohio State match, where the OSU block managed to shut down both of MSU's outside hitters. To counter this, Courtney found the openings in the center of the court and wound up setting almost as often to her middles (76 attempts) as to the outside (86 attempts), a very unusual situation.

The other players have made Courtney's job easier by improving their passing. One reflection of this is that while 1994 saw the Spartans averaging more than 2 service-reception errors per game, the average has been reduced to 1.4 this year.

Winning on the Road

For at least the last five years the Spartans have had significantly better Big Ten records at home than on the road. Last year, for example, they were 6-4 at home, but only 3-7 away from home. This year's team has shown they don't care where they're playing. This season's victories over Illinois and Penn State were the first ever for the Spartans on those teams' home courts, and the win over Ohio State was their first at Columbus since 1976.

This ability is really a surprise in a "Cinderella" team. It's easy for a team to muster all of their newly developed skills when playing on a familiar court in front of a friendly crowd. It takes another level of determination to come back from 12-13 in a rally-scoring fifth game to win a match in front of an arena full of cheering Penn State fans.

Rules Changes

Many fans don't realize it, but NCAA women's volleyball plays under rules formulated by the National Association for Girls' and Women's Sports (NAGWS). While these rules generally follow the international (FIVB) and national (USAV) rules, there are sometimes interesting differences.

Some significant rules changes were put into effect in the last two years, but, since they affect uncommon situations, most fans haven't noticed them. The changes are intended primarily to keep the ball in play longer by legalizing plays that would have been rules

violations in the past.

Players are now allowed to play the ball with any part of the body above and including the knee. The ball is also allowed to hit a player below the knee, as long as the contact is unintentional. A ball that accidentally bounces off a player's foot is still in play, but if the referee thinks a player intentionally kicked the ball, it will be whistled as a fault. The other rules bodies have gone even farther, allowing intentional play of the ball with the foot or lower leg, but the NAGWS wasn't ready to encourage soccer-style play.

A player may now have "insignificant" contact with the net, provided the player was not involved in an attempt to play the ball. A hitter going up for a fake and a blocker jumping to defend a fake are specifically defined as attempting to play the ball, even though the ball may be set elsewhere along the net. This change is intended to apply to cases such as a player near the net turning around to see play at the back of the court, and accidentally swinging an elbow into the net in the process.

A ball that contacts an object above the court now remains playable, unless the ball continues from the object to the opponent's court or the team has used all of its three hits. Given the height of the ceiling in Jenison, we aren't likely to see any of these plays!

The "rally point" scoring method will be used for the fifth game of a match. This was previously optional, so unless both coaches wanted rally scoring, standard scoring was used.

The NAGWS has another optional rule this year, allowing the server to stand anywhere behind the end line, as in outdoor play. Since the rule is optional, if either coach elects not to play the rule, it will not be used. It will be used in the 1996 NCAA women's playoff rounds and finals, so we are more likely to see coaches opting for this rule next year.

In addition to the above rule changes, the FIVB and USAV have made the most dramatic change of all, one the NAGWS has not yet adopted. This allows multiple contacts (a "double hit") of the ball during a

team's first play of the ball, even if the player uses his or her fingers. This means referees will allow players to use a setting motion to receive the serve or to play any attack from the opponents. It is still illegal to carry the ball. The intent of this rule was supposedly to promote longer rallies by allowing defensive players more latitude in covering difficult hits.

This rule has been in effect for several months on the international circuit, and reports from some of those matches indicate that many teams are already taking full advantage of it. U.S. fans are having trouble adapting to it, issuing collective groans at some of the formerly illegal hits that are now allowed. Unless the FIVB and USAV repeal this change, we can expect to see it in women's college matches within a few years.

Big Ten Live TV Update

There have now been several matches played under the experimental scoring format adopted by the Big Ten for live TV. While it has been a success in getting our favorite game on television, everyone seems to agree that the format needs at least some fine tuning, and perhaps a complete overhaul.

One flaw was uncovered in the very first match, when Penn State intentionally served the ball out just as the clock ran out in the last game of the match. At the time, Penn State was losing the match, but the score of the third game was tied. Ending that game with a tie forced an overtime under the new rules, giving Penn State two minutes to possibly score enough points to win the overall match. They were unable to do so, but it was clear that the rules should not have mandated an overtime under the circumstances.

This was followed two nights later by MSU's blowout of Illinois. Here, the clock allowed MSU to amass what must have been the largest winning margin (44 points) in any major collegiate volleyball match.

MSU's home match against Ohio State on November 18 will be televised live, so local fans will have the chance to evaluate the new format first-hand.

Volleyball on the Internet

As a volleyball fan, have you been frustrated by the lack of coverage of the sport in the mass media? You subscribe to Volleyball magazine, and read it in one sitting the day it arrives. You scan the State Journal, USA Today, and the State News for the occasional article or match results. You study the TV listings to make sure you don't miss the Stanford-UCLA matchup that's on at 3:00 in the morning. Don't you wish you had access to as much information on your favorite sport as the average football fan does?

Well now your options have expanded, and the delivery medium for all this, as you might have guessed, is the Internet. The oldest of these resources is a news group, while the newest are the many Web servers that are popping up everywhere.

Everybody's Talking About...Volleyball

If interaction is what you want, the place to start is the Usenet news group rec.sport.volleyball (or "rsv"). A news group provides a place for those interested in a particular subject to discuss that subject by "posting" messages electronically and responding to messages from other participants. If you're not inspired to speak up, you can just read what everyone else has to say.

rsv typically has 50 messages per day about all aspects of the game. The focus is primarily on the United States, but there are participants from all around the world, including Italy, Australia, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and other countries.

The discussions tend to change by season, and naturally in the fall the main topic is the college women's game. Fans from some schools post messages describing their team's matches in great detail, trying to analyze why they won or lost. Others just post scores, but they do it immediately after the finish of the match, making rsv occasionally the fastest way to find out a result. There is friendly (and sometimes not-so-friendly) debate about the merits of certain teams, players, and coaches.

In the spring and summer the beach game dominates, and again rsv can often be the fastest way to find out

the results of the weekend's AVP tournament. All year long there is talk about the U.S. national teams, questions on the finer points of volleyball rules, and debate on where the sport is headed.

Since many of the participants are players, topics also include the elements of specific skills and techniques, strategies of play, conditioning and fitness, as well as players looking for teams to join or places to play.

If you read rsv often enough, you're sure to catch some messages from familiar names. From the college ranks we have heard from coach Mike Hebert of Illinois. Players who sometimes contribute include Scott Fortune of the U.S. men's team, Angela Rock of the WPVA, Doug Foust of the AVP, and Dan Hanan of the four-man beach tour. John Kessel of USA Volleyball is prolific at keeping us up-to-date on all sorts of news from USAV and FIVB. Eric Nashbar of Spike Nashbar and C.C. Sandorfi, editor of Volleyball magazine, represent the more commercial side. Rules interpretations are provided by national referees Wally Hendricks and Rob Peglar.

As with all news groups, some of the messages will be of no interest at all, but the true volleyball junkie will find rsv to be mostly fascinating.

Serving It Up...on the World-Wide Web

Of course the hot ticket these days is the World-Wide Web, and you don't have to look far to find volleyball on the Web. If you have an Internet connection, a Web browser and enough time to look around, you can probably find a hundred or more "servers" or "pages" with information on volleyball. They range from dry, official sites with pre-packaged info such as schedules and scores, to quirky personal pages that give you surprises at every turn.

To get an idea of how the Web is changing communications, consider the following: Stanford women's volleyball posts live real-time reports of all their home matches via their Web server! Those who connected to the Stanford page (<http://athletics.stanford.edu/varsity/women/vb/current.html>) on Friday October 20 could follow the scoring in the Stanford-UCLA match as it happened. There is no

play-by-play, but statistics are posted, so after the second game ended you knew that Stanford had held UCLA to a .000 hitting percentage for that game.

Now this might rightly be categorized as a pointless exercise in technology. It's hard to imagine anyone actually "watching" that page for the duration of the entire match. On the other hand, it's phenomenal to realize that an organization can now provide this kind of information instantaneously worldwide at low cost to anyone who wants access to it.

The following will give you an idea of the variety of volleyball pages that can be found on the Web. Each of the pages mentioned has links to many other related pages, so there is lots more to discover than what can be covered here.

Volleyball WorldWide (<http://www.volleyball.org/>)

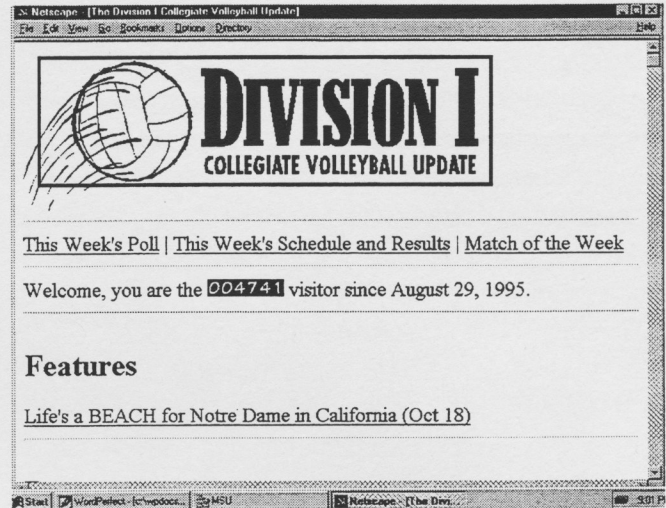
This should definitely be your starting place on the Web. Volleyball WorldWide was created in 1994 by Tom Jack, a software engineer at Hewlett-Packard in Cupertino CA. He works in cooperation with USAV, the AVP, WPVA, and others to provide a comprehensive resource on the sport of volleyball. If Volleyball WorldWide doesn't have what you're looking for, you'll probably be able to find it on one of the links from its pages.

USA Today Women's College Volleyball

(<http://www.usatoday.com/sports/other/sowvbn.htm>) This page seems to be updated only once per week, but you can find news here you won't get anywhere else. For example, the update for October 16 told us that six of the top seven ranked teams (including MSU) had blanked their opponents the previous week, posting records of 6-0 in games won. MSU was mentioned two additional times, including the new attendance record set on October 14. USA Today has links that let you see the national rankings for Division I, II and III, individual statistics leaders, team statistics, and much more.

The Division I Collegiate Volleyball Update

(<http://www.tpoint.net/Users/rdise/VolleyPage.html>) This site nicely complements the USA Today site. Its version of the coaches poll has hot links to any of the



ranked universities that have their own volleyball home pages. It also has a featured match of the week that is covered in some detail, and the schedule for televised matches.

The Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Page

(<http://szygy.math.ufl.edu/~sfm/ACL/acl.html>)

This isn't really a volleyball page, but it demonstrates how the Web encourages jumps that lead you to unexpected subjects. The ACL Page was created by a volleyball player who suffered his second torn ACL, and wanted to find out all he could before deciding whether and how to have it repaired. The page has an amazing 35 links to sites that contain medical information related to knee injuries, including diagrams of knee structure showing what the ACL does and how it can be reconstructed. There are also stories from 25 people who have had ACL injuries

Volleyball Southern California Style

(<http://pages.prodigy.com/CA/zuma2/index.html>)

Visit this site for a lighter view of volleyball. While it does have serious content about California high school volleyball (its creator, Tom Fakehany, is a high school official), there's also plenty of the Southern California touch, with links to pages for Baywatch, the Simpsons, the Eagles, and California earthquake data.

This is just a small sampling of what you can find on the Internet when you start exploring. There's no longer any reason to let the commercial media restrict your news about volleyball.

SideOut Club Report

Spartan Volleyball Banquet

This season is obviously going to be extremely successful, no matter what happens from here on out. Please plan now to celebrate the team's accomplishments at the Spartan Volleyball Banquet on Sunday, January 28, 1996 at 1:00pm in the banquet rooms of the Breslin Center. Details on reservations and ticket prices will be released soon.

SideOut Club Annual Meeting

The SideOut Club also holds its annual membership meeting immediately following the Spartan Volleyball Banquet. On the agenda is the election of Board members for terms expiring in 1999 and a report from the Board on activities for the year. This is also the chance for members to speak up about any subject that is on their minds. Please be sure to attend; the success of a club such as ours depends on the energy and participation of its members.

Board of Directors

Twelve members, each elected for a term of three years. The current Board members are:

Dianna Kaplinski (term expiring '97)	President
Bob Alim-Young ('97)	Vice-President
Cathy Caswell ('97)	Treasurer
Chris Wolf ('97)	Secretary
Tim Chamness ('96)	
Jim Constandt ('96)	
Sandy Kilbourn ('98)	
Kim Maylee ('96)	
Dean McCracken ('98)	
David Pike ('98)	
John Salmons ('98)	
vacancy ('96)	

Membership

Club membership for our first year, the 1994-95 season, reached 42, of which half were family

memberships, and half were individual memberships.

Membership is steadily increasing for 1995-96, reaching 56 memberships by mid-October. More than half are now family memberships, and we have just received our first lifetime membership.

Finances

Summary for Year Ending June 30, 1995

Revenue	
Membership dues	\$1155.00
Merchandise sales	671.00
Spartan Volleyball Banquet tickets	430.00
Credit Union dividends	15.17
Total revenue	\$2271.17
Expenditures	
Player award plaques	\$275.00
Office supplies, copying, postage	93.39
Contribution to Ralph Young Fund	500.00
Cost of goods sold	300.00
Banquet room rental	150.00
Credit Union fees	12.00
Check printing	27.00
Total expenditures	\$1357.39
Ending Balance	\$913.78

1994-95 was our first year as an organized club, so we started small, with reasonable goals and manageable projects. This is reflected in our budget.

For 1995-96, revenues are up significantly, primarily from increased sales of merchandise. The Club expanded from selling only T-shirts last year to include several designs of sweatshirts, as well as baseball caps. We expect to have a raffle license shortly, and will be conducting 50/50 raffles at selected home volleyball matches as another major fund raiser.

The Club's monetary contributions to the volleyball program last year were the purchase of player award plaques and a donation of \$500 to the Ralph Young Fund to support the team's trip to Japan. We expect to do much more in 1995-96.

1995 Schedule and Results

9/2	W	BAYLOR	15-4, 14-16, 15-11, 15-10	10/20	W	Ohio State	15-10, 5-15, 15-10, 15-13
	W	BOWLING GREEN	15-6, 15-10, 17-15	10/21	W	Penn State	14-16, 15-6, 15-10, 13-15, 16-14
9/3	W	ILLINOIS STATE	15-13, 12-15, 15-11, 15-3	10/25		MICHIGAN	
	W	SAN DIEGO STATE	15-7, 15-8, 11-15, 15-8	10/27		IOWA	
9/8	W	Hofstra	15-12, 15-9, 15-7	10/28		LOUISVILLE	
	W	San Jose State	15-12, 15-3, 15-3	11/3		INDIANA	
9/9	L	Long Beach	3-15, 15-8, 12-15, 15-10, 13-15	11/4		ILLINOIS	
	W	UC Santa Barbara	15-10, 17-15, 15-9	11/10		@Minnesota	
9/15	W	MARYLAND	15-2, 15-3, 15-13	11/11		@Wisconsin	
	W	CLEVELAND STATE	15-3, 15-4, 15-5	11/17		PENN STATE	
	W	SOUTH CAROLINA	15-1, 15-1, 15-10	11/18		OHIO STATE	
9/20	W	CENTRAL MICHIGAN	15-4, 15-9, 15-2	11/24		@Purdue	
9/22	W	NORTHWESTERN	15-4, 15-6, 15-5	11/25		@Northwestern	
9/23	W	PURDUE	15-8, 15-4, 15-2				
9/27	W	Michigan	15-5, 15-6, 15-13	11/29		NCAA 1st round	
9/30	W	Iowa	15-5, 15-9, 15-17, 15-8	12/2		NCAA 2nd round	
10/6	W	Illinois	21-9, 19-5, 22-4	12/8-9		NCAA Regionals	
10/7	W	Indiana	15-3, 15-7, 15-12	12/14-16		NCAA Championships	
10/13	W	WISCONSIN	15-4, 15-1, 15-11			University of Massachusetts	
10/14	W	MINNESOTA	15-7, 15-7, 15-5				

MSU SideOut Club
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