
THE SERVICE LINE

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club

Vol. IV No. 5

March 1999

Big Ten Coaching Spots in Transition

Laura Farina Leaves for Marquette

There were some surprise volleyball coaching changes throughout the Big Ten conference following the end of the 1998 season.

Here at home, MSU's assistant coach Laura Farina moved into the ranks of Division I head coaches by accepting a position at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Laura replaces Tat Shiely who retired in November after having served as the only head coach in the 24-year history of the Marquette volleyball program. A particular distinguishment of Shiely's tenure is that all but two of the players she recruited during that time completed their bachelor's degrees. The Golden Eagles play in Conference USA, with such schools as Louisville and Houston. They have played against MSU twice, with both victories going to the Spartans.

The former Laura Bush came to MSU in 1993 as Chuck Erbe's second-assistant coach. Chuck was well acquainted with Laura since she played at Illinois during the time that he was an assistant coach for the Illini. In 1994 Laura was named MSU's first-assistant coach, a position which she held for five years. She focused on training the Spartans' middle

hitters, playing a key role in developing the talents of All-Americans Val Sterk and Dana Cooke. She also spent a large part of her time on recruiting activities. Laura is married to John Farina, an assistant director of sports information for MSU.

All Spartan fans wish the best for Laura—perhaps we'll see her back here with her new team for a match some day.

Cook Takes Associate Position at Nebraska

Another Big Ten coaching change was of national interest, because it involved two Division I powers. John Cook, after seven years as head coach at Wisconsin, accepted a position as associate coach to Terry Pettit at the University of Nebraska.

Cook had tremendous success at Wisconsin, guiding the Badgers to top-ten national rankings and a share of the Big Ten title in 1997. Wisconsin has also been an attendance leader, ranking as high as the top five in the nation during Cook's tenure. The national championships were held in Madison in 1993 and 1998, setting new attendance records both times.

It's very unusual for a coach to leave a head position for a lower level job, but it's even more surprising at a major national program. Apparently Cook felt that after all he had done, the administration at Wisconsin was not giving enough support to the volleyball program. In addition, Nebraska offered him \$90,000 per year, a raise of more than \$20,000 from his head coaching salary at Wisconsin.

Note that his new position is designated "associate" coach rather than assistant, which is unusual in itself. At his press conference, Cook implied that he would eventually be named head coach at Nebraska, when Pettit decides to step down. Pettit himself was unwilling to be specific, saying he has no immediate plans for retirement.

Before taking the reins at Wisconsin, Cook was

CONTENTS

Big Ten Coaching Spots in Transition	1
Laura Farina Leaves for Marquette	1
Tournament Set for April 10...	2
...Along With Annual Meeting	3
Banquet Wraps Up the Season	3
MSU Signs Canadian Star	3
Big Ten Considers Wednesday Matches	4
Team Notes	4
Scoring Changes Forestalled One More Year . . .	5
Volunteer Opportunity—Apply Now!	5
Tentative 1999 Schedule	6

Pettit's assistant at Nebraska from 1988 to 1991. The two have remained good friends, and continued talking several times per week even after becoming rivals. Cook, his wife Wendy (a two-time All America setter at San Diego State) and their two children are looking forward to moving to Nebraska.

Giovanazzi Retires for Medical Reasons

Also unexpected was the resignation of Greg Giovanazzi, head coach at the University of Michigan. Giovanazzi cited a neurological disorder as he stepped down after seven seasons at U of M.

"Concluding my tenure at Michigan is a personal sacrifice that I had to make", Giovanazzi said with regret. "However, at this point I am going to pursue my personal health with the same passion and commitment with which I coached."

Giovanazzi was hired in 1992 with the hopes of building Michigan volleyball into a nationally ranked program. In spite of his efforts, the program faced an uphill battle, and continued to be hampered by an inability to attract top-rank players. His team's greatest success came in 1997 when the Wolverines tied for third in the Big Ten and made their first NCAA tournament appearance.

On February 1, Mark Rosen took over as the new Wolverine coach. Rosen may be somewhat familiar to Spartan fans, as he was the head coach at Northern Michigan from 1994 to 1997. His team won the Division II national championship in 1994,

and he was named National Coach of the Year by Asics/Volleyball Magazine. His teams won their conference championship all four years and made four consecutive final-four appearances. In 1998 he moved to Division I at Boise State, where he led the school to their best conference record since joining the Big West.

In an unusual arrangement, Rosen's wife Leisa will be his assistant at U of M, as she was at Boise State.

These coaching changes leave Chuck Erbe as one of the old-timers in the conference. Only Russ Rose (20 years at Penn State) and Jim Stone (17 years at Ohio State) have longer tenure in the Big Ten.

Tournament Set for April 10...

MSU will play host to five visiting volleyball teams on Saturday April 10 for a spring scrimmage tournament. Play starts at 10:00 am, and is expected to finish by 5:00 pm. The participants for this year's tournament will include Notre Dame, the University of Michigan, Western Michigan, Central Michigan, and the Dead Frog juniors team. The morning schedule is as follows:

	Court 1	Court 2
10 am	MSU vs. Dead Frog	ND vs. U-M
11 am	WMU vs. Dead Frog	CMU vs. U-M
12 noon	MSU vs. WMU	ND vs. CMU

After morning play, power pools will be formed, with the top three teams on Court 1, and the others on Court 2, according to the following schedule:

	Court 1	Court 2
1:30 pm	1 vs. 3	4 vs. 6
2:45 pm	2 vs. 3	5 vs. 6
4 pm	1 vs. 2	4 vs. 5

The match format will differ slightly between the morning and afternoon sessions. What the matches will have in common:

- Two-out-of-three format

The Service Line

©1999 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

Newsletter Editor: Chris Wolf (517) 332-4353
President: Dave Martz (517) 521-4907
Vice-president: Jenny Bond (517) 676-2676
Secretary: Joy Jacobs (517) 675-5590
Treasurer: Jim Ellis (517) 323-3566

MSU SideOut Club, P.O. Box 80491, Lansing MI 48908
Email: jimandeileenellis@prodigy.net
Web site: kurtz.tcimet.net/sideout

- Rally scoring
- Back row kills earn two points
- Unlimited substitutions

In addition, for the morning:

- First two games to 25 points; tie-breaker to 15
- May win by one point
- Teams do not change sides of the court

And, for the power pools:

- Games are timed, with 5:30 for the first two games and 3:00 for the tie-breaker
- Clock starts when the serve is passed and stops with the whistle

...Along With Annual Meeting

The SideOut Club will hold its annual meeting for all members in conjunction with the spring scrimmage tournament on April 10. The meeting is scheduled for 12:45 pm, and the Club will provide members with a free lunch at the meeting.

The Spartans are scheduled to play at 12 noon, so the lunch and meeting will immediately follow the end of the match.

The major item on the agenda will be the annual election of four Board members. Any Club members who are interested in running for a seat on the Board are welcome to nominate themselves. If you have questions about the election or about service on the Board, please contact president Dave Martz at (517) 521-4907.

Banquet Wraps Up the Season

At the 1999 Michigan State Volleyball Banquet on January 24 at Hawk Hollow Golf Course, fans had their chance to say goodbye to three seniors who have played their last match for the Spartans.

While Kelly Penney and Jennifer Stroffe have made important contributions to MSU volleyball, the day clearly belonged to Jenna Wrobel. In an unscheduled moment, master of ceremonies Tim Berkey paid her an impromptu tribute, expressing how much he would miss watching her play. Jenna is certainly the most spectacular player to grace

MSU's court and we may not soon see anything to match her high-flying, hard-hitting form.



Jennifer Stroffe, Chuck Erbe, Jenna Wrobel and Kelly Penney at the 1999 volleyball banquet
Photo: Jack Carmichael

Awards presented at the banquet included:

- L&L Most Valuable Player Jenna Wrobel
- Andrea DeLuca Spirit Award Tammy Vonderheide
- Hitting Efficiency Sarah Gustin
- Captain's Award Jenna Wrobel
- Top GPA Sarah Gustin
- SideOut Club Service Award Andy Kurtz

Andy Kurtz received the Club's service award for his volunteer efforts in the creation and continued maintenance of the MSU SideOut Club web site <<http://kurtz.tcimet.net/sideout>>. It's not uncommon for fans or booster groups to have unofficial web sites for their teams, but Andy's goes well beyond the typical site. Congratulations Andy, and thanks for the hard work!

MSU Signs Canadian Star

Kyla Smith, a 5-11 outside hitter from British Columbia, has signed on to play volleyball for the Spartans. Kyla is an honors student at Highland Senior Secondary, and was named the British Columbia female athlete of the year for three consecutive years. Her club team, Powell River Volleyball Club, won the British Columbia Club Championship in 1998. She also spent some time playing on the Canadian junior national team.

Chuck says "She is a tremendous natural athlete with a long and varied sports background." Kyla lives on an 800-acre dairy farm in Comox on Vancouver Island. In addition to volleyball, she competed for a number of years as a gymnast. Her father was an Olympic rower in 1972 and 1976 for Canada.

Big Ten Considers Wednesday/ Saturday Schedule

Usually in this issue we give you the complete Spartan volleyball schedule for fall, but things are still up in the air this year. The Big Ten has not been able to fill out its calendar because the conference is considering a major change in scheduling.

Under the proposed plan, volleyball would be played on Wednesday and Saturday nights instead of the traditional Friday/Saturday arrangement. Each team would play one match at home and one match away every week. Matches against one's traveling partner would be played on Fridays, while both Fridays and Sundays could be used in case of facilities conflicts or for purposes of television.

The Big 12 conference has already approved a Wednesday/Saturday schedule for 1999.

Chuck explained the advantages of this schedule as follows:

- The athletes will have more time for rest and recovery between matches.
- The coaches and team will be better able to prepare for each opponent by concentrating on only one upcoming match at a time.
- Fans will be able to count on a consistent schedule of one home match every week.
- There will be fewer conflicts on campus with basketball and hockey, and no more competition with Friday night high school football.

The Big Ten coaches voted 10-0 in favor of this schedule, with Penn State not voting. This was followed a few weeks later by a vote of the senior women administrators, who approved it 7-4. The nay votes came from the schools located on the geographic fringes of the conference, probably because they would incur the greatest additional

travel expenses.

The definitive vote from the Big Ten athletic directors should come very soon, perhaps by the time you read this.

Team Notes

Another Departure

Jenny Whitehead has played her last season as a Spartan. She is completing her bachelor's degree in exercise science this year and expects to continue in a master's degree program at another university.

Since she red-shirted her freshman year, she will have one year of playing eligibility left, and she is looking at some schools with top volleyball programs. If she finds a spot on another team, the move will be just like what Jennifer Stroffe did in coming to MSU for her graduate studies in 1998.

Filling the Coaching Vacancy

MSU's assistant coaching position was advertised nationally following Laura Farina's departure in late January. The position closed in mid-February and the evaluation of candidates began.

One applicant who was invited to campus to interview has previous experience with Spartan volleyball. That candidate is Todd Dagenais, who was a volunteer coach at MSU during the 1997-98 season. He was Vicki Basil's coach both at Bay City Central High School and the Valley Volleyball juniors team, guiding both teams to championships.

Tammy Named Captain

Senior outside hitter Tammy Vonderheide has been selected by her teammates as the Spartan captain for 1999. Last year she shared this honor and responsibility with Jenna Wrobel and Jenny Whitehead.

Possible Spring Lineup

For the spring practice season, Chuck Erbe will rely on four of last season's starters plus four or more additional players to make up a core lineup. Christie Landry will continue as setter, with Sarah Gustin and Jessica Sanborn in the middle, and Erin Hartley on the left side. Tammy Vonderheide will be the other left-side hitter, and Maren Witzel will play opposite the setter. Lisa Ashton and Kayleen Cook will see

quite a bit of time in the back row.

Jenna To Join U.S. National Team

When Jenna Wrobel completes her degree in communications from MSU this spring, she may get a short break, but will then embark on a career in volleyball. She has been officially invited to join the U.S. national team, which is in desperate need of a dominant outside hitter of her caliber.

Other New Faces

In addition to the announced signing of Kyla Smith, at least two other players are expected to join the Spartans for the fall.

Kelly McDonald will have a number of fans puzzling over why she looks so familiar. That's because she was the team manager for the past season, her freshman year. She found it too difficult to watch from the sidelines, so has joined the squad as a walk-on. The other addition is Nicole Allen, a transfer player from Mott Community College. We'll tell you more about them in the next issue.

New Department Administrator

Michigan State Athletics announced the January appointment of Shelley Appelbaum as associate athletic director and senior woman administrator. She replaces Kathy Lindahl who was promoted to assistant vice-president for finance.

Appelbaum previously spent five years at Bowling Green State University, where she was most recently senior associate athletic director. She was a basketball player in college, and coached basketball at the college level for a number of years.

Among other duties, Appelbaum will oversee the Spartan volleyball program. Chuck Erbe expects her to be an excellent addition to the department's administration, and is looking forward to working with her. "Her experience as a coach is a huge benefit to us, since she is already familiar with the challenges that coaches face."

Scoring Changes Forestalled At Least One More Year

The decision-makers for women's collegiate volleyball are having a hard time agreeing about possible changes in scoring systems. A major

impetus for change is the assertion by sports programming executives that volleyball matches will not be televised live unless they can be made to fit consistently into a two-hour time slot.

In December, the Division I coaches considered the issue. What they recommended, by an overwhelming vote, was a two-out-of-three format that uses all rally scoring. The first two games would be played to 50 points, and the third game, if necessary, would be to 25. Their intent was to use this scoring for all matches, not just those that would be televised.

Earlier in the same meeting the coaches heard a proposal presented by Chuck Erbe that would control match length by using a clock. This was voted down by a substantial margin.

The next move came in late February, when the NCAA Women's Volleyball Committee voted against any scoring changes for the 1998 season. They felt they did not have enough information yet to be comfortable choosing between the multitude of possible formats. So, as in past years, teams will use their tournaments this spring to experiment with a variety of options, and we can expect to hear more about this in the future.

Volunteer Opportunity—Apply Now!

Are you a volleyball fan looking for a chance to use your creative side to help out the MSU volleyball program and the SideOut Club? If so, you should act fast, because your opportunity is here!

The SideOut Club is looking for a new editor/writer for the Club newsletter, to start with the publication of the August issue. I have enjoyed the challenges and rewards of the position for four years, but am now getting involved in additional volunteer activities that will make it difficult to devote enough time to the newsletter. I'm not dropping out entirely, and expect to be able to contribute occasional articles for the newsletter.

If you would like to apply your talents, energy and enthusiasm in this type of position, please contact the current editor or any officer, as listed on page 2.

Tentative 1999 Schedule

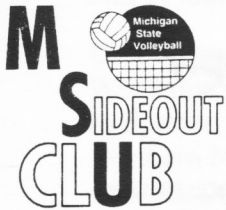
(All home matches are played in Jenison Field House)

9/3-4	L&L/MSU VOLLEYBALL CLASSIC	
Friday	MSU vs. Cleveland State	10:00 am
	Clemson vs. Texas A&M	12:00 noon
	Eastern Kentucky vs. Cleveland State	2:00 pm
	Texas A&M vs. Eastern Kentucky	6:00 pm
	MSU vs. Clemson	8:00 pm
Saturday	Eastern Kentucky vs. Clemson	9:00 am
	Texas A&M vs. Cleveland State	11:00 am
	MSU vs. Eastern Kentucky	1:00 pm
	Cleveland State vs. Clemson	6:00 pm
	MSU vs. Texas A&M	8:00 pm
9/10-11	University of Massachusetts Invitational @Amherst with New Hampshire, Seton Hall, Southern Mississippi, UMass	
9/17-18	Western Michigan Invitational @Kalamazoo with Depaul, Loyola, Niagara, Western Michigan	

Big Ten Schedule

To Be Determined

12/2-5	NCAA - 1st and 2nd Round
12/9-12	NCAA Regionals
12/16-18	NCAA Final Four in Honolulu, Hawai'i



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