
THE SERVICE LINE

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club
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Spartan Players Win Big Ten Honors

Gustin, Sanborn, Morley Chosen

Three MSU volleyball players were recognized by the Big Ten conference for their outstanding performances this season. Both **Sarah Gustin** and **Jessica Sanborn** were chosen for the All-Big-Ten Team. Sarah's award is noteworthy because she earned it as an outside hitter, after winning an honorable mention award last year as a middle blocker. **Angela Morley** was named to the All-Freshman Team, which was a new addition to the Big Ten post-season awards this year.

Lauren Cacciamani of Penn State was named Player of the Year, and she was joined by teammate Bonnie Bremner as the only unanimous selections to the all-conference team.

Penn State, Minnesota and Wisconsin each placed three players on the team, while MSU was the only squad with two selections.

The 1999 All-Big-Ten Volleyball Team

Bonnie Bremner, S, Penn State
Lauren Cacciamani, MB, Penn State
Nicole Branagh, OH, Minnesota
Sherisa Livingston, MB, Wisconsin
Betsy Spicer, MB, Illinois

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Lindsey Berg, S, Minnesota
Jenny Maastricht, OH, Wisconsin
Stephanie Hagen, MB, Minnesota
Sarah Gustin, OH, Michigan State
Jessica Sanborn, MB, Michigan State
Jen Flynn, OH, Ohio State
Katie Schumacher, OH, Penn State
Kelly Kennedy, MB, Wisconsin

Honorable Mention:

Ryann Connors, OH, Indiana; Rosie Snow, OH, Ohio State; Amanda Rome, OH, Penn State; Carrie Schonveld, OH, Penn State; Aneska Arosarena, OH, Purdue

All Freshman Team

Katie Virtue, S, Ohio State
Angela Morley, MB, Michigan State
Mishka Levy, MB, Penn State
Laurie Gardner, S, Indiana
Erin Byrd, OH, Wisconsin
Suzie Stiling, MB, Ohio State

Player of the Year

Lauren Cacciamani, MB, Penn State

Freshman of the Year

Katie Virtue, S, Ohio State

Coach of the Year

Mike Hebert, Minnesota

Academic Honors for Sanborn

In other good news for Spartan volleyball, Jessica Sanborn was named to the 1999 GTE Academic All-District IV Second Team, becoming only the fifth player in Spartan history to receive such an honor.

MSU Opens NCAA Tournament Play at Pepperdine University

The MSU volleyball team has earned their sixth consecutive NCAA tournament berth, and is scheduled to begin play in the Central region bracket at Pepperdine University at 8:00 pm EST on Friday. Their first round opponent will be California Polytechnic-San Luis Obispo. A win in that match would most likely see them face Pepperdine, who will play Arkansas State in the first round.

Cal Poly's program is on the upswing, making a return to the tournament for the first time since the '80s when they made nine consecutive appearances. They were 20-8 this season, and 11-5 in the Big West where they finished fourth. Their only major victory of the year was a 3-2 upset of UCSB. In Miguel Ballicora's computer rankings, Cal Poly and MSU are just a few spots apart.

Cal Poly relies heavily on 6'3" senior middle blocker Kari DeSoto, who leads the team in hitting percentage (third best in the nation), kills, and blocks. Also a threat is 5'10" junior outside hitter Melanie Hathaway, who joined DeSoto on the All-Big-West first team this year. The Mustang lineup also features four freshman starters, including, at setter and outside hitter, 6' sisters Carly and Kristen O'Halloran. All four freshmen were named to the conference All-Freshman team.

Pepperdine, of course, is the team that prematurely ended MSU's 1998 tournament run in the first round. MSU would welcome a chance to avenge that loss.

The Waves have had a very good year, being ranked in the lower part of the top ten most of the season and earning the number eight seed in the tournament. However, their only victory against a top-20 opponent was the last match of the season, when they defeated UCLA 3-2. They went undefeated in the West Coast Conference at 14-0, and were 24-3 overall.

Head coach Nina Matthies was named conference coach of the year, and two players—6'4" senior middle blocker Jamie Hill and 5'11" sophomore setter Melissa Plass—made the all-conference first team. Outside hitter Stacy Rouwenhorst was chosen freshman of the year and, along with sophomore outside hitter Melissa Snow, was named to the second team.

Big Ten Final Standings

After losing the opening match of the season to Florida, Penn State went on a thirty-match rampage to complete their second consecutive undefeated season in the Big Ten. Minnesota was the over-achiever of the year, moving up to second from last year's eighth place.

1999 Finish	School	Big 10	Overall	Preseason Poll	1998 Finish
1	Penn State	20-0	30-1	1	1
2	Minnesota	15-5	25-8	6	8
3	Wisconsin	14-6	21-9	2	2
4	Illinois	12-8	16-10	3	4
5	MSU	10-10	20-12	4	3
5	Ohio State	10-10	16-11	4	5
5	Indiana	10-10	19-10	7	5
8	Michigan	7-13	15-14	10	10
8	Purdue	7-13	15-14	9	7
10	Iowa	3-17	4-23	8	11
11	Northwestern	2-18	4-26	11	9

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Volleyball Banquet Set for Hawk Hollow Golf Course

The volleyball banquet for 2000 will follow the tradition of recent years in location, scheduling and format. The tentative date is Sunday January 23 in the early afternoon and it is planned for Hawk Hollow Golf Course. SideOut Club members can expect to receive invitations with more details by early January.

NCAA Tournament Brackets

The 1999 NCAA Division I volleyball championships exhibit one extraordinary feature this year—the inclusion of eight teams from the Big Ten Conference! This is the largest number of teams invited from a single conference in tournament history. (See the full bracket on the following page.)

Penn State earned the number one seed in the country, and is the only Big Ten team to make it into the top 16, and thus the only one that will host the opening rounds of play. Many observers thought Minnesota should have also ranked among the top 16, but the Gophers just missed the cut. Miguel Ballicora's computer rankings had Minnesota in the 13th spot, but the coaches' poll consistently put them around number 20, and the selection committee seemed to agree.

Eighth place Michigan (7-13, 15-14) was the lowest-ranked Big Ten team to get a bid. Purdue fans will be disappointed that their team, which tied with Michigan in both conference record and overall record, did not receive a tournament bid. It appears that Michigan's impressive wins against BYU and Arkansas, possibly combined with Purdue's late-season loss to Northwestern, gave the Wolverines the edge.

The large number of teams from our conference was surprising to many, since the Big Ten has not fared well in the coaches' poll this year. MSU coach Chuck Erbe feels that it shows once again what a deep, strong conference we have. "In Penn State we have a marquee team, number one in the nation. Even though they dominated the

conference this year, we also have eight other teams that can play with anyone in the country. You can't really say that about other conferences. Even Purdue, who didn't make it, has played well enough this year to be considered for the tournament."

Interestingly, Miguel's computer rankings validate the committee's choices. All eight Big Ten teams would have been included even if the selections had been done strictly by the numbers.

The Big Ten teams were all seeded into different sub-regionals, entirely in the Central and East regions. This raises the fascinating scenario of what would happen if they all won their first and second round matches. If this highly unlikely event occurred, both of these two regionals would consist solely of Big Ten teams!

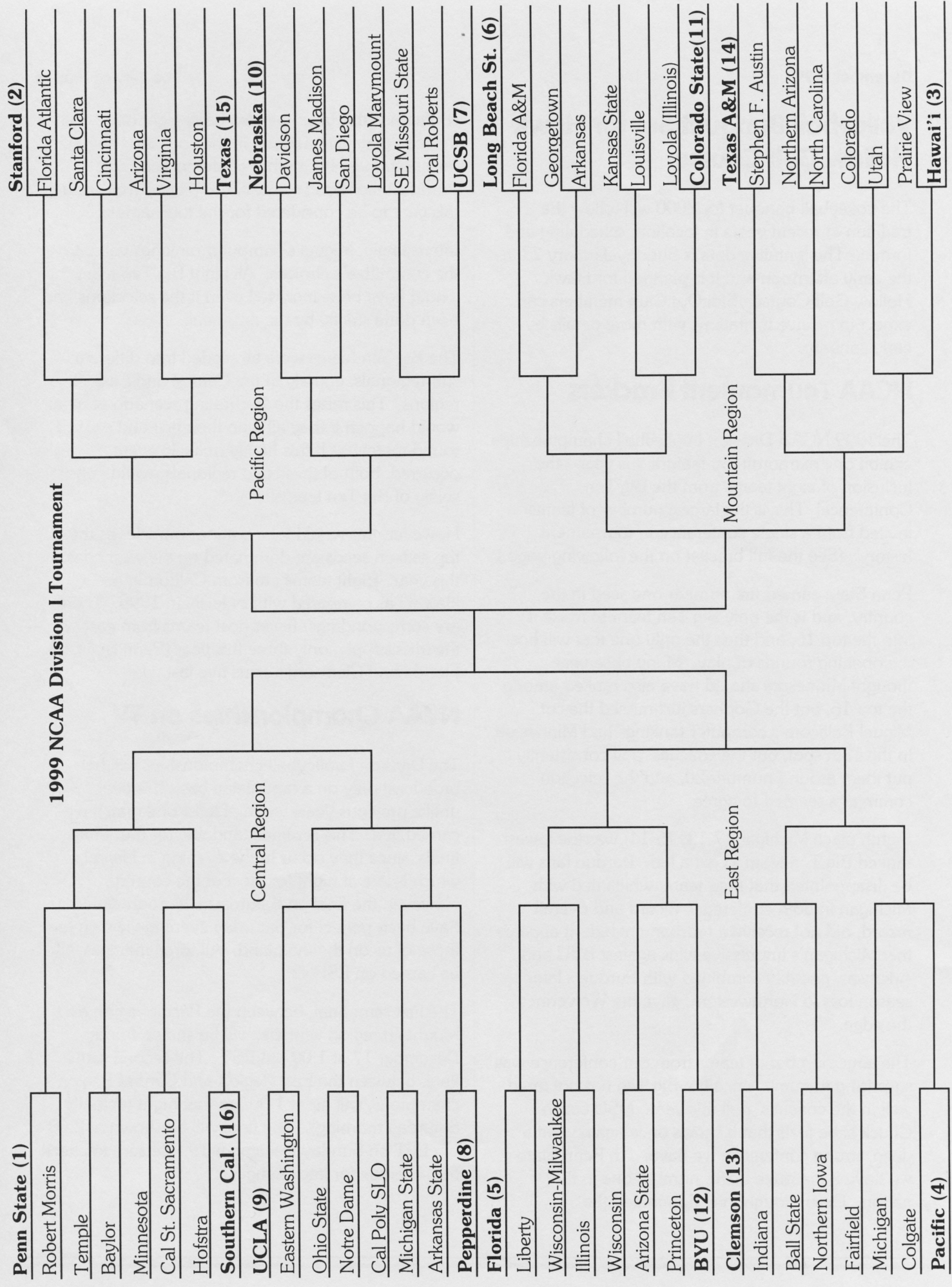
However, this would take a minor miracle, as the top sixteen seeds are dominated by the west coast this year. Eight teams are from California or Hawai'i as compared with only six in 1998. There are correspondingly fewer host teams from east of the Mississippi—only three this year (Penn State, Florida and Clemson) versus five last year.

NCAA Championships on TV

The Division I volleyball championships will be broadcast only on a tape-delay basis this year, unlike previous years when at least one match was carried live. This is understandable for the semi-finals, since they occur in the evening in Hawai'i, which is late at night for most of the country. However, the final on Saturday afternoon would have been perfect for Saturday evening viewing for those of us on the mainland. All three matches will be carried on ESPN2.

The first semi-final, between the Pacific region and Mountain region winners, will be shown Friday December 17 at 1:00 pm EST. The second semi-final, between the East Region and Central Region champions, will air at 1:00 am that night (actually Saturday morning). The final will be shown at 2:00 pm EST on Sunday December 19. Be sure to check the schedule for late changes.

1999 NCAA Division I Tournament



Thanks to Our Volunteers

We would like to extend our thanks to the Club members listed below, who contributed their time to SideOut Club activities this season. (Please excuse any omissions or misspellings. Not included are the names of Board members, many of whom work for the Club at matches in addition to the many hours they put in as Board members.)

Amy Eagle	Bob Lovell	Georgia Johnson
Ron Priebe	Diana Priebe	Marlene Wesselman
Andy Kurtz	Dave Pike	Roy Wesselman
Jim Pifer	Ann Purvis	Shirley Garrity
Betsy Pifer	Chris Wolf	Cathy Caswell
Carl Carlson		

Team Plans European Trip for June 2000

The first time the Spartan volleyball team went overseas, they came home and pounded out a 34-3 season, won the Big Ten championship, and went to the final four. In 1997, Wisconsin took a summer trip to Eastern Europe, and followed up with an outstanding season, barely nosed out of the final four in a five-game loss to Florida. Other schools have had similar experiences.

Now MSU is planning a trip to Europe for next spring, hoping it will give them the extra boost they need to contend for another Big Ten championship.

MSU second assistant Laura Abbinante was one of the Badgers who took that trip in 1997, and she is enthusiastic about the benefits. "It's a team-building activity. The players will be away from home for an extended period, without their usual support systems, but also away from the pressures of school, boyfriends and family. It's something that helps the players come together as a team."

Laura also sees it as an opportunity for personal growth. "The experience of being a foreigner, seeing the difference in lifestyle from the United States, can help a young person grow up a lot. It's really going to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience

for them."

The tentative plans call for a departure on May 31, returning home June 19. The itinerary is still flexible, but will most likely start in Amsterdam and finish up in Paris. In between will be a loop through central Europe, with possible stops in Germany (Munich), Austria (Innsbruck), Italy (Milan), and Switzerland (Geneva).

The team will visit club teams in each city, practicing at their facilities and playing exhibition matches against them. The Spartans expect to play at least eight matches during the trip.

The competition will likely expose the team to a relatively slow, very physical style of play. European players tend to be big and powerful, relying on strength rather than quickness to dominate an opponent.

Laura is in charge of the trip planning, and is working with a professional sports agent who helped her find a European club team to play on last year. The first choice of cities will be those where a local team is willing to host the Spartans, providing them with meals or lodging to keep expenses down.

Chuck is encouraging fans to make the trip as well, but emphasizes that they will have to make their own travel and lodging arrangements. "We'd love to have a contingent of fans and parents along for support at the matches. Laura can be a liaison for this, providing information about the schedule as it becomes more definite. However, she has her hands full with the team planning and can't be handling reservations for anyone else." Laura will try to put interested fans in touch with each other, so that they can make group plans if desired.

The team trip will, of course, be an expensive undertaking. Because funds are uncertain at this point, each player and staff member going on the trip is being asked to put up a significant amount of money to guarantee a spot. As fund raising proceeds, the cost to the individuals will be reduced. If you want to make a contribution toward the trip, or have any potential donors in mind, contact Chuck Erbe directly at 355-4705.

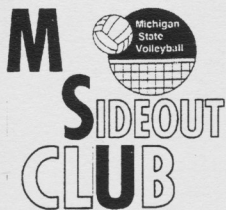
1999 Schedule and Results

(All home matches are played in Jenison Field House)

9/3	W	Cleveland State	15-6, 15-11, 15-3
9/3	L	Texas A&M	15-12, 5-15, 15-9, 3-15, 10-15
9/4	W	Eastern Kentucky	15-4, 15-1, 15-11
9/4	L	Clemson	3-15, 11-15, 7-15
9/10	W	New Hampshire	15-6, 15-8, 15-10
9/10	W	Southern Mississippi	15-3, 15-5, 15-8
9/11	W	Seton Hall	15-1, 12-15, 15-5, 15-3
9/11	W	Massachusetts	15-5, 15-12, 15-11
9/17	W	Depaul	15-8, 15-5, 15-13
9/17	W	Niagara	15-4, 15-0, 15-1
9/18	W	Loyola	8-15, 15-13, 15-4, 15-6
9/18	W	Western Michigan	15-13, 15-9, 15-4
9/24	L	PENN STATE	15-10, 3-15, 5-15, 15-11, 8-15
9/25	W	OHIO STATE	15-13, 15-9, 15-4
10/1	L	Purdue	11-15, 10-15, 13-15
10/2	L	Wisconsin	5-15, 13-15, 4-15
10/8	L	IOWA	15-3, 11-15, 7-15, 18-16, 12-15
10/9	L	MINNESOTA	7-15, 8-15, 6-15

10/13	W	MICHIGAN	15-9, 15-6, 15-5
10/15	W	NORTHWESTERN	15-8, 15-2, 15-2
10/22	W	Illinois	15-9, 15-6, 17-15
10/23	W	Indiana	15-11, 9-15, 15-11, 15-6
10/29	L	Minnesota	6-15, 3-15, 10-15
10/30	W	Iowa	15-11, 15-10, 15-5
11/5	W	WISCONSIN	16-14, 15-9, 15-12
11/6	W	PURDUE	2-15, 15-13, 12-15, 15-13, 15-8
11/12	L	Ohio State	15-17, 15-13, 7-15, 15-4, 11-15
11/13	L	Penn State	7-15, 10-15, 3-15
11/19	W	INDIANA	12-15, 15-11, 15-8, 15-12
11/20	L	ILLINOIS	15-6, 17-15, 8-15, 8-15, 9-15
11/24	L	Michigan	7-15, 5-15, 1-15
11/27	W	Northwestern	15-12, 15-12, 15-9

12/3	California Poly SLO	8:00 pm EST
12/4	NCAA second round	10:00 pm EST
12/9-12	NCAA Regionals	
12/16-18	NCAA Final Four in Honolulu, Hawai'i	



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