

Texas Ready To Go Against Huskers, Crowd In Volleyball Final

BY ERIC OLSON
AP Sports Writer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Not that Nebraska volleyball fans needed any more reason to show up. They love their Cornhuskers, especially when they're close to home playing for a national championship, and Saturday night's NCAA final would be a sellout no matter the opponent.

The fact the Huskers are playing Texas just adds a little spice, maybe a lot.

The CenturyLink Center will be full again, with the tournament attendance record of 17,551 set during Thursday's semifinals likely to be broken, but the full-throated cheers of Nebraska partisans might be even louder this time.

No matter the sport, the Longhorns are the team Nebraska fans

love to root against, even though the Huskers left the Big 12 for the Big Ten four years ago.

"People in Nebraska do still get worked up about Texas," Huskers coach John Cook said Friday. "I think it's kind of in the DNA now. I credit Bill Byrne for that."

Byrne was Nebraska's athletic director when the Big Eight and Southwest Conference merged to form the Big 12 in 1994. Nebraska and Texas usually were on opposite sides when it came to making policies in the new league, and it was no secret the school to the north resented the political clout of the school to the south.

Then there were some big football games. None was bigger than the 2009 Big 12 title game, when Nebraska had the Longhorns beaten until officials put one second back on the clock at the end, just enough

time for Texas to kick the winning field goal.

Yes, the third-seeded Longhorns (30-2) know what awaits Saturday.

"The fans," coach Jerritt Elliott said, "are going to be all over us because it's Texas."

Big 12 player of the year Amy Neal said she's excited about playing for a national title in a tough environment.

"I honestly think it's kind of fun that it'll be packed with Nebraska fans," Neal said. "Whenever we've gone to (Lincoln), it's smaller but it's still a huge arena filled with people, and I think it's fun when the crowd's against us. I think they'll be all over us, like Jerritt said. We embrace that."

The teams have continued to play every year in the regular season since fourth-seeded Nebraska (31-4) left the Big 12.

"Volleyball likes rivalries, but it's not as personal like football can be," Cook said. "There were some close football games that were controversial and precipitated that. We have a lot of respect for Texas, and they're fun to play."

Some things to know heading into the title match:

HOW THEY GOT HERE: Texas defeated second-seeded Minnesota in a four-set semifinal and Nebraska beat Kansas in four sets. The Longhorns are playing for their third championship, having won in 1988 and 2012. The Huskers are going for their fourth title, having won in 1995, 2000 and 2006.

THEY MEET AGAIN: Nebraska leads the all-time series 30-21, but Texas won the most recent meeting in five sets in Austin in September. The Longhorns' Ebony Nwanebu had 22 kills, 17 digs and four blocks

in her only match of the season. The 2013 national freshman of the year for Southern California injured her back and has only recently begun practicing on a limited basis.

SORE ARM? Texas' Neal had career highs with 25 kills and 67 swings against Minnesota. She laughed when asked if it was just a routine night for her. "I don't think it's a routine night at all," she said. "Being an outside, you're going to get sets whenever there's a crazy dig or a bad pass or when you get out-of-system balls. That was a factor to how I got so many swings. I don't usually get that many in system. It's just how the game went."

20 YEARS LATER: Nebraska-Texas is a rematch of the 1995 final. Terry Pettit's Huskers won in four sets for the first of the school's three national titles.

Reds Invite Somsen To Spring Training

Yankton native and former South Dakota State standout Layne Somsen is one of six pitchers who have been invited to 2016 Major League spring training camp for the Cincinnati Reds organization. Somsen was one of several non-roster invitees announced by the Reds on Friday.

Somsen, a 22nd round pick of the Reds in 2013, spent the 2015 season between Pensacola (AA) and Louisville (AAA), with the majority of his appearances coming at the AAA level. On the season, he went 2-1 with a 2.74 earned run average, striking out 60 batters in 62 1/3 innings pitched.

In three minor league seasons, Somsen is 9-5 with four saves and a 2.57 ERA and 164 strikeouts in 164 2/3 innings. All but seven of his 76 career appearances have been as a reliever, though he made three starts for Louisville in 2015.

NDSU Makes 5th Straight FCS Title Game

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Eric Perkins returned a punt 88 yards for a touchdown to finish off a dominating first half and four-time defending FCS winner North Dakota State rolled to a 33-7 victory over Richmond in a semifinal game Friday night.

The Bison (12-2) advanced to the Jan. 9 championship game in Frisco, Texas, against the winner of the semifinal Saturday between Sam Houston State and Jacksonville State. North Dakota State is 16-0 at home in the FCS playoffs.

King Frazier rushed for 121 yards and two touchdowns and redshirt freshman quarterback Easton Stick threw for a pair of scores to lead the Bison. Perkins was the special teams star with three punt returns for 145 yards.

The Bison rolled up 418 yards of total offense, to 209 for Richmond.

North Dakota State led 26-0 at half, and it should have been more. Not including Perkins' punt return with 1:31 left in the half, the Bison drove into Spiders territory on all seven of their drives in the first half. Three of them ended in touchdowns, two of them stalled on missed field goals and the last one ended on downs on the final play of the half. The Bison also blew two point-after tries.

Trio Power IW Past Cougars



Irene-Wakonda's Gabe King throws down a massive dunk during Friday night's game against Viborg-Hurley in Viborg. King led a balanced Eagles attack in a 72-29 victory.

JEREMY HOECK/P&D

VIBORG – In Tri-Valley Conference boys' basketball action, the Irene-Wakonda Eagles dominated Viborg-Hurley 72-29 on Friday night in Viborg.

For the Eagles, Gabe King had 12 points, eight assists, five rebounds, and two blocks. Trey King had a team-high 19 points and four steals, while Tate Gale totaled 12 points and five assists.

Despite the loss, Viborg-Hurley out-rebounded Irene-Wakonda 22-15.

The Eagles will take on Parkston on Dec. 29 in the Parkston Classic, while Viborg-Hurley hosts Centerville on Dec. 31.

IRENE-WAKONDA (2-1).....21 40 56 72
VIBORG-HURLEY (0-3).....9 13 20 29

Creighton 37, Crofton 33

CROFTON, Neb. – Lane Walton helped lead Creighton to victory Friday night in Crofton, against Crofton as he scored 12 points. The final score was 37-33.

In the win for Creighton, Brandon Borgmann scored 11 points and had seven rebounds. Cole Wetzler scored eight points and had five rebounds.

For Crofton, Joey Tramp scored 14 points and Grant Wragge scored 10 points.

Creighton's next game will be against Elgin-Pope John on Monday in Creighton and Crofton's next game will be against Hartington-Newcastle in Crofton.

CREIGHTON (3-3).....15 18 20 37
CROFTON (0-5).....7 9 23 33

Bon Homme 64, Scotland 49

TYNDALL – Bon Homme's Chase Kortan finished with 26 points to help lead the Cavaliers to a 64-49 victory over the Scotland Highlanders on Friday night in Tyndall.

Kortan also added five assists to his stat line, while Bryce Scieszinski added 16 points. Colin Adams finished with 15 points in the win.

For Scotland, Travis Skorepa scored 13 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, while Tanner Skorepa had 19 points and 12 rebounds.

Bon Homme will travel to Winner on Dec. 29, while Scotland hosts Andes Central/Dakota Christian on Tuesday.

SCOTLAND (1-2).....13 26 41 49
BON HOMME (1-0).....11 40 50 64

West Central 77, Wagner 67

WAGNER – Noah Vetrus finished with 33 points to help West Central defeat Wagner by a score of 77-65 on Friday night in Wagner.

Nick Nagel added 15 points for West Central, while Blake Svoboda finished the contest with nine points.

Wagner's Jubal Grant had a dominating performance, totaling 23 points and 10 rebounds. Chase Zepher scored 17 points, and Alex Sully added nine points.

West Central will host Dakota Valley on Tuesday, while Wagner will host

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Okla. Keeper Signs With Mount Marty Men's Soccer

A goalkeeper who led his team to the 2015 Oklahoma Class 5A state championship will bring his talents to the Mount Marty College men's soccer program.

Zachary Lyday of Edmond, Oklahoma, will attend MMC and play soccer for the Lancer men, the institution announced on Friday.

The 6-3 Lyday helped Deer Creek High School to the 2015 Class 5A title on year after the squad advanced to the quarterfinals, also with Lyday in goal. He also plays for the prestigious Oklahoma Football Cub.

"We are in need of a talented keeper who excels in all aspects of the goal keeping position and I believe we have found that in Zach," said MMC head coach Peter Shepherd. "Mount Marty is signing not only a tremendous goal keeper but an outstanding person as well; he embodies the values of Mount Marty College and will be a great representative during his career here."

Off the field, Lyday has been active in the local TOPSoccer program, a program that is a modified version of the game of soccer designed to provide opportunities for special needs children. He has also done missionary work through Acts 2 Methodist Church.

Lyday, the son of Robin and Russell Lyday, plans to major in nursing at MMC. He will receive an athletic scholarship and the Academic Incentive Scholarship.

Gymnastics: Gazelles Third In McCormick Inv.

MITCHELL – The Yankton Gazelles scored a 128.55 to finish third in the seven-team Friday portion of the Jill McCormick Invitational gymnastics meet, held in Mitchell.

Madison won Friday's event with a 135.375. Watertown finished second at 133.15.

Madison's Jenni Giles led three Bulldogs in the top four of the all-around, scoring a 36.2 to beat out Watertown's Abigail Lenssen (34.15). Madison's Jocelyn Krouse (33.675) and Shania Schwebach (33.6) finished third and fourth.

Giles also won the bars (8.9) and floor (9.425). Krouse won on the vault (9.2). Brookings' Maci Law won on balance beam (9.075).

Yankton put two gymnasts in the top 10 of the all-around, Haleigh Diede (32.625) in sixth and Jaiden Boomsma (31.525) in tenth.

Yankton is off until Jan. 9, when the Gazelles return to action at the Brookings Invitational. The Jill McCormick Invitation-

al continues today (Saturday), with Parkston-Ethan-Hanson among the teams scheduled to compete.

TEAM SCORES: Madison 135.375, Watertown 133.15, Yankton 128.55, Brookings 127.6, Mitchell 124.65, Huron 120.85, Aberdeen Central 120.15.

ALL-AROUND: Jenni Giles, Madison 36.2; Abigail Lenssen, Watertown 34.15; Jocelyn Krouse, Madison 33.675; Shania Schwebach, Madison 33.6; Sydney Schillingsted, Huron 32.7; Haleigh Diede, Yankton 32.625; Blair Flammoud, Brookings 32.15; Mackenzie Gauger, Mitchell 32.0; Cynde Munson, Brookings 31.825; Jaiden Boomsma, Yankton 31.515.

VAULT: Jocelyn Krouse, Madison 9.2; Jenni Giles, Madison 8.125; Shania Schwebach, Madison 9.05; Jaiden Boomsma, Yankton 9.0; Whitney Scott, Watertown 8.875; Cameryn Specht, Yankton 8.85; Kallee Henglefeldt, Mitchell 8.75; Allison Stadheim, Watertown 8.7; Sydney Ahlers, Watertown 8.7; Amber Kallas, Aberdeen Central 8.65; OTHER YHS: Sophie Bisgard 8.55; Trinity Goeman 8.4; Haleigh Diede 8.3.

BAR: Jenni Giles, Madison 8.9; Abigail Lenssen, Watertown 8.875; Blair Flammoud, Brookings 8.7; Tessa Kimbler, Aberdeen Central 8.3; Kallee Henglefeldt, Mitchell 7.85; Masey Mock, Mitchell 7.825; Shania Schwebach, Madison 7.8; Jocelyn Krouse, Madison 7.725; Sophia Vandenbosch, Madison 7.525; McKenzie Busker, Watertown 7.475; YHS: Kaitlin Guthmiller 7.4; Haleigh Diede 7.025; Trinity Goeman 7.025; Samantha Kortan 6.325; Jaiden Boomsma 5.55.

BEAM: Maci Law, Brookings 9.075; Jenni Giles, Madison 8.75; Sydney Suttan, Watertown 8.725; Haleigh Diede, Yankton 8.65; Abigail Lenssen, Watertown 8.4; Cynde Munson, Brookings 8.375; Jaiden Boomsma, Yankton 8.375; McKenzie Busker, Watertown 8.0; Masey Mock, Mitchell 7.95; Elise Cardella, Aberdeen Central 7.9; OTHER YHS: Kaitlin Guthmiller 7.6; Cameryn Specht 7.325; Sophie Bisgard 7.1.

FLOOR: Jenni Giles, Madison 9.425; Abi Cummings, Watertown 9.25; Shania Schwebach, Madison 33.6; Sydney Schillingsted, Huron 9.075; Jocelyn Krouse, Madison 9.05; Deyona Little, Huron 8.975; Whitney Scott, Watertown 8.75; Allison Stadheim, Watertown 8.675; Haleigh Diede, Yankton 8.65; Erica Zell, Huron 8.625; OTHER YHS: Jaiden Boomsma 8.6; Sophie Bisgard 8.425; Cameryn Specht 8.35; Kaitlin Guthmiller 8.05.



MARCUS TRAXLER/MITCHELL REPUBLIC

Yankton's Kaitlin Guthmiller gestures during her floor routine Friday at the Jill McCormick Invitational at Mitchell High School.