

Illinois Pass Game Could Test Nebraska

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. (AP) — Nebraska makes its first trip to the Illinois campus since 1986 and the favored Cornhuskers could use a win in the Big Ten opener for both teams.

Fall short on Saturday and Nebraska (2-2) would leave town with a losing record and games against No. 19 Wisconsin and No. 16 Northwestern over the next three weeks.

For an Illinois team (3-1) looking to prove something in a tumultuous season, the game has high stakes, too. To get to a bowl the Illini might

have to pull off an upset along the way. A Nebraska team that isn't a direct descendent of the Tom Osborne glory days might be one of their best shots.

The game will be first-year Nebraska coach Mike Riley's Big Ten initiation, and Illinois' passing game could test the suspect Cornhusker pass defense. It is last in the conference, giving up 379.5 yards a game.

"I watch the film and go, 'What are we doing here?'" Riley said, explaining that his players have pan-

icked when things go wrong. "We've got to coach to a point where the confidence, no matter what's going on, we'll play within the principles of what we're doing."

Interim Illinois coach Bill Cubit, who was promoted when player-abuse allegations led to the firing of Tim Beckman a week before the season, nonetheless sees the favored Cornhuskers as a serious challenge.

"Hopefully we get a nice crowd out there," Cubit said. "We're going to have to play really well. We

understand that."

Some things to watch Saturday:

Illinois Improvements

When the teams played at Nebraska in 2014, the Illinois offense was limited without injured quarterback Wes Lunt and the defense could not stop the Cornhuskers. The result was a 45-14 Nebraska romp. Ameer Abdullah ran for 208 yards and three touchdowns.

"I remember we started off really

well and went down and scored and it fell apart from there," Lunt said.

Cubit said he believes this Illini team is better, and one big reason is the protection in front of Lunt. Illinois has given up one sack a game so far.

The coach also thinks his defense is better, too, and will be focused on quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. Last season, the Illini were last in The Big Ten or close to

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Volleyball: Coyotes, Lancers Fall On Road

FARGO, N.D. — North Dakota State overcame a slow start and a 20-kill performance by South Dakota's Audrey Reeg in a 19-25, 25-21, 25-20, 25-23 victory over the Coyotes in Summit League volleyball action on Friday.

Jenni Fassbender had 18 kills and 16 digs, and Emily Minnick had 14 kills to lead NDSU (11-6, 2-2 Summit), which hit .319 as a team. Emily Miron had 10 kills, and Brianna Rasmusson had 40 assists and 16 digs in the victory.

For USD, Reed had 20 kills and 16 digs, and Lindsey Brown posted 13 kills with just one error (.480 hitting) to lead the way. Haley Dotseth had 12 kills. Brittany Jessen finished with 56 assists. Kelsey Biloft had five blocks (one solo), Lauren Mattison had 24 digs and Kaitlyn Hastings had 13 digs for the Coyotes.

USD, 6-10 and 0-3 in the Summit, will look to snap out of a three-match skid when it travels to Denver on Sunday.

Midland 3, MMC 0

FREMONT, Neb. — The fourth-ranked Midland Warriors remained unbeaten on the season with a 25-15, 25-11, 25-12 victory over Mount Marty in Great Plains Athletic Conference volleyball action on Friday.

Ashlee Harms had 15 kills and Prisilla O'Dowd had 11 kills and five assisted blocks to lead the Midland (20-0, 7-0 GPAC) attack. Jessica Peters had 39 assists and 12 digs in the victory.

For Mount Marty (5-11, 2-6 GPAC), Rachel Reiff had six kills and Sierra Kloth had five kills to lead the way. Amber Dythse had 19 assists. Maura Lysne posted 10 digs.

MMC hosts Morningside on Tuesday. The Lancers beat the Mustangs 3-0 in Sioux City on Sept. 9.

High School

Creighton 3, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge 2

LAUREL, Neb. — Creighton came away with a victory over Laurel-Concord-Coleridge in a five game thriller, 26-24, 25-12, 24-26, 23-25, 15-7, in Lewis & Clark Conference volleyball action on Thursday.

Maycey Forker led the Creighton attack with seven kills. Bailey Zimmerman recorded 16 digs.

For LCC, Bryn Schutte had 18 kills and 21 digs, and Katelyn Cooke had 40 assists to lead the way. Kaci Groene posted 13 kills, five ace serves and 12 digs. Lorna Maxson had 13 digs and Mady Holloway added 10 digs and three ace serves for the Bears.

Creighton will host Neligh-Oakdale on Monday and LCC will host Wakefield today (Saturday).

CREIGHTON (6-7).....26 25 24 23 15
LAUREL-CONCORD-COL (2-16).....24 12 26 25 7

Guardian Angels CC 3, Hart Cedar Catholic 1

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Guardian Angels Central Catholic defeated Hartington Cedar Catholic 25-18, 25-10, 18-25, 25-22 on Thursday night in Hartington.

No stats available for GACC. The HCC Trojans were led by Jada Cattau and Abby Steffen, who totaled 11 kills apiece. Taylor Lammers added nine kills, while Emily Felmeier had 34 assists and 13 digs.

The Trojans will take on Ponca next Thursday in Hartington. GACC travels to Battle Creek next Tuesday.

GUARDIAN ANGELS CC (12-1).....25 18 25
HART. CEDAR CATHOLIC (13-7).....18 10 25 22

Beresford Girls, WC Boys Win At Lennox

LENNOX — The Beresford girls and West Central boys claimed team honors at the Lennox Invitational cross country meet on Friday at Lenwood Golf Course.

In the girls' race, Beresford put four runners in the top 11 to beat out Garretson 31-50. Sioux Falls Christian was third with 64 points.

Gayville-Volin's Laura Nelson won the 5,000-meter event in 19:13.08, 10 seconds faster than Lennox's Maisey Bainbridget (19:23.87). Elk Point-Jefferson's Josie Heeren (19:26.96), Dakota Valley's Marisa Schulz (19:29.80)

Corsica-Stickney 3, Tripp-Delmont-Armour 2

ARMOUR — Corsica-Stickney defeated Tripp-Delmont-Armour 22-25, 25-13, 25-20, 15-12 in a five game battle on Thursday night.

Corsica-Stickney was led by Courtney Menning with 11 kills and six digs. TDA was led by Kelsey Buchmann with eight kills and three blocks. Erica Koster provided 22 assists.

Corsica-Stickney will travel to Andes Central on Monday night and TDA will host Wagner on Monday.

CORSICA-STICKNEY (1-11).....25 27 20 15
TRIPP-DELMONT-ARMOUR (2-10).....22 25 25 25 12

Crofton 3, West Holt 0

CROFTON, Neb. — The Crofton Warriors swept the West Holt Huskies 25-11, 25-13, 25-11 on Thursday night in Crofton.

Monica Arens led the Warriors attack with eight kills, while Kelsey Sanger totaled seven kills and five ace serves. Brittany Guenther added 15 assists in the victory.

No stat available for West Holt. Crofton will host conference foe Wayne next Thursday. West Holt will host Boone Central/Newman Grove on Thursday.

WEST HOLT (5-11).....11 13 11
CROFTON (12-6).....25 25 25

Wynot 3, Homer 0

HOMER, Neb. — The Wynot Blue Devils picked up a 25-20, 25-19, 25-16 road victory over Homer on Thursday night in Homer.

Cortney Arkfeld had 14 kills and 16 digs for Wynot, while Carissa Kuchta totaled 11 kills. Skylar Arkfeld finished with eight kills, while Danielle Wieseler had 31 set assists.

No stats available for Homer. Wynot will play at Randolph on Monday, while Homer will travel to Dakota Valley on Tuesday.

WYNOT (7-3).....25 25 25
HOMER (8-12).....20 19 16

Chester Area 3, Beresford 0

BERESFORD — Jenna Reiff had 18 kills for Chester in a 25-18, 25-4, 25-11 sweep over Beresford on Thursday night in Beresford.

Sam Ondal added five kills for Chester, while Josie Wolf had 24 assists. Hanna Reiff led the Chester Area defense with a team-high 13 digs in the win.

For Beresford, Katelyn Wilson had five kills and two blocks. Becca Nelson totaled 11 digs and four assists.

Beresford will host West Central next Tuesday, while Chester will travel to Tea on Thursday.

CHESTER AREA (18-1).....25 25 25
BERESFORD (7-6).....18 4 11

C-O Tri.

Niobrara-Verdigre 2, Wausa 1

CLEARWATER, Neb. — Niobrara-Verdigre held off Wausa 22-25, 26-24, 25-20 in a volleyball triangular hosted by Clearwater-Orchard on Thursday.

No statistics were reported for Niobrara-Verdigre.

For Wausa, Tara Munter had nine kills, four blocks and 16 digs, and Clare Lundberg had five kills and 12 digs to lead the way. Michaela Timmerman had three blocks. Alli Barney and Regan Hennings each had 13 digs, and Mary Johnson had 10 digs for the Vikings.

WAUSA (0-14).....25 24 20
NIORBARA-VERDIGRE (9-6).....22 26 25

Clearwater-Orchard 2, Wausa 0

CLEARWATER, Neb. — Host Clearwater-Orchard downed Wausa 25-7, 25-17 in a volleyball triangular on Thursday.

For Clearwater-Orchard, Katie Funk had 20 assists and Sierra Schroeder had seven kills to lead the way. Jacee Johnston had two ace serves and seven blocks (five solo). Kinzley Macke had six kills and eight digs. Mallory Cooper had six kills and Alexis Pokorney had three blocks in the victory.

For Wausa, Regan Hennings had four kills and six digs, and Tara Munter had three blocks to lead the way. Mary Johnson also had six digs.

WAUSA (0-14).....7 17
CLEARWATER-ORCHARD (9-7).....25 25



PHU NGUYEN/JACKRABBIT SPORTS SERVICE
Defensive specialist Alanna Pengilly (18) and her South Dakota State volleyball teammates prepare to play a game last weekend at Frost Arena.

Pengilly Hopes To Lead Jackrabbit Resurgence

BY NATHAN GIESE
Jackrabbit Sports Service

Alanna Pengilly has learned a lot about losing in her volleyball career at South Dakota State University.

And you know what? That's OK, because the senior from Watertown has learned a lot about hope, too.

To put it mildly, the Jackrabbits haven't had a lot of success in the past few years:

- 2015: The team is 1-17 this year with a match schedule against Denver on Friday;
- 2014: The Jacks finished with a 6-27 record;
- 2013: 5-22.

But through all the struggles, Pengilly has learned to find the bright spot even though her career may be ending on a losing note.

"It's just a lot better feeling (this year) because we know that in the way we are going, we're going to get better," Pengilly said, referencing this season's fresh start with a new coach.

After redshirting in 2011, Pengilly, a defensive specialist, officially joined the active roster in 2012. SDSU went 16-13 that year and finished fifth in the Summit League standings.

Things went south for the program after that, and the struggles came to a head last year.

"We only lost one senior, so the fact that things still weren't working was very upsetting," Pengilly said. "There was a lot more pressure to play well and I think that backfired on us. We didn't perform because we were so frustrated."

Despite the struggles, Pengilly has been able to deal with the situation

through the help of her good friend, teammate and fellow senior Wagner Larson.

"I feel like we're very much like each other's own support system and counselors for each other in a way," said Larson, a 6-foot-2 middle blocker from Sioux Falls.

During the down times, Pengilly and Larson talk to each other about what's going on the court, putting all the good and the bad on the table. Larson said the frank talks allow them to move forward.

The Jackrabbits — besides their 6-27 overall mark — went 0-16 last year in Summit League play under then-coach Phil McDaniel, who resigned after the season. The coaching change was a turning point.

SDSU hired Nicole Cirillo, who spent the previous five years as the associate head coach for Summit rival IUPUI. With the change came a new direction and a new attitude for the team.

"She really made it a goal to start team building, team bonding, saying, 'You all need to like each other before you can play together,' and we kind of adopted that mindset," Larson said.

Part of the change between coaches for Pengilly was changing her serve. She went from serving at the basketball baseline to a jump float, which she used in high school but hadn't used at SDSU.

Despite the fact that wins aren't coming easily this season, Cirillo and Pengilly say that the progress made so far are promising.

"We've definitely made strides physically, but I think more so mentally," Cirillo said. "We can always work on skill things and we can always get better, but it's harder to fix the mental things."

Game Day

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can do it," he said.

And, as Banks said matter-of-factly, more than once. One win Saturday over Youngstown State won't mean much unless the Coyotes string together victories — like they did in 2013, when they won three straight.

"If we want to be respected in this league, we have to

go into the Valley and win some games to earn respect," Banks said.

Working in USD's favor is back-to-back convincing wins over UC Davis and Drake, performances that certainly created a little bit of a buzz around the program. It was the long-awaited momentum Glenn consistently refers to.

"I think our kids feel it, our coaches feel it, but we've got to prove it on that thing right there," he said, pointing to the DakotaDome scoreboard.

The combination of expe-

rience and health are playing to USD's advantage right now, as the Coyotes gear up for a homecoming date with Bo Pelini and Youngstown State. Those two factors, along with that confidence, will eventually result in wins, Glenn said.

"I want our kids to feel that what they've done makes them worthy of winning," he said. "They work hard, and something good is going to happen to them."

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what it can to shut down the NDSU side to get the win.

"We know our offense is going to come out and do some great things," Lally said. "We need to put them in a position where they can be successful with what they're doing."

Getting stops figures to be challenging for the Jacks. NDSU senior quarterback Carson Wentz has been electric in season, completing 63 percent of his passes for 741 yards and nine touchdowns. He's also a running threat, rolling up 106 yards and adding three more touchdowns on the ground.

"We need to control that," Stigelmeier said of Wentz's ability to scramble for yards. "That's crucial because when

it's third-and-12 and he runs for 14, that crushes you."

Stigelmeier also noted designed plays for Wentz, saying that that's when the defense has to step up the most.

One of the reasons the Bison have won four straight national titles has been because of their confidence, Lally says. Though SDSU hasn't found a way to match that confidence in recent years, he says that this team is different, that they're a more confident bunch than recent years.

The NDSU game is talked about all year. And while that may be so, Lally says the team doesn't pay attention to it during the week because, to them, it's another game.

But the question remains: Can SDSU end the drought and send the senior class out with not only the program's first win over an FBS opponent (the Jacks beat Kansas

Golf

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the Trojans don't often see during the season.

"It's a different course than what we're used to," he said. "It's tree-lined, long and full of hazards," he said. "Knowing where those hazards are and pre-shot routine will be crucial."

While the Trojans are trying to chase down Dell Rapids and win the team's first-ever state title, Hockett wants each of them to focus on the shot at hand.

"I'm hoping to see the boys play with a cool, easy mindset," he said. "Worrying about where we could be at, that's for everyone else."

Besides the teams from Vermillion and Parkston, the southeast corner of South Dakota is represented by Dakota Valley's Jameson Bull, Keaton Hensley and Jacob Wente, Elk Point-Jefferson's Michael Murphy and Tyler Leif, and Beresford's Logan Busch and Sam Nelson.

Bull, a sophomore, won the Region 2A title on Monday in Sioux Falls. He and Wente tied for 59th a year ago, as did Beresford's Sam Nelson.

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