

Husker Volleyball Reloads for Big 12 Title Run

For teams around the country, a new season brings new challenges, and it is no different for the Nebraska volleyball program. Following the departure of four AVCA All-Americans and the most successful senior class in school history, people have pegged the Huskers to be in a rebuilding mode this year.

To Nebraska Coach John Cook, the upcoming season reminds him of 2003, when the Huskers replaced another legendary group of seniors with a class of six newcomers. That class became the foundation of the 2006 national title team, and Cook sees the same trait with this year's group - senior leadership.

"What I've seen so far is that Jordan (Larson), Rachel (Schwartz) and Amanda (Gates) understand what needs to be done in the offseason and summer, and what it takes to be a great team," Cook said.

"They have the experience of winning a title and have been a major part of our success over the years. We are bringing in five new players, and our seniors have been proactive in making them feel comfortable and helping to build relationships that are needed to be successful."

While others see a squad short on experience, Cook sees a hungry team that is anxious to prove the doubters wrong. He was impressed by the Huskers' efforts in the spring season, and understands the 2008 Huskers can only reach their goals if they play together and use their collective strengths.

"Our margin for error will be less than last year, especially with the scoring change (going from 30 points per set to 25)," Cook said. "The thing I was most encouraged about during the spring was our ability to be an exceptional serving, passing and defensive team. I saw us play at a very high level in those areas. We have the potential to make teams very uncomfortable with our serving and defense, and our ability to side out at a high level.

"If we can pass the ball in system, we have the hitters who can put the ball away. We will have to rely on them and be better with our first contact."

Huskers Led by Nebraska Natives

All three members of Nebraska's 2008 senior class hail from the Cornhusker State. All-American Jordan Larson is an outside hitter from Hooper, Rachel Schwartz a libero/defensive specialist from Lincoln and Amanda Gates is a middle blocker from Columbus.

In addition to the seniors, the Huskers feature three other native Nebraskans including: freshman setter Brigette Root (Grand Island); redshirt freshman middle blocker Jordan Wilberger (Scottsbluff); and redshirt freshman middle blocker Brooke Delano (Bellevue).



2008 Huskers: Front Row (from left): Tara Mueller, Allison McNeal, Jordan Larson, Lindsey Licht, Brooke Delano, Jordan Wilberger, Kori Cooper, Amanda Gates, Jessica Yanz, Jordan Haverly. Back Row (from left): Jolene Emricson, Laura Pilakowski, Ryan Walthall, Erik Sullivan, Kaitlynn James, Brigette Root, Sydney Anderson, Kayla Banwarth, Rachel Schwartz, John Cook, Lizzy Stemke, Lindsay Peterson.

2008 Nebraska Volleyball Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (High School/Previous Schools)
1	Sydney Anderson	S	6-0	So.	Salt Lake City, Utah (Alta/Utah)
2	Kayla Banwarth	L/DS	5-10	So.	Dubuque, Iowa (Wahlert Catholic)
3	Brigette Root	S	5-10	Fr.	Grand Island, Neb. (Grand Island)
4	Lindsey Licht	RS	6-5	So.	Aurora, Colo. (Grandview)
5	Rachel Schwartz	L/DS	5-9	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (East)
6	Jordan Wilberger	MB	6-1	RFr.	Scottsbluff, Neb. (Scottsbluff)
8	Brooke Delano	MB	6-4	RFr.	Bellevue, Neb. (Bellevue West)
10	Jordan Larson	OH	6-2	Sr.	Hooper, Neb. (Logan View)
11	Jessica Yanz	S	6-0	Jr.	Bolingbrook, Ill. (Naperville Central/Penn State)
14	Kaitlynn James	OH	5-11	Fr.	Louisville, Ky. (Assumption)
15	Kori Cooper	MB	6-2	Jr.	Amarillo, Texas (Amarillo)
16	Allison McNeal	MB/OH	6-3	Fr.	Schulenburg, Texas (Schulenburg)
17	Amanda Gates	MB	6-2	Sr.	Columbus, Neb. (Columbus)
19	Tara Mueller	OH	6-0	So.	Scottsdale, Ariz. (Desert Mountain)

Coaching Staff

Head Coach: John Cook

Assistant Coaches: Lizzy Stemke & Erik Sullivan

Volunteer Assistant Coach: Ryan Walthall

2008 Husker Volleyball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time/Result
<i>Runza/AVCA Showcase (Qwest Center Omaha)</i>		
Friday, Aug. 29	vs. Stanford	7 p.m.
Sunday, Aug. 31	vs. USC	3 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 1	Oral Roberts	4 p.m.
<i>Cal Poly Tournament (San Luis Obispo, Calif.)</i>		
Friday, Sept. 5	vs. Northeastern	2 p.m.
	at Cal Poly	9:30 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 6	vs. Tulane	8:30 p.m.
Ameritas Players Challenge		
Friday, Sept. 12	vs. LSU (Devaney Center)	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 13	Consolation/Championship	TBA
Wednesday, Sept. 17	at Kansas State	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 20	Texas	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 24	Kansas	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 27	at Iowa State	6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 1	at Texas Tech	7 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 4	Colorado	TBA
Sunday, Oct. 5	at Creighton (Qwest Center)	5 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 8	Oklahoma	7 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 12	at Missouri	1 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 15	Baylor	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 22	Texas A&M	7 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 25	at Oklahoma	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 29	at Colorado	8 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 1	Iowa State	7 p.m.
Wednesday, Nov. 5	at Texas A&M	6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 8	Kansas State	TBA
Wednesday, Nov. 12	Missouri	7 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 15	at Kansas	TBA
Wednesday, Nov. 19	at Texas	TBA
Saturday, Nov. 22	Texas Tech	7 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 29	at Baylor	7 p.m.
<i>NCAA Tournament</i>		
Friday, Dec. 5	First Round (Campus Sites)	
Saturday, Dec. 6	Second Round (Campus Sites)	
Friday, Dec. 12	Regional Semifinals (Campus Sites)	
Saturday, Dec. 13	Regional Championship (Campus Sites)	
Thursday, Dec. 18	National Semifinals (Qwest Center)	
Saturday, Dec. 20	Championship Match (Qwest Center)	

All home games in **bold** played at the NU Coliseum, unless otherwise noted