



BIG 12 CONFERENCE NEWS

Assistant Commissioner - Communications - Bob Burda, 469/524-1007, bob@big12sports.com
Director of Communications - Rob Carolla, 469/524-1011, rcarolla@big12sports.com
Associate Director of Communications - Joni Lehmann, 469/524-1022, joni@big12sports.com
Assistant Director of Communications - Carmen Branch, 469/524-1009, carmen@big12sports.com
Will Hancock Communications Assistant - Felicia Michael, 469/524-1039, fmichael@big12sports.com
Will Hancock Communications Assistant - Bonnie Ryan, 469/524-1040, bryan@big12sports.com

Dec. 1, 2008

Contact: Carmen Branch

2008 Big 12 Volleyball Postseason Awards Announced

IRVING, Texas — Jordan Larson (Nebraska), the first player in Big 12 history to earn Player of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year, headlines the 2008 All-Big 12 Volleyball Awards. This marks the fourth individual award for the senior -- she also was named Freshman of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year in 2005 and '06, respectively. Larson joins former teammate Sarah Pavan as the only other Big 12 volleyball player to receive four individual league accolades in their career.

Other individual winners include Newcomer of the Year Sydney Anderson (Nebraska), Freshman of the Year Michelle Kocher (Texas), Libero of the Year Ashley Mass (Iowa State) and John Cook (Nebraska) as Coach of the Year.

The All-Big 12 awards are selected by the league's head coaches, who are not allowed to vote for their own players.

Larson, the only active four-time All-Big 12 performer, led No. 4 Nebraska to an 18-2 conference record (27-2 overall) and a share of the league crown for the second straight season. The two-time senior All-American ranked among the conference leaders in four different categories in league play: points (4.75, second), kills (4.11, third), service aces (0.31, third) and digs (3.23, 10th). Larson is on NU's top-10 list in kills, digs, service aces and solo blocks, while her 51 double-doubles are the most by a Husker in the Big 12 era. The Hooper, Neb. outside hitter has been named to the All-Big 12 team every season she has competed, including three straight first-team honors.

Anderson, the 2008 Preseason Big 12 Newcomer of the Year, averaged a league-leading 11.87 assists while recording 1.94 digs and 1.40 points per set in conference action during her rookie campaign. She also tallied 0.26 service aces per set, which ranked eighth among the Big 12 leaders in conference only statistics. Anderson guided the Husker offense to the second-best kills (14.90) and hitting percentage (.272) against Big 12 opponents. The Utah transfer is ranked fourth nationally in assists, posting 11.72 per set through matches of Nov. 23. She was honored five times as the Big 12's Rookie of the Week during the award's inaugural year. Prior to becoming a Husker, Anderson trained with the 2007 U.S. National Team in Colorado Springs.

Kocher becomes the third consecutive Longhorn to be crowned Freshman of the Year. The Wheaton, Ill. native led UT to a conference-high 14.94 kills per set and a .347 hitting percentage in Big 12 play. She also helped the Longhorns pace the field in team assists per set at 13.68. Individually, she averaged 11.73 assists to rank second behind Anderson. In all matches played, Kocher has guided the Longhorns to the nation's second-best hitting percentage, amassing a .338 clip, according to the Nov. 23 NCAA statistical report. Kocher, who ranks 24th nationally in assists (11.04), was tabbed Big 12 Rookie of the Week five times.

The Big 12's overall and conference digs leader, Mass, produced 5.22 per set in league action. Mass wrapped up the regular season with 574 digs, just 32 short of tying ISU's single-season mark. As of last week, she also ranked 20th nationally with 5.08 digs per set. The sophomore libero has earned four Big 12 Defensive Player of the Week honors this season, and is the ISU career leader for conference player of the week awards with six.

Cook is being honored with Coach of the Year accolades for the third time in his career (2001, '05, '08). He guided the Huskers to their 11th Big 12 title in the league's 13-year tenure, after clinching a share of the crown with Texas. Nebraska claimed its fifth consecutive conference championship despite losing four AVCA All-Americans and its most successful senior class in school history. The fourth-ranked Huskers were rated in the top 10 of the Bison/AVCA poll the entire season. Cook's squad earned the No. 4 national seed of the 2008 NCAA Division I Volleyball Championship on Sunday, making its 27th national tournament appearance. With the selections of Amanda Gates, Kori Cooper and Larson as Academic All-Americans last Tuesday, the Huskers have had 16 selections under Cook -- more than any other program. NU was the only school with two first-team selections and three honorees.

NU posted a league-high five All-Big 12 selections -- four on the first team and one on the second. In addition to Larson's four all-conference accolades, Ashley Engle and Destinee Hooker (Texas) are being honored as first-team selections for the third time. Nataly Korobkova (Kansas State), Juliann Faucette and Lauren Paolini (Texas) become two-time All-Big 12 honorees.

-more-

2008 ALL-BIG 12 VOLLEYBALL AWARDS

PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Jordan Larson, Nebraska, OH, Sr., 6-2, Hooper, Neb./Logan View

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR:

Sydney Anderson, Nebraska, So., S, 6-0, Salt Lake City, Utah/Utah

FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR:

Michelle Kocher, Texas, S, 5-10, Wheaton, Ill./St. Francis

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Jordan Larson, Nebraska, OH, Sr., 6-2, Hooper, Neb./Logan View

LIBERO OF THE YEAR:

Ashley Mass, Iowa State, L, So., 5-8, Muskego, Wis./Muskego

COACH OF THE YEAR:

John Cook, Nebraska

ALL-BIG 12 FIRST TEAM

Name, School	Pos.	Cl.	Ht.	Hometown/Previous School
Taylor Barnes, Baylor	S	Jr.	5-11	Arlington, Texas/Martin
Anna Breyfogle, Baylor	MB	Jr.	6-0	Buda, Texas/Hays
Victoria Henson, Iowa State	OH	So.	5-11	Leavenworth, Kan./Leavenworth
Kaylee Manns, Iowa State	S	Jr.	5-10	Topeka, Kan./Washburn Rural
Rita Liliom, Kansas State	OH	Sr.	6-0	Budapest, Hungary/Csik Ferenc
Nataly Korobkova, Kansas State	OH	Sr.	6-3	Krasnoyarsk, Russia/State Siberian Technological
Sydney Anderson, Nebraska	S	So.	6-0	Salt Lake City, Utah/Utah
Kori Cooper, Nebraska	MB	Jr.	6-2	Amarillo, Texas/Amarillo
Jordan Larson, Nebraska	OH	Sr.	6-2	Hooper, Neb./Logan View
Tara Mueller, Nebraska	OH	So.	6-0	Scottsdale, Ariz./Desert Mountain
Ashley Engle, Texas	OPP	Jr.	6-3	Yorba Linda, Calif./Esperanza
Juliann Faucette, Texas	OH	So.	6-2	San Diego, Calif./Westview
Destinee Hooker, Texas	OH	Jr.	6-4	San Antonio, Texas/Southwest
Lauren Paolini, Texas	MB	Sr.	6-5	Ann Arbor, Mich./Saline

ALL-BIG 12 HONORABLE MENTION

Name, School	Pos.	Cl.	Ht.	Hometown/Previous School
Jen Malcom, Iowa State	MB	Sr.	6-1	Schaller, Iowa/Syracuse
Ashley Mass, Iowa State	L	So.	5-8	Muskego, Wis./Muskego
Megan Farr, Kansas State	MB	Sr.	5-10	Manhattan, Kan./Manhattan
Amanda Gates, Nebraska	MB	Sr.	6-2	Columbus, Neb./Columbus
Sarah Ammerman, Texas A&M	OH	Jr.	6-2	Parker, Colo./Chaparral
Mary Batis, Texas A&M	OH	Jr.	6-0	San Antonio, Texas/Clark

ALL-FRESHMAN TEAM

Name, School	Pos.	Ht.	Hometown/Previous School
Rachel Hockaday, Iowa State	OH	6-0	Decatur, Ill./Maroa-Forsyth
Nicole Tate, Kansas	S	5-10	St. Louis, Mo./Lindbergh
Brianne Barker, Oklahoma	S	5-9	Amarillo, Texas/Amarillo
Caitlin Higgins, Oklahoma	OH	6-0	Amarillo, Texas/Tascosa
Michelle Kocher, Texas	S	5-10	Wheaton, Ill./St. Francis
Amanda Dowdy, Texas Tech	MB	6-3	Lexington, Texas/Lexington