



# 2006 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship

National Semifinal #1 - UCLA vs. Nebraska

Dec. 13 • Qwest Center Omaha

Postmatch Notes - Pg. 1

Thursday's Game #1 crowd of 17,013 set a new NCAA attendance record.

With the win, Nebraska improves to 69-22 all-time in the NCAA tournament, ranking second in wins to Stanford.

Nebraska is now 6-4 in NCAA semifinal matches, including 3-1 under John Cook.

Nebraska will aim for its third national title Saturday.

The Huskers have won 57 consecutive matches in the state of Nebraska.

UCLA Head Coach Andy Banachowski has led the Bruins to the NCAA semifinals 11 times, the most of any coach. He was selected the 2006 Tachikara/AVCA Division I National Coach of the Year on Dec. 14.

UCLA's Nana Meriwether and Nellie Spicer were named AVCA All-America first team, along with Katie Carter on third team.

Nebraska has won the NCAA national title twice (1995, 2000), and Cook led the Huskers to their most recent championship. Nebraska is a three-time runner-up (1986, 1989, 2005).

Nebraska reached the national championship match last year, but lost to Washington in three games in San Antonio.

Nebraska is making its 10th NCAA national semifinal (1986, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2006) appearance.

The Huskers are 37-3 against ranked opponents since the start of the 2004 season and 74-11 under John Cook.

According to research by Rich Kern, Nebraska's 20-1 record against the other NCAA Tournament qualifiers is the best of any team in the NCAA Tournament field. Florida was second with an 18-2 record against NCAA tournament qualifiers.

Nebraska's only defeat heading into the 2006 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship was a Nov. 11 five-game loss to Colorado in Boulder, Colo.

Nebraska Head Coach John Cook has had the most successful first seven years ever at a NCAA Division I university with a 219-14 overall record.

Nebraska's Sarah Pavan and Jordan Larson were selected AVCA All-America first team this year, while Tracy Stalls was tabbed second team and Rachel Holloway third team.

UCLA lost for the first time this year at neutral site

Nebraska is 8-4 against UCLA all-time.

UCLA entered the match 28-2 when winning the first game this season – Losses after winning game one were to Washington (1-3) and Stanford (1-3).

The 23 points by Nebraska in the first game is the third fewest by the Huskers, who scored 22 points twice this year (at Texas on Oct. 18 and Minnesota on Dec. 9).

Nebraska has dropped just 13 games this season and is 5-0 after dropping the first game during a match.

Dani Busboom's 29 digs marked a career high. The total ranks tied for second all-time in NU postseason history, only one shy of Amanda McCormick's 30 against USC in 2004, and fifth overall in Nebraska single-match history.

Pavan recorded at least 20 kills for the ninth time this year. She moved past Lisa Reitsma into third on NU's all-time single-season kills list with 564.

Jordan Larson registered a career-high 25 digs, which tie her for sixth all-time in Nebraska single-match postseason history.

Tracy Stalls recorded a career-high 17 kills, surpassing her previous high of 16 at Colorado earlier this season. Thursday marked the 12th time on the season that she hit .500 or better in a match.



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Head Coach: John Cook

## Head Coach John Cook

### *Opening statement:*

"I thought it was a great match. We came out a little tight. It's hard to play in front of 17,000 people if you've never done it before. I think we were just a little wired. I think once we got going, we did a great job of preparation on UCLA, and we stayed with our game plan. Then your big players step up. Sarah Pavan took over the match in game three. I thought our team showed a lot of mental toughness, hanging in there, getting the tough points. UCLA made it a very difficult match, but that's what you want in a final four."

### *On Game One:*

"I think the experience against Minnesota of settling in and coming back helped us in our confidence in this match."

### *On the ending of game two:*

"I think mentally if we go down 0-2, we're in a big hole to come back, even with the crowd. I think at that point it also took something out of UCLA. It was definitely the turning point in the match."

### *On his offense:*

"When (Dani) Mancuso has a good night and gets Tracy (Stalls) the ball, it makes a big factor in the match and it makes us a great team because everyone is so focused on Jordan (Larson) and Sarah (Pavan). Tracy and Rachel got in a good rhythm tonight and were attacking all over the net, and that's something we've worked hard on."

### *On the crowd and the atmosphere:*

"It's hard to say how much of an impact the crowd really had. When you come out of the tunnel and see that much red, it's just unbelievable. You could feel the momentum change once we won some big rallies and the crowd got into it."

### *On the team's pressure:*

"I think this team has done a great job dealing with the pressure of getting here and winning tonight. Husker Nation should be proud of this team, and I can't wait to see the sell out Saturday night."

## Junior RS Sarah Pavan

### *On the match:*

"I'm just going to do everything I can to help my team win. Serving, passing, hitting, anything, in this match, it happened to be serving. I want to take over the match if I have to."

### *On her serving:*

"Historically I haven't served too well in the Qwest Center. I was a little bit nervous at the beginning of that first game. I just started to get in a rhythm, and I think in jump serving that's the main thing, getting into the rhythm. The reassurance of your team behind you on every serve makes everything easier as well."

## Redshirt freshman S Rachel Holloway

### *On the ending of game two:*

"Going down 0-2 is the hardest thing, even with the crowd. We did it in Minnesota, but that was the hardest thing I've ever done in my life. It was a crucial turning point in the match. Once we made it 1-1, I thought we had a great chance from there."

## Senior L Dani Busboom

### *On the crowd and atmosphere:*

"Obviously, it's amazing to play in front of that many people. I think we were talking in the locker room on how it didn't feel like (the crowd was there) because we were so focused. I didn't even hear them until the last point, and when I did, it was awesome."

## Junior MB Tracy Stalls

### *On the difficulties in game one:*

"One of the things we start to do at the beginning of a big match, from looking at our tendencies, we start to press. We want to make big plays so bad, that we don't start trusting our stuff and we get away from making simple plays that we usually make. All we had to do was take a breather, look each other in the eye and try to steer away from the visual of winning the game and just do our jobs."



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Head Coach: Andy Banachowski

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## Head Coach Andy Banachowski

### *Opening Statement*

"It was a thrill to be here in the championship tournament and a thrill to play in front of such a great crowd and we wish Nebraska well in the championship match."

### *On overcoming bad situations*

"Part of the game is overcoming adversity, whether it is a call or a hot streak by your opponents. You just have to weather the storm, I think that is what we were doing in games three and four, certainly trying to work our way back into those games."

### *On the play of Tracy Stalls*

"When I saw her on tape I thought she was very effective, I just didn't think [Nebraska] used her very much. She did the things we saw on tape and they used her a bit more, it was disappointing that she had a great match and that we weren't able to contain her."

### *Reflecting on the year*

"This was a tremendous season for us, you can go back quite a ways. We haven't had 30 wins in quite a while, we haven't had a trip to the championship in quite a while. When you look at it from those results, it certainly was a great season. But even more than the records, this was a great group of kids. They came into the gym everyday, they worked hard, they worked hard at having fun too, which kind of pushed me sometimes. They enjoyed that, and I certainly enjoyed them. This was a great year for UCLA volleyball."

### *On the turning point in the match*

"The fact that Nebraska was able to win that second game, to get those two points when it was 28 all, certainly killed our buzz a little bit. We just couldn't generate the same type of energy that we generated throughout the first game. As the match wore on, we served a little less tough and Nebraska, especially Sarah Pavan notched up their serve. I think then the pendulum swung their way as far as who was in system and who was able to run their offense."

## Senior OH Katie Carter

### *On playing in front of the large crowd*

"I think we did fine in front of the crowd, playing in front of Hawai'i and playing here last year really helped, and I think we fed off of it. I think it just made us pumped up."

## Senior MB Nana Meriwether

### *On ending the season and her career at UCLA*

"We've been through so much. This is basically the same team I've been playing with for four years so we are all super close. This past two years we've gone through so much, each player has developed and the coaches have been through so much, they've inspired us to do great things. That is why we made it so far."

## Sophomore S Nellie Spicer

### *On the turning point in the match*

"Our communication started breaking down and wasn't as strong as it was in the first game. Communication is a huge part of volleyball, especially when you are playing in front of 17,000 people."