



NOTRE DAME VOLLEYBALL

Eight-Time BIG EAST Champions • 12 Consecutive NCAA Tournament Appearances

Notes Package #1 • Aug. 31, 2004 • Contact: Bo Rottenborn, Rottenborn.2@nd.edu Page 1

NOTRE DAME VOLLEYBALL (0-0)

SEPTEMBER

1	Wed.	Loyola Univ. Chicago	7:00
3	Fri.	Nebraska (und.com)	7:00
4	Sat.	Nebraska (und.com)	7:00
7	Tue.	Valparaiso	7:00

Cal Poly Invitational (San Luis Obispo, CA)

10	Fri.	vs. Fresno State	4:30
11	Sat.	vs. Sacramento State	11:30
11	Sat.	at Cal Poly	7:00

Gamecock Invitational (Columbia, SC)

17	Fri.	vs. Michigan State	5:00
18	Sat.	vs. Southern California	3:00
19	Sun.	at South Carolina (CSTV)	2:00

28	Tue.	at Michigan	7:00
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OCTOBER

2	Sat.	*at Syracuse	2:00
9	Sat.	*at Rutgers	2:00
10	Sun.	*at Seton Hall	1:00
13	Wed.	at Illinois State (und.com)	7:00
19	Tue.	at Utah	7:00
20	Wed.	at Brigham Young	7:00
24	Sun.	*St. John's	2:00
30	Sat.	*at Georgetown	2:00
31	Sun.	*at Villanova	1:00

NOVEMBER

5	Fri.	*Connecticut (und.com)	7:00
7	Sun.	*Boston College	2:00
12	Fri.	*Pittsburgh (und.com)	4:00
14	Sun.	*West Virginia	2:00
16	Tue.	Northern Iowa (und.com)	7:00

BIG EAST Championship (Pittsburgh, PA)

20	Sat.	Semifinals	1/3:30
21	Sun.	Final	2:00

Baden Thanksgiving Tournament (Long Beach, CA)

26	Fri.	vs. UC Irvine	5:00
27	Sat.	at Long Beach State	7:00

DECEMBER

2-5	NCAA 1st/2nd Rounds (campus sites)
10-11	NCAA Regionals (campus sites)
16	NCAA Semifinals (Long Beach, CA) 5:30/8
18	NCAA Final (Long Beach, CA) 3:00

Home matches in **bold** and held in Joyce Center. All times are local.

NOTE: Number in parentheses to left of opponent is Notre Dame AVCA national ranking at time of match; number to right of opponent is its AVCA national ranking at time of match.

und.com - indicates match will feature live internet audio via www.und.com.
All home matches will feature live scoring via www.und.com.

#25 Notre Dame (0-0) vs. Loyola University Chicago (0-0) Wednesday, Sept. 1, 7 p.m. • Joyce Center

- B100 Birthday Party Remote -- 6-9pm -- chance to win tickets to the B100 Birthday Party
- Official opening night long sleeve t-shirt, sponsored by McDonald Physical Therapy, to first 250 fans

#25 Notre Dame vs. #2 Nebraska (0-0) Friday, Sept. 3, 7 p.m. • Joyce Center

- Gold Game Match: T-shirt to first 200 fans, sponsored by South Bend Orthopaedics
- Movie Night: come watch Shrek 2 following the match in the fieldhouse, sponsored by Magic 95.7
- Free admission into the movie with your volleyball ticket stub and free popcorn while supplies last
- First 500 fans will receive a Notre Dame volleyball team puzzle sponsored by Famous Dave's BBQ

#25 Notre Dame vs. #2 Nebraska Saturday, Sept. 4, 7 p.m. • Joyce Center

- Beach Volleyball Night: ND volleyball beach towel, sponsored by Papa John's Pizza, to first 200 fans
- Scout Night! Free admission for all Boy Scouts
- All ND international students and their host families are invited to a pre-game tailgating party
- Free admission to all Notre Dame host families

Notre Dame vs. Valparaiso Tuesday, Sept. 7, 7 p.m. • Joyce Center

- First 500 fans will receive a volleyball schedule glass sponsored by Between the Buns and Coke

IRISH TO OPEN SEASON WITH FOUR HOME MATCHES IN SEVEN DAYS, HIGHLIGHTED BY A PAIR AGAINST #2 NEBRASKA: The University of Notre Dame women's volleyball team will open its 25th season of varsity play with four home matches in seven days, beginning Wednesday against Loyola University Chicago. Following that contest, the Irish will welcome #2 Nebraska for matches on both Friday (Gold Game) and Saturday before Valparaiso comes to town on Tuesday. All of the matches will begin at 7 p.m. Notre Dame returns nine monogram winners, including four starters and three players who were honorable mention All-America in 2003, from last year's squad that finished 23-7 and was ranked as high as 12th before finishing 24th. The '03 team was 11-1 in BIG EAST play to claim a share of Notre Dame's eighth regular-season title in nine years since joining the conference. The Irish were the runners-up in the BIG EAST Championship, but earned their 12th consecutive bid to the NCAA tournament.

FOLLOWING THE MATCHES: Fans and media unable to attend any of the opening matches will have a number of ways of keeping up with the action. Notre Dame's official athletic website, www.und.com, will feature links to live scoring of every home contest during the season, and also will have live internet audio broadcasts of the two Nebraska matches, featuring Dr. Lorne Oke and Stephen Hinkel, available to subscribers of College Sports Pass. In addition, Nebraska's official website, www.huskers.com, will have live internet audio and live streaming video on Friday and Saturday, with John Baylor providing the call that also will be available on 16 stations across Nebraska and the surrounding states. Tuesday's match will be broadcast by Andrew Stem of Valparaiso's campus radio station, WVUR, which can be accessed at www.valpo.edu/student/wvur. For other ways to follow the Irish, see "Keeping Up With ND Volleyball" on the last page of this release.

GOLD GAME: Friday's match between Notre Dame and Nebraska has been designated the Irish volleyball "Gold Game" this season. The distinction was created by the Student-Athlete Advisory Council to encourage the entire Notre Dame community to attend designated contests, each determined to be the most significant home event of the season for the respective team.

SNAPSHOT OF THE IRISH: Notre Dame's women's volleyball program has experienced a wealth of success since the arrival of head coach **Debbie Brown** in 1991. In her 13 seasons, Brown has guided Notre Dame to a winning record every year (and 20+ wins in every year but one), compiling a 323-109 (.748) mark. The Irish have earned 12 consecutive berths to the NCAA Championship, including a '93 quarterfinal finish and three trips to the round of 16 (1994, '95, and '97). Since joining the BIG EAST Conference in '95, Notre Dame has dominated the league, winning eight regular-season and seven tournament titles in nine years. Overall, the Irish are 98-5 in regular-season BIG EAST play and 17-2 in conference tournament action. Notre Dame is 56-0 in BIG EAST regular-season matches in the Joyce Center.

The 2004 Irish team returns nine monogram winners and four starters from last year's squad that was 23-7 and finished 24th in the national rankings after peaking at 12th. The

2004 Notre Dame Volleyball Roster

No.	Name	Year	Pos.	Ht.	Hometown	Notes
<u>Probable Starters</u>						
1	Emily Loomis***	Sr.	OH/MB/OPP	6-1	Fort Wayne, IN	Named all-AVCA Northeast Region twice
3	Kelly Burrell**	Jr.	S	5-10	Phoenix, AZ	Will share time as ND's top setter
4	Meg Henican** (c)	Jr.	OH	5-9	New Orleans, LA	4.23 dig avg. after becoming libero in '03
6	Lauren Kelbley**	Jr.	MB/OH	6-1	Bascom, OH	One of 3 Div. I jrs. to be all-region in '02 & '03
10	Adrianna Stasiuk	Fr.	OH/OPP	5-10	Park Ridge, IL	"Fab 50" & 4-time All-Am. for Sports Performance
12	Lauren Brewster**	Jr.	MB	6-3	Brentwood, TN	Led NCAA Division I in blocking in '03 (1.78)
11	Danielle Herndon*	So.	DS/L	5-7	Plant City, FL	Starts season as top libero for ND
<u>Reserves</u>						
2	Leah Nedderman**	Sr.	OH	5-10	Grapevine, TX	Foot injury will sideline her for the season
5	Ellen Heintzman	Fr.	OH/OPP	5-11	Louisville, KY	5-time All-American for KIVA
7	Kelly Corbett***	Sr.	DS/L	5-10	Mountain View, CA	Played in 12 matches in '02
8	Ashley Tarutis	Fr.	S	5-8	Long Beach, CA	Will see considerable time in Irish rotation
9	Carolyn Cooper**	Jr.	MB/OPP	6-1	Houston, TX	Figures to be a top sub for Irish again
13	Laura Bresnahan	Fr.	MB/OPP	6-0	Elmhurst, IL	School-record 1154 kills for York Comm. H.S.
16	Julie McElroy	So.	OH/MB/OPP	6-0	Ames, IA	Walk-on joined Irish in spring '04

Irish also led the nation in blocks per game (3.72, with second-place Cornell at 3.52) and have three of their top four blockers back for the '04 campaign.

Offensively, Notre Dame returns three players who were named honorable mention All-America last season and who constitute the only trio in school history to register 350+ kills apiece in the same season. Senior OH/MB/OPP **Emily Loomis**, the 2002 BIG EAST Championship's Most Outstanding Player and a fourth-year starter, became the 14th player in Irish history to register 1,000+ career kills late in '03. She enters her final campaign with 1,008 and has a good chance to finish among the top five on the Notre Dame career kills list. Junior MB **Lauren Brewster** led the country in individual blocking in '03 (1.78 per game) and enters the second half of her career with a 1.72 career block average, which is the best mark in Irish history. She already has five individual BIG EAST statistical crowns to her credit (blocking in league and overall matches in '02 and '03, hitting percentage in BIG EAST play in '03), which is the most-ever by a Notre Dame player. Her classmate, MB/OH **Lauren Kelbley**, is one of only three juniors in Division I to earn all-region honors from the AVCA in each of her first two seasons. In '02, she was the rookie of the year for both the AVCA's Northeast Region and the BIG EAST Conference. Her career hitting percentage of .325 currently ranks as the second-best in school history.

Also back for the Irish is junior captain OH **Meg Henican**, who is expected to be a starting hitter this season after serving as Notre Dame's top libero for most of 2003. One of the team's top all-around players, Henican became just the third player in program history to register 400+ digs in a season, as she averaged 4.23 per game after becoming the starting libero last year. Her 3.15 career dig average is the second-best mark in Irish history.

With the graduation of AVCA honorable mention All-American **Kristen Kinder**, setter will be the biggest hole to fill for this year's Notre Dame team. Junior **Kelly Burrell**, who has been a reserve the past two seasons including as part of the 6-2 offense run by the Irish early in '03, and freshman **Ashley Tarutis**, a two-time All-American for Los Alamitos High School and the Golden West Volleyball Club in California, are expected to contribute there.

Another rookie, OH/OPP **Adrianna Stasiuk**, who was a "Fab 50" selection playing for Maine South High School and the Chicago-area Sports Performance Volleyball Club, figures to be an immediate contributor for Notre Dame in the front row, while junior MB/OPP **Carolyn Cooper** again will be a key factor, either off the bench or in a starting role. Rookie **Ellen Heintzman** of Sacred Heart Academy in Kentucky and KIVA also figures to challenge for playing time.

Sophomore **Danielle Herndon** is expected to start the season as Notre Dame's top libero after filling that role early in '03 before becoming a defensive specialist for the remainder of the season.

SCOUTING LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO: Loyola University Chicago will open its season in the Joyce Center, as Tim O'Brien makes his head coaching debut following two years as an assistant for the Ramblers. Loyola was 18-14 (11-3 Horizon) in 2003, finishing second in the Horizon League and falling in five games to Wisconsin-Green Bay in the semifinals of the conference tournament. The Ramblers return 11 letterwinners, including four starters, from that squad.

IRISH-RAMBLERS SERIES NOTES: The Irish and Ramblers, formerly foes in both the North Star and Midwestern Collegiate Conferences, will play for the first time since 1994 ... the schools met 15 times from 1981-94, with the Irish winning 12 of the matches, including

USA Today/CSTV Top 25 Coaches' Poll (Preseason)

	'03	'03
<u>Team</u>	<u>W-L</u>	<u>Final</u>
1. USC (56)	35-0	1
2. Nebraska (5)	28-5	13
3. UCLA	24-9	5
4. Florida	36-2	2
5. Minnesota (1)	26-11	4
6. Stanford (2)	25-7	10
7. Washington	23-9	9
8. Penn State	31-5	7
9. Pepperdine	27-3	6
10. California (1)	25-7	12
11. Colorado State	30-5	14
12. Georgia Tech	34-4	8
13. Hawai'i	36-2	3
14. Kansas State	30-5	11
15. Texas A&M	23-10	16
16. UC Santa Barbara	19-9	22
17. Arizona	17-15	--
18. Loyola Marymount	26-7	17
19. Illinois	26-7	15
20. Louisville	25-6	20
21. Northern Iowa	28-6	18
22. Santa Clara	20-11	19
23. Wisconsin	22-11	21
24. Utah	22-9	23
25. NOTRE DAME	23-7	24

Other receiving points and listed on 2+

ballots: Maryland, Cincinnati, **Long Beach State**, San Diego, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, **Michigan**, Colorado, **Brigham Young**, **Michigan State**, **UC Irvine**, **Pittsburgh**, Florida A&M, Ohio, Arkansas, Wichita State, **Fresno State**, Tennessee, North Carolina, Ohio State, Pacific, Western Michigan, Ball State, Florida State.

Bold indicates 2004 Notre Dame opponent.

() - first-place votes

Notre Dame 2003 Match Highs

<u>Individual</u>			
<u>Kills</u>	24	Loomis	vs. Valparaiso
4G	20	Brewster	at North Carolina
5G	22	Kelbley	vs. Houston
	22	Kelbley & Brewster	vs. VT
<u>Blocks</u>	13	Brewster	vs. Purdue
3G	11	Brewster	at Boston College
5G	13	Brewster	vs. Utah
<u>Digs</u>	28	J. Kinder	vs. Valparaiso
4G	24	J. Kinder	at North Carolina
5G	25	Henican	at Pittsburgh
<u>TA</u>	52	Brewster	vs. L'ville (NCAA)
4G	43	Loomis	at Connecticut
	43	Kelbley	at N. Iowa
5G	48	Loomis	vs. Virginia Tech
<u>Hit %</u>	.706	Kelbley	vs. Georgetown
4G	.593	Brewster	at Connecticut
5G	.476	Brewster	vs. Houston
<u>Asst.</u>	68	K. Kinder	vs. Virginia Tech
3G	45	K. Kinder	at St. John's
4G	51	K. Kinder	vs. Villanova
<u>Aces</u>	4	J. Kinder	vs. South Carolina
3G	3	Brewster	vs. Georgetown
	3	J. Kinder	at Rhode Island
	3	Brewster	vs. Illinois State
5G	3	Burrell	vs. Utah
	3	Herndon	vs. Virginia Tech
<u>Points</u>	28.5	Kelbley	vs. Houston
3G	25.5	Loomis	vs. Valparaiso
4G	27.0	Brewster	at North Carolina
<u>Team</u>			
<u>Kills</u>	3G	62	vs. Valparaiso
	4G	67	vs. E. Washington
	5G	83	vs. Virginia Tech
<u>Blocks</u>	3G	19	at Boston College
	4G	20	vs. Villanova
	5G	22.5	at Pittsburgh
<u>Digs</u>	3G	81	vs. Valparaiso
	4G	88	at Connecticut
	5G	80	vs. Utah
<u>TA</u>	3G	167	vs. Valparaiso
	4G	182	vs. South Carolina
	5G	196	vs. Virginia Tech
<u>Hit %</u>	3G	.436	vs. Seton Hall
	4G	.324	vs. Arizona
	5G	.291	vs. Virginia Tech
<u>Asst.</u>	3G	55	vs. Valparaiso
	4G	61	vs. Miami (BE)
	5G	79	vs. Virginia Tech
<u>Aces</u>	3G	7	vs. Valparaiso & Syracuse
	4G	10	vs. South Carolina
	5G	8	vs. Utah
<u>Points</u>	3G	76	vs. Valparaiso
	4G	93	vs. Villanova
	5G	100	vs. Virginia Tech

each of the last eight ... Notre Dame is 3-0 against the Ramblers in the Joyce Center, dropping just one game in picking up victories in 1986, '91, and '93 ... Loyola was victorious in the first two contests between the schools, prevailing in two games (best-of-three format) in 1981 in a neutral-site match at Chicago State University before winning a five-game decision (15-12 in the fifth) on its home court in a North Star Conference tilt in '83 ... Notre Dame got its first win over the Ramblers in five games (15-11 in the fifth) in 1985 in Chicago, which began streak in which the Irish would win 12 of the next 13 matches over a 10-year span ... Loyola's lone victory during that time was a four-game decision in 1990 in Chicago in the first time the schools met as Midwestern Collegiate Conference (MCC) foes ... the schools have played five times in the postseason (North Star tournament in '85, MCC tournament in 1990-92 and '94), with Notre Dame prevailing on each occasion ... Loyola and Notre Dame twice played in the conference title match, with the Irish winning 2-0 in '85 (North Star in St. Louis) and 3-1 in '92 (MCC in Pittsburgh) ... in the most recent meeting, Notre Dame won in three games in the 1994 MCC Championship in DeKalb, Ill. ... Notre Dame has won 38 games and Loyola 16, with the Irish winning each of the last 11 (1992-94) and 16 of the last 17 (1991-94) ... ND has won three of the four five-game matches between the schools, with wins in 1985 and in the '90 and '91 MCC tournaments after Loyola won in '83 ... the Irish are 21-0 against current Horizon League members under head coach Debbie Brown and 36-11 all-time ... in the '92 MCC final, Notre Dame had 11 solo blocks, which is tied for the most-ever by an Irish team in a match ... that contest saw the Ramblers hit just .048 (50-41-186), which stands as the lowest attack percentage by a Notre Dame opponent in a four-game match in school history ... two freshmen – **Laura Bresnahan** (Elmhurst, York H.S., Lions Elite VBC) and **Adrianna Stasiuk** (Park Ridge, Maine South H.S., Sports Performance VBC) – are the latest Chicago-area products to play for the Irish ... a total of 18 Notre Dame volleyball players have hailed from Illinois, making it tied with Indiana as the second-most common home state of Irish players.

SCOUTING NEBRASKA: Nebraska will open its 2004 season this weekend at the Joyce Center. After finishing 2003 ranked 13th, the Cornhuskers jumped 11 spots to #2 in the preseason AVCA national rankings, based largely on the return of six starters from last year's squad, as well as the addition of an outstanding freshman class. Nebraska was 28-5 (17-3 Big XII) in '03, finishing second in the Big XII Conference. The Huskers topped Valparaiso and Dayton to reach the round of 16 of the NCAA Championship before falling in four games to UCLA. Nebraska is coached by John Cook, who has a 285-82 (.777) record in 11 years as a head coach, including a 124-9 (.932) mark in five seasons at NU. Among the top returnees for the Huskers are MB Melissa Elmer, a second-team All-American in '03 who was sixth nationally in blocking, and OH Jennifer Saleaumua, who was honorable mention All-America.

IRISH-HUSKERS SERIES NOTES: Notre Dame and Nebraska will meet for the ninth and 10th times overall and first since 2001 ... the Cornhuskers have won six of the eight meetings, including each of the last three ... this will be Nebraska's first trip since 2000 to the Joyce Center, where the teams have split four matches ... that match, played prior to a pep rally for the matchup between the schools in football slated for the following day, featured a crowd of 3,102, which, at the time, was the largest in school history ... each of the last six contests have featured both squads carrying national rankings at the time of the match ... every NU team the Irish have faced has been ranked eighth or higher, including a pair of squads ranked #1 (in 1995 and 2001) ... the teams first met in 1983 at a Thanksgiving tournament in Baton Rouge, La., and then played a home-and-home series in 1987 and '88, with the Huskers winning each of those meetings without dropping a game ... Notre Dame's lone victories against Nebraska both came during the 1993 season in the Joyce Center, when the 14th-ranked Irish beat #3 NU in four games in the Golden Dome Invitational and then upset the eighth-ranked Cornhuskers 3-0 in the second round of the NCAA tournament ... the former still stands as the highest-ranked win in Notre Dame's history ... the Huskers then won at home in 1995 and 2001 and in the Joyce Center in 2000 ... the last match between the teams came on Sept. 8, 2001, in the US Bank/Arby's Tournament in Lincoln, with the Cornhuskers winning in three games ... only once in nine matches has the contest not been decided in three games (the '93 Irish victory in four) ... Nebraska has won 19 of the 25 games ... Debbie Brown holds a 17-12 career record against the Big XII, including 12-10 at Notre Dame ... this year's matches feature the only teams to lead NCAA Division I in blocking over the past four seasons ... NU was first in 1998, 2000, '01, and '02 before the Irish led the nation last season ... last year's Nebraska squad was ranked in the national top 25 in four statistical categories: blocks (6th, 3.17), winning percentage (11th, .848), kills (23rd, 16.37), and assists (25th, 14.94) ... the matches also will feature two of the top six individual blockers in the country from a year ago: Notre Dame's **Lauren Brewster** (1st, 1.78) and NU's Melissa Elmer (6th, 1.59) ... Elmer was an AVCA second-team All-American in '03, while Jennifer Saleaumua was named honorable mention All-America ... the only current Notre Dame player to have played against Nebraska is **Emily Loomis**, who had five kills and two digs in the '01 match.

2004 BIG EAST Preseason Coaches Poll

School	Points	'03 BIG EAST	'03 Overall	'03 Finish	ND vs.
1. NOTRE DAME (9)	99	11-1	23-7	T-1 st	—
2. Pittsburgh (2)	90	11-1	26-6	T-1 st	H – Nov. 12
3. Connecticut	78	6-6	20-12	7 th	H – Nov. 5
4. St. John's	70	7-5	26-9	T-4 th	H – Oct. 24
5. Villanova	57	7-5	14-15	T-4 th	A – Oct. 31
6. Boston College	50	3-9	17-12	T-10 th	H – Nov. 7
7. Georgetown	42	3-9	9-19	T-10 th	A – Oct. 30
8. Rutgers	40	5-7	11-17	8 th	A – Oct. 9
9. Syracuse	38	4-8	17-16	9 th	A – Oct. 2
10. Seton Hall	20	3-9	20-13	T-10 th	A – Oct. 10
11. West Virginia	17	3-10	6-21	13 th	H – Nov. 14

SCOUTING VALPARAISO: Valparaiso opens its season by playing host to Michigan on Wednesday before heading to Muncie, Ind., for the Ball State Classic on Friday and Saturday (Albany and Southeast Missouri State are the tournament's other teams). The Crusaders return eight letterwinners and three starters from last year's team that finished 27-8 (13-1 Mid-Con) and was first in the Mid-Continent Conference. Valpo then beat Oral Roberts in five games to capture the league tournament and advance to the NCAA Championship for the first time in school history, where it would lose to Nebraska. The Crusaders are coached by Carin Avery, whose husband Mike is an assistant coach for Notre Dame's men's soccer team. She has a 102-42 (.708) career mark in five previous years as a head coach, including a 47-18 (.723) record in two years at Valpo. Among VU's top returnees is MB Liz Mikos, who finished second in the nation in blocking last year with an average of 1.77 that was just behind Notre Dame's MB **Lauren Brewster** (Brentwood, Tenn./Brentwood H.S.).

IRISH-CRUSADERS SERIES NOTES: The Irish and Crusaders, formerly North Star Conference rivals, will meet for the seventh consecutive year and 21st time overall, which will tie Valpo for the most-common opponent in the history of Notre Dame varsity volleyball until the Irish face Pittsburgh for the 22nd time on Nov. 12 ... after Valparaiso won the first two meetings, Notre Dame has won 18 in a row, dating back to 1981 ... the Irish have won each of the last 31 games against Valpo, taking 10 straight matches by 3-0 scores ... this will be the Crusaders' second trip in as many years to the Joyce Center, where they are winless in eight visits (though they won a game apiece in 1983 and '87) ... the Irish won 30-21, 30-17, 32-30 a season ago against the previously undefeated (8-0) Crusaders ... Notre Dame's 18 victories vs. Valparaiso is the most against any opponent ... the Crusaders won a pair of matches by 2-0 scores in the inaugural season of Irish varsity volleyball, 1980, one at Valparaiso and the other in the Indiana Division II Tournament in Hammond ... Notre Dame's first win vs. its intrastate rival was a come-from-behind 2-1 decision in a neutral-site match in Calumet, Ind., in 1981 ... since then, the Crusaders have managed to avoid a sweep by the Irish just three times, losing in four in 1982, '83, and '87 ... the teams have never played a five-game match ... Notre Dame won all five North Star Conference matches from 1983-87, as well as a pair in the NSC tournament in Chicago (in '86 and '87) ... the Irish have won 53 of 61 games, including 47 of the last 48 ... Notre Dame holds a 23-7 all-time record against current members of the Mid-Continent Conference, including 10-2 under head coach **Debbie Brown** ... last year's match saw a pair of Irish school records, as **Jessica Kinder** had 28 digs, the most-ever in a three-game contest, and **Emily Loomis** (Fort Wayne, Ind./Bishop Luers H.S.) set a mark for most kills in a match without an error, slamming 24 ... the 2001 match was notable in a number of ways, as the Irish won by 39 points (30-22, 30-12, 30-17), the second-largest margin of victory for Notre Dame under the 30-point scoring format ... the game-two margin also stands as the second-largest in a game in Irish history ... that match took just 1:15, making it the third-quickest tilt under rally scoring ... in 1994, Valparaiso hit -.105 (13-21-76), which stands as the second-lowest hitting mark ever by an Irish opponent ... in 1984, Notre Dame served up 17 aces in a three-game victory over Valpo, a sum that stands as the most-ever for the Irish in any length match ... this year's contest will feature the top two individual blockers in Division I from a year ago: Notre Dame's **Lauren Brewster** (1st, 1.78) and Valpo's Liz Mikos (2nd, 1.77) ... the Crusaders ranked in the national top 20 in both digs (13th, 18.87) and blocks (18th, 2.97) in '03 ... Sara Silcox ranked 18th nationally in digs (4.56) ... in three matches against Valpo, OH/MB/OPP **Emily Loomis** has 40 kills (4.44) on .384 hitting, as well as 12 digs (1.33) and nine blocks (1.00) ... in two matches against VU, MB/OH **Lauren Kelbley** has 13 kills (3.25) on .364 hitting, while Brewster has 13 kills (3.25) and nine blocks (2.25) and MB/OPP **Carolyn Cooper** has registered eight kills (2.00) and five blocks (1.25).

HEAD COACH DEBBIE BROWN: Irish head coach **Debbie Brown** is in her 14th season at the helm of the Notre Dame program. She has led the Irish to a 323-109 (.748)

2003 Notre Dame Statistical LeadersKills

Emily Loomis 387 (3.55)
Lauren Brewster 372 (3.58)
Lauren Kelbley 352 (3.29)

Hitting %

Lauren Brewster 341
Lauren Kelbley 303
Kristen Kinder 279

Assists

Kristen Kinder 1,108 (10.17)
Kelly Burrell 206 (2.71)
Meg Henican 66 (0.61)
Jessica Kinder 66 (0.61)

Digs

Meg Henican 419 (3.84)
Jessica Kinder 354 (3.25)
Kristen Kinder 242 (2.22)

Blocks

Lauren Brewster 185 (1.78)
Lauren Kelbley 109 (1.24)
Emily Loomis 119 (1.09)

Service Aces

Jessica Kinder 33 (0.30)
Lauren Brewster 27 (0.26)
Lauren Kelbley 25 (0.23)

Points

Lauren Brewster 506.5 (4.87)
Emily Loomis 472.5 (4.33)
Lauren Kelbley 455.5 (4.25)

Games Played

Meg Henican 109
Jessica Kinder 109
Kristen Kinder 109
Emily Loomis 109

Note: Returning players in **bold**.

2004 Preseason BIG EAST AwardsPlayer of the Year

Megan Miller, Pittsburgh, Sr., MH

All-BIG EAST Team

Jamie Hadenfeldt, UConn, Sr., OH
Sara Albert, Georgetown, Sr., MB
Lauren Brewster, ND, Jr., MB
Lauren Kelbley, ND, Jr., MB/OH
Emily Loomis, ND, Sr., OH/MB/OPP
Megan Miller, Pittsburgh, Sr., MH
Jackie Ahlers, St. John's, Jr., MH

mark, while holding a 440-192 (.692) overall record. Brown's Notre Dame teams have earned 12 consecutive NCAA tournament berths, advancing to the quarterfinals in 1993 and the round of 16 in '94, '95, and '97. Her squads have won 20 or more matches 12 times. A nine-time conference coach of the year (4 MCC, 4 BIG EAST, 1 Pac-10), she has coached eight Irish players to All-America honors, while 32 have gained all-BIG EAST mention since 1995. The Irish also have claimed 12 regular-season conference titles (4 Midwestern Collegiate, 8 BIG EAST) and 11 league tournament crowns (4 MCC, 7 BIG EAST). A captain of the 1980 U.S. Olympic volleyball team after winning a pair of national championships and earning All-America honors twice playing at USC, Brown graduated from Arizona State in 1982 and coached her alma mater from 1983-88, helping the Sun Devils to five NCAA tournaments.

IRISH 25th IN PRESEASON NATIONAL RANKINGS: Featuring a squad that returns four starters from last year, Notre Dame was 25th in the preseason edition of the *USA Today/CSTV Top 25 Coaches' Poll*, announced by the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA). It is the third time in four years and the ninth time since 1993 that the Irish are listed in the AVCA's preseason rankings. Notre Dame will take on 11 teams that are either ranked or receiving votes in the poll and is the only school that will take on both the preseason #1 and #2 teams in '04. The Irish are 23rd in the RichKern.com preseason poll.

Four '04 Irish opponents are listed in the preseason top 25. USC (Sept. 18 in Columbia, S.C.) leads the way at first, with Nebraska (Sept. 3, home; Sept. 4, home) right behind at second. Northern Iowa (Nov. 16, home) is 21st and Utah (Oct. 19, away) is 24th, while seven teams -- Long Beach State (Nov. 27, away), Michigan (Sept. 28, away), Brigham Young (Oct. 20, away), Michigan State (Sept. 17 in Columbia, S.C.), UC Irvine (Nov. 26 in Long Beach, Calif.), Pittsburgh (Nov. 12, home), and Fresno State (Sept. 10 in San Luis Obispo, Calif.) -- were receiving points and listed on two or more ballots.

START ME UP: Notre Dame has had a great deal of success in season openers over the years. The Irish are 13-0 in season openers in the **Debbie Brown** era and 19-5 overall. Further, Notre Dame has opened 2-0 in eight of the last nine seasons, including 3-0 in three of the last four. Last season, the Irish upset #10 Arizona in four games in the Four Points Sheraton Classic before losing 3-1 to host #5 Pepperdine the following day.

Notre Dame will try to continue its history of success in home openers. For 14 consecutive seasons, the Irish have won their first home match, including all 13 years in the **Debbie Brown** era. The last time Notre Dame lost its home opener was 1989, when Western Michigan gained a five-game triumph in the Notre Dame Invitational. Overall, the Irish are 19-5 in home openers. In 2003, Notre Dame beat Valparaiso in three games in its first match in the Joyce Center.

WE'RE PLAYING THEM AGAIN?: This weekend will mark the sixth time in Irish history -- and only the second in the Joyce Center -- that Notre Dame has played the same team on back-to-back days. Three of the previous occasions came on trips to Hawaii, as the Irish split a pair with the Rainbow Wahine in 1992 and then lost two to Hawaii in both 1996 and 2002. Notre Dame first undertook a two-day doubleheader in 1991, beating Texas-Arlington on its home court in back-to-back days in late November. The only previous time a team has come to the Joyce Center for two matches in as many days was Sept. 23-24, 1995, when the seventh-ranked Irish topped #15 Colorado in three games in both matches.

SEE THEM NOW! ... LONG ROAD TRIP AWAITS: Irish fans should make every effort to see Notre Dame during its opening week of action because after playing four straight at home to begin the season, the Irish will play their next 10 matches away from home. Following next Tuesday's match with Valparaiso, it will be more than five weeks until Notre Dame plays again in the Joyce Center; the Irish will welcome Illinois State on Oct. 13. The road swing will feature trips to the Cal Poly Invitational in San Luis Obispo, Calif., and the Gamecock Invitational in Columbia, S.C., as well as matches at Michigan, Syracuse, Rutgers, and Seton Hall.

HOME, SWEET HOME: Notre Dame's Joyce Center has become one of the most difficult places in the nation for road teams to win, especially since the arrival of head coach **Debbie Brown** in 1991. Over the last 13 years, Notre Dame has posted a 159-23 (.874) home record, including a 39-3 (.929) mark over the last three seasons. The Irish, who enter '04 with a nine-match home winning streak in regular-season action, have pieced together a variety of impressive winning streaks on their home floor, winning 14 or more in a row on five different occasions, highlighted by 27 consecutive home wins from 1993-95 and a program-best 36-match winning streak from 2000-02. Notre Dame currently has won 72 consecutive regular-season conference matches (56-0 vs. the BIG EAST) in the Joyce Center, with its last defeat coming in 1990. The Irish, who have topped 13 ranked teams -- including four top-10 squads -- at home, also hold a 152-6 (.962) record against unranked teams in the Joyce Center, including a 52-match winning streak (1998-2002).

Irish Double-Doubles in 2003

Lauren Brewster -- Season: 4, Career: 7
13 kills, 13 blocks vs. Purdue
20 kills, 10 blocks at North Carolina
21 kills, 10 blocks at Pittsburgh
16 kills, 11 blocks vs. Miami (BE semis)

Kelly Burrell -- Season: 1, Career: 2
20 assists, 12 digs at Texas

Meg Henican -- Season: 1, Career: 2
11 kills, 14 digs vs. Utah

Jessica Kinder -- Season: 2, Career: 9
10 kills, 10 digs vs. Virginia Tech
13 kills, 16 digs vs. Miami (BE semis)

Kristen Kinder -- Season: 9, Career: 27
29 assists, 14 digs vs. Utah
29 assists, 10 digs vs. South Carolina
35 assists, 13 digs vs. Purdue
39 assists, 10 digs vs. Georgetown
46 assists, 10 digs at Connecticut
29 assists, 12 digs vs. Illinois State
24 assists, 10 digs vs. Syracuse
51 assists, 15 digs at Pittsburgh
47 assists, 15 digs vs. Miami (BE semis)

Emily Loomis -- Season: 4, Career: 12
17 kills, 11 digs vs. Villanova
12 kills, 17 digs at UConn
16 kills, 18 digs vs. Virginia Tech
12 kills, 10 digs vs. Miami

Notre Dame in 2003...

... at home: 12-2
... away: 7-4
... on neutral courts: 3-1
... in three games: 12-3
... in four games: 8-3
... in five games: 2-1
... vs. ranked opponents: 1-4
... vs. BIG EAST teams: 12-2
... vs. non-con. teams: 11-5
... at night: 13-2
... during the day: 9-5
... in tournament play: 7-4

THREE RECENT NATIONAL CHAMPIONS, A DOZEN '03 NCAA TOURNAMENT TEAMS HIGHLIGHT 2004 SCHEDULE: A dozen teams earning berths to last year's NCAA Championship and a trio of teams that have combined to win six of the last 11 national titles highlight the 2004 schedule. Notre Dame will take on three of the last five teams to win national championships. After consecutive home dates against Nebraska (national champions in 1995 and 2000) this weekend, the Irish will face two-time defending NCAA champion USC, where Notre Dame head coach **Debbie Brown** was a standout outside hitter, on Sept. 18 in Columbia, S.C., as well as three-time national champ (1989, '93, '98) Long Beach State on Nov. 27 on the 49ers' home floor. Twelve of Notre Dame's 17 non-conference matches will be against NCAA participants from a year ago, including half of the 16 road matches.

PRESEASON BIG EAST FAVORITES: For the 10th consecutive season, Notre Dame is the favorite in the BIG EAST Conference. The Irish, who have captured eight regular-season and seven tournament crowns in their nine years in the league, garnered nine first-place votes and were chosen as the favorite in the preseason volleyball poll of conference head coaches. Pittsburgh, which beat the Irish in last year's BIG EAST final after the teams shared the regular-season crown, gained two first-place votes and was picked second. The teams will meet in the Joyce Center on Nov. 12 in a match slated to take place before the football pep rally for the matchup between the schools on the gridiron the following day.

For the first time since the debut of the preseason all-BIG EAST team in 1998, one school placed three players on it. Notre Dame senior OH/MB/OPP **Emily Loomis** (Fort Wayne, Ind./Bishop Luers H.S.) and juniors MB **Lauren Brewster** (Brentwood, Tenn./Brentwood H.S.) and MB/OH **Lauren Kelbley** (Bascom, Ohio/Hopewell-Loudon H.S.) were tabbed after the younger two were first-team all-league honorees in '03 and Loomis was on the second team after being a first-team selection in '02.

IRISH ONE OF JUST TWO DIVISION I TEAMS RETURNING THREE ALL-REGION PLAYERS: Back for Notre Dame in 2004 are three players – senior OH/MB/OPP **Emily Loomis** (Fort Wayne, Ind./Bishop Luers H.S.) junior MB **Lauren Brewster** (Brentwood, Tenn./Brentwood H.S.) and junior MB/OH **Lauren Kelbley** (Bascom, Ohio/Hopewell-Loudon H.S.) – who were tabbed all-Northeast Region and honorable mention All-America by the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) last season. The Irish are one of only a pair of Division I squads (also two-time defending NCAA champion USC) to have three players back who earned all-region accolades from the AVCA in 2003.

IRISH ONLY SQUAD IN NATION TO TAKE ON PRESEASON #1 AND #2 TEAMS: Notre Dame is the only squad in the nation that will play both the preseason #1 and #2 teams in 2004. The Irish will take on two-time defending NCAA champion and #1 USC on Sept. 18 in the Gamecock Invitational in Columbia, S.C. and will play host to #2 Nebraska twice this weekend, with both Friday's and Saturday's matches beginning at 7 p.m. (EST) in the Joyce Center.

BREWSTER, IRISH LOOK TO REPEAT AS NCAA BLOCKING CHAMPS: In 2003, Notre Dame won its first two NCAA statistical championships, as the Irish were the top blocking squad in Division I with an average of 3.72 per game (second-place Cornell averaged only 3.52), while then-sophomore MB **Lauren Brewster** (Brentwood, Tenn./Brentwood H.S.) led the nation in individual blocking (1.78 per game). The core of Notre Dame's blocking unit returns for the '04 season, with Brewster, junior MB/OH **Lauren Kelbley** (Bascom, Ohio/Hopewell-Loudon H.S.), and senior OH/MB/OPP **Emily Loomis** (Fort Wayne, Ind./Bishop Luers H.S.) back in the fold. Gone is OPP **Katie Neff**, who was third on the Irish in blocking in both 2002 and '03. That quartet holds the distinction of being the only foursome in Notre Dame history to post 100 blocks apiece in the same season, a feat it accomplished in both of the last two campaigns.

CLASS OF THE CONFERENCE: Notre Dame has experienced unprecedented success in the nine years since joining the BIG EAST Conference in 1995. The Irish have compiled a 98-5 (.951) regular-season mark, highlighted by eight titles and winning streaks of 45 and 35 consecutive matches. Notre Dame is 56-0 in BIG EAST regular-season matches in the Joyce Center, and the Irish have won seven BIG EAST tournament championships, posting a 17-2 mark in the event and reaching the final every year. Notre Dame also has dominated the conference awards, winning player-of-the-year honors six times and the coach-of-the-year award on four occasions. In seven instances, Irish players have been named the league tournament's most outstanding player. Also, Notre Dame student-athletes have garnered 32 all-conference accolades, including 20 first-team honors, which account for more than one-third of the first-team selections during the span.

SIX-MATCH SCHEDULE SET FOR www.und.com INTERNET AUDIO: Notre Dame's official athletic website, www.und.com, will feature six internet audio broadcasts of Irish matches this season, available to subscribers of College Sports Pass. Former Bethel College volleyball coach Dr. Lorne Oke returns to call the action, and he will be joined again by Stephen Hinkel, in his second season of Irish volleyball. The schedule kicks off this weekend, as they will call both matches against Nebraska (Friday and Saturday, both at 7 p.m.). Other matches to feature internet audio will be Oct. 13 vs. Illinois State (7 p.m.), Nov. 5 vs. Connecticut (7 p.m.), Nov. 12 vs. Pittsburgh (4 p.m.), and Nov. 16 vs. Northern Iowa (7 p.m.). For more information about College Sports Pass, see www.und.com.

ND-SOUTH CAROLINA MATCH TO BE ON CSTV: For the second year in a row, Notre Dame will be featured on *Sunday Night Spikes*, a presentation of College Sports Television (CSTV) and the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) that features matches of the week broadcast on Sunday evenings throughout the season. The Irish match at South Carolina on Sept. 19, the final day of the Gamecock Invitational, will be shown on CSTV. A year ago, South Carolina upset the Irish in the Shamrock Invitational in the Joyce Center. Notre Dame beat league rival Miami in three games at home as part of the inaugural season of *Sunday Night Spikes*.

KEEPING UP WITH ND VOLLEYBALL: For the fastest results of Notre Dame volleyball matches, call the Notre Dame sports hotline at (574) 631-3000 and choose #5 and #1. The hotline provides schedules and result information for all Irish varsity sports and serves as a supplement to the match recaps and weekly releases provided on the official athletics website at www.und.com. The hotline is the first medium updated with results of each Notre Dame volleyball match.

Once again, www.und.com will be the best place for in-depth coverage of Irish volleyball. Live scoring of all home matches, as well as live internet broadcasts of six contests supplement the regular match previews and recaps.

In addition, media members and fans may be added to the sports information e-mail release list by contacting assistant sports information director Bo Rottenborn at Rottenborn.2@nd.edu. All requests for story ideas, interview access, match credentials, and further information on Irish volleyball should similarly be directed to Rottenborn. Credential and interview requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance.