

Freiborg, Groh Named To AVCA All-America Teams

Posted: Tuesday, November 14, 2006

UW-Eau Claire seniors **Carly Freiborg** (*Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West*) and **Jess Groh** (*Eau Claire/North*) have been named to the AVCA All-America second and third teams, respectively.

The American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) selected three 12-player All-America teams from a pool of 96 players who had been named to the eight All-Region first teams.

The remaining All-Region first team members were accorded honorable mention in the balloting including Blugold senior **Shanna Berger** (*Baldwin/Baldwin-Woodville*). Last year, Blugold hitters Molly Menard and Jenny Wolter received honorable mention.

This is only the second time in the 26-year history of the AVCA All-America selections that the Blugolds have had two players named to the top three teams in the same year. In 1994, Michelle Arganbright was a first team pick and Marnie Blau was a second team selection.

Only 10 Blugolds had previously earned a spot on one of the first three AVCA All-America teams with four first team members, five second team members and one third team member. The previous Blugold honorees are Kristi Griggs (2nd-1987, 1st-1988), Deb Allaman (2nd-1989), Sarah Allen (2nd-1992), Arganbright (1st-1994), Blau (2nd-1994), Rhonda Endres (2nd-1996), Maria Jensen (1st-1997), Brooke Wozniak-Schmidt (1st-2003) and Becca Carstensen (3rd-2004).

Freiborg, at 5-foot-9, a four-year setter, broke the school assist record as she finished her career with 5,021. She also ranks third in service aces with 243, eighth in digs with 1,132 and 10th in total blocks with 278.

Groh, a 6-0 middle hitter, led the team in kills this year with 432 as she hit .334 for the season. Her .301 career hitting average is eighth best in school history. She also set the school career records for blocking assists (423) and total blocks (508) and finished fifth in solo blocks with 85.

Berger, a 5-5 libero, finished second only to Marnie Blau in career digs with 1,983. A three-time WIAC All-Defensive honoree, Berger also finished 12th in career service aces with 129.

With Groh, Freiborg and Berger in the lineup, the Blugolds produced a 103-30 record over the past four seasons including back-to-back records of 30-5 in 2005 and 30-4 in 2006. This year, the Blugolds shared the conference regular season title with UW-Oshkosh to mark only the second conference championship in school history. The other occurred nearly two decades ago in 1987 when the team finished with a 52-3 season record.

The past two years, the Blugolds have also advanced to the Sweet Sixteen round of the NCAA tournament, both times losing to conference rival UW-Whitewater. The Warhawks went on to capture the NCAA national championship last year after edging the Blugolds, 3-2, in the sectional final. They are playing in the national championship tournament this week in Salem, Virginia, after beating the Blugolds, 3-1, in the sectional final last Saturday.

- TP -