

## NCAA Division III Women's Volleyball Championship • Oshkosh Regional

### University of St. Thomas Notes

The No. 9-ranked Tommie volleyball team received an at-large bid into the 62-team Division III playoffs. The Tommies start play Thursday in the single-elimination event and have an opening match against No. 7-rated UW-Whitewater. The winner of that match plays Friday against either St. Benedict or Luther.

Ex-Tommie All-American setter Jane Gibbs is the head coach at Luther.

The Tommies (24-7) are in the NCAA playoffs for the 11th time overall, and fifth year in a row. UST qualified from 1987-92 and has advanced each year since 2005 with region runner-up finishes in 1990, 1991, 1992, 2005 and 2007.

They need one victory to post their fifth consecutive 25-win season.

Seventh-year Tommie head coach Thanh Pham is 182-49 at UST, including a 68-9 record in regular-season conference matches. Pham has been voted MIAC Coach of the Year in 2005, 2007 and 2008, and UST has had the conference Player of the Year in four of his seven seasons.

St. Thomas, Wittenberg, Washington (Mo.) and Trinity (Tex.) were the lone teams ranked in the top 15 in the final 2008 AVCA poll to make the 2008-09 AVCA team academic honor list with a gpa over 3.30.

St. Thomas has played one of the nation's toughest schedules including five-set losses to the teams currently ranked 1-2-3.

The Tommies have been ranked in the top 25 by the AVCA for 56 consecutive polls and been in the top 15 for a conference-record 49 polls in a row.

UST had a 36-match conference win streak halted Oct. 14 with a four-set loss to St. Ben's. The Tommies had won the previous nine matches against the Blazers, including a five-set win in September.

Junior setter Emily Foster, an AVCA All-American in 2008, surpassed 4,000 career assists last week and now has 4,039, with 960 digs, 53 aces and 329 blocks in 347 career sets. She was chosen 2009 conference Player of the Year. The Tommies are 80-15 in her three-year era, including a 41-2 record against MIAC opponents.

Nine of the Toms' 15 losses the last three seasons have come in five sets, including five of their seven 2009 defeats.

Senior hitter Kyley Crotty, a three-year starter, also made first-team all-conference. Crotty has 348 kills and 552 digs this season. She has 1,158 digs and 834 kills in 319 career sets and has 20 double-doubles in kills/digs in her last 24 matches this season.

UST has five players with more than 200 kills this season.

With construction underway for UST's Anderson Athletic and Recreation Building, which will open in 2010, the Tommies played their six home matches off campus, two miles away. The Tommies said goodbye to Schoenecker Arena, where they compiled a 39-5 record over the last four seasons.