

# 2014 Season in Review

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The 2014 Big Ten volleyball season came to a close at the NCAA Championships in Oklahoma City, Okla., as Penn State won its sixth title in the last eight years and seventh overall, setting a new NCAA record.

**We are the Champions:** With its 3-0 (25-21, 26-24, 25-14) win over BYU in the NCAA Championship match at Chesapeake Energy Arena in Oklahoma City, Okla., fifth-seeded Penn State won the 2014 NCAA Volleyball Championship, the Nittany Lions' sixth title in the last eight years and seventh overall. Penn State's seven national championships marks an NCAA record. The Nittany Lions claimed back-to-back national titles for the first time since 2009 and 2010. The Big Ten has now won seven national championships in the past nine years. To read about Penn State's national title, click [HERE](#).

**NCAA Bound:** Six Big Ten volleyball teams were selected to the 2014 NCAA Volleyball Tournament. Big Ten Champion Wisconsin entered the tournament as the No. 4 overall seed, while No. 5 Penn State, No. 9 Illinois and No. 14 Nebraska each earned top-16 seeds. Michigan State and Ohio State also received bids to round out the Big Ten contingent in the tournament. For a look back at the entire NCAA Tournament, visit the Tournament Central page [HERE](#).

**Nationally Noticed:** Ten Big Ten volleyball players were selected as AVCA Division I All-Americans, with three players earning first-team status. Additionally, Penn State's Micha Hancock was named the Division I Player of the Year, while teammate Ali Frantti was tabbed Division I Freshman of the Year. Wisconsin's Lauren Carlini and Penn State's Nia Grant and Micha Hancock earned first-team honors, while Illinois' Jocelynn Birks, Penn State's Ali Frantti and Aiyana Whitney and Wisconsin's Taylor Morey and Courtney Thomas were named to the second team. Minnesota's Paige Tapp and Nebraska's Kadie Rolfzen earned third-team honors. Sixteen others received honorable mention recognition - Illinois' Liz McMahon, Michigan's Abby Cole, Michigan State's Rachel Minarick and Kori Moster and Chloe Reinig, Minnesota's Daly Santana, Nebraska's Kelsey Fien and Mary Pollmiller, Northwestern's Katie Dutchman, Ohio State's Elizabeth Campbell, Taylor Sandbothe and Taylor Sherwin, Purdue's Annie Drews and Val Nichol and Wisconsin's Haleigh Nelson and Dominique Thompson. For the complete release, click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

**Off The Court Honors:** Illinois senior Anna Dorn was named to the Capital One Academic All-America Second Team, as selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA). She is the fourth Illini in program history to take home this prestigious honor, joining Director of Operations Johannah Bangert (First Team, 2010), two-time First-Team honoree Laura Bush (1989, 1990) and Disa Johnson (Second Team, 1987). Of the 18 student-athletes named to the three Academic All-America teams, Dorn is the sole representative from the Big Ten. Earlier in the season, Dorn made history by becoming the first Illini ever to earn three First Team Academic All-District awards. A three-time Big Ten Distinguished Scholar, she has a 3.96 cumulative GPA through her first four years at Illinois. A kinesiology major, the Munster, Indiana, native has been accepted to graduate school where she plans to study to become a physical therapist. For the complete release, click [HERE](#).

**Head of the CLASS:** Illinois opposite hitter Liz McMahon was selected as the 2014 Senior CLASS Award winner in NCAA Division I women's volleyball. The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I volleyball coaches, national volleyball media and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I volleyball. To be eligible for the award, a student-athlete must be classified as an NCAA Division I senior and have notable achievements in four areas of excellence - classroom, community, character and competition. A model student-athlete both on and off the volleyball court, McMahon is a three-time Academic All-Big Ten honoree who finished her career at Illinois among the school's top ten in virtually every statistical category - kills, attacks, block assists, points, sets played and matches played. Additionally, Michigan State's Kori Moster was named to the Senior CLASS award first team. Click [HERE](#) for more on the Senior CLASS Award.

**Regional Recognition:** Big Ten volleyball standouts collected numerous AVCA Division I Regional Awards, with 27 players earning All-Region honors. Wisconsin head coach Kelly Sheffield earned Northeast Region Coach of the Year honors, while Penn State's Ali Frantti collected Freshman of the Year honors in the same region. Big Ten student-athletes made up 13 of the 14 spots on the Northeast Region in Illinois' Jocelynn Birks and Liz McMahon, Ohio State's Elizabeth Campbell and Taylor Sandbothe, Penn State's Ali Frantti, Nia Grant, Micha Hancock and Aiyana Whitney and Wisconsin's Lauren Carlini, Taylor Morey, Haleigh Nelson, Courtney Thomas and Dominique Thompson. Conference honorees on the North Region team include Michigan's Abby Cole, Michigan State's Rachel Minarick, Kori Moster and Chloe Reinig, Minnesota's Daly Santana and Paige Tapp and Nebraska's Kelsey Fien, Mary Pollmiller and Kadie Rolfzen. For the complete All-Region recognition, click [HERE](#).

**Big Ten Champions:** With its 3-0 win over No. 19 Purdue, the No. 2 Wisconsin volleyball team earned the outright 2014 Big Ten Championship. The crown marked Wisconsin's first Big Ten title since 2001 and fifth overall, having also finished first in 1990, 1997 and 2000. The Badgers improved to 19-1 in Big Ten play and earned the conference's automatic berth to the NCAA Championship. Click [HERE](#) for more information on Wisconsin's Big Ten title.

**Taking Home the Hardware:** The Big Ten announced its postseason volleyball awards following the regular season, with standouts from Penn State and Wisconsin earning recognition following the conclusion of the 2014 regular season. The Badgers' Lauren Carlini was named the Big Ten Player and Setter of the Year by a vote of the conference's coaches, while teammate Taylor Morey was tabbed the Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year. Penn State's Haleigh Washington earned Big Ten Freshman of the Year honors, while Wisconsin head coach Kelly Sheffield was named Big Ten Coach of the Year by the conference's coaches and media contingent. For the complete All-Big Ten teams, click [HERE](#).

**And The Academic Awards Go To:** Following the conclusion of the fall season, the Big Ten recognized a total of 977 fall sports student-athletes who had been named to the Academic All-Conference team, which included 99 volleyball players. To be eligible for Academic All-Big Ten selection, student-athletes must be letterwinners who are in at least their second academic year at their institution and carry a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or higher. Five players maintain 4.0 GPA's in Maryland's Emily Fraik, Michigan State's Maggie Halloran, Minnesota's Paige Tapp and Northwestern's Katie Dutchman and Kayla Morin. For the complete Academic All-Big Ten release, click [HERE](#).

**Where We Rank:** Seven Big Ten volleyball teams were ranked or receiving votes in the final AVCA Division I Coaches poll of the 2014 season, which was released on Dec. 22. NCAA Champion Penn State topped the poll at No. 1, followed by Big Ten Champion Wisconsin at No. 4. Nebraska checked in at No. 8, followed by No. 11 Illinois and No. 13 Ohio State. Michigan State and Purdue were receiving votes in the final poll. For the complete poll, click [HERE](#).

**Statistically Speaking:** In the final NCAA stats of 2014, Penn State led the nation in aces per set (1.91) and hitting percentage (.342), and ranked fourth in kills per set (14.7). Wisconsin finished the season ranked eighth in kills per set (14.34) and hitting percentage (.275). Numerous Big Ten standouts appeared among the top 10 of the final NCAA statistical leaders of 2014. Penn State's Micha Hancock led the nation with .99 aces per set and ranked eighth with 11.61 assists per set. Minnesota's Paige Tapp ranked third with 1.55 blocks per set, while the Nittany Lions' Nia Grant ranked fourth in hitting percentage (.431). For the complete statistical breakdowns, click [HERE](#).