

## Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



(F10)

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# Volleyball standout picks Notre Dame

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

The University of Notre Dame offered Jennifer Slosar the opportunity to earn a degree from the prestigious school and play collegiate volleyball at the same time.

"I couldn't go wrong with that," said the Farmington Hills Mercy senior, who has signed a national letter of intent to attend the South Bend, Ind., school.

"The reputation of the school is outstanding, and the academic program is very good. Combined with the volleyball program at Notre Dame, it was something I couldn't pass up."

The Fighting Irish, in fact, hope to raise their program to the national-power level, and they believe the 6-foot-1 Slosar, a versatile player who specializes as a middle hitter, will help them reach that goal.

Notre Dame plans to beef up its schedule and, next season, will play 19 of the top-20 teams, including Stanford, Pacific, Purdue, Hawaii and Texas.

"(THE IRISH) are going to be up there, and that's why I want to be with them," Slosar said.

"You have to play the best to be the best. They have the same philosophy as me."

The post-season honors are beginning to roll in for Slosar, but she was relatively unknown until this year. However, college coaches, once they got on the recruiting trail, immediately saw potential in the Mercy star.

Plus, the Marlins turned their program around under second-year coach Tim DeBeliso last season and posted a 41-10 record.

"What the coaches like is that she

## volleyball

**'They don't have to worry about taking (Mercy star Jennifer Slosar) out of the game when she rotates into the back row . . . That's why she was so highly recruited.'**

— Tim DeBeliso  
Mercy volleyball coach

## Ladywood state champ, 2D

has the size to play at the college level," DeBeliso said. "She has good footspeed, good agility and can play the back row."

"They don't have to worry about taking her out of the game when she rotates into the back row. They want someone who can play all the way around. That's why she was so highly recruited."

"SHE WANTS to be the best volleyball player she can be," he added, "and Notre Dame is the place she thought she would be able to do that."

Slosar, who had 123 kills out of 296 attacks for a .415 hitting percentage her senior season, played for coach

Mike Gibson's Victors team in the Junior Olympics last summer. Plus, she sent letters to various schools herself.

Before long, most of the Big Ten schools, Texas, Rice, and Auburn were among the schools recruiting her.

Eventually, it came down to Michigan and Notre Dame, and a surprised Slosar even got a phone call at home from U-M football coach Bo Schembechler.

"I said, 'No, this is not Bo Schembechler.' He said it was 'Oh, my goodness.' He said it was the first time he ever called a girl to recruit her to the school, and I was really honored," Slosar said.

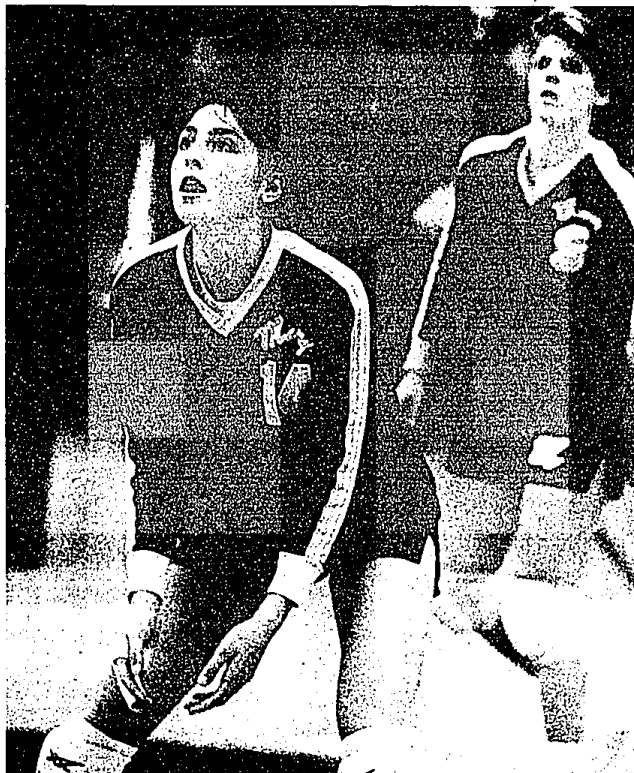
But Notre Dame's volleyball program is more advanced than Michigan's, and Slosar liked the smaller campus at Notre Dame.

"THERE ARE no sororities or fraternities; it's all just combined," she said. "I thought that was really nice. It was like a small-community atmosphere."

The main consideration in choosing a school, however, was academics — an important area for Slosar, who carries a 3.9 grade-point average and plans to study mechanical engineering. She hopes to someday work in the aerospace industry. Two older brothers and one sister are engineers, too.

Slosar, who missed three weeks with a hand injury, also averaged five digs and five blocks. She rated 85 percent on serve reception/passing and 94 percent on serving.

"She handled (the recruiting pressure) with a lot of maturity and class," DeBeliso said. "She's a fine, fine person. She comes from a good family, and it reflects on Jennifer."



RANDY BONST/staff photographer

Jennifer Slosar will continue her volleyball career next season at the University of Notre Dame. Mercy High School's standout hitter

chose the Fighting Irish over a host of college powers that pursued her talents.

# Time to express opinions, vent frustrations

IT'S THAT TIME of the year. Time to let off a little steam.

That's more steam than you'll find spewing any day at Jackson Hole.

And what's bugging me? There's a lot of things a can of Raid wouldn't cure.

But before I let loose, you've got to understand. Don't construe this as "I'm mad and I'm not going to take it anymore."

I've been through a few airports over the last few months and it's safe to say some things I've noticed lately made me angrier than dealing with Northwest.

Anybody seen my bags lately?

We're talking high school sports in particular, with a dash of pro and college sprinkled in.

But before we embark on this journey, pull all trays and tables back to their ready positions. Please, fasten your seat belts.

## READY FOR some turbulence?

What's with those PSL basketball coaches attacking Ricky Byrdson at U-M?

I've been through a few airports over the last few months and it's safe to say some things I've noticed lately made me angrier than dealing with Northwest.

Anybody seen my bags lately?



Brad Emons

And speaking of Mulroy, the former Plymouth Canton girls coach. He did a terrific job during his interim stint. Give him credit for providing some excitement down

the stretch.

I'm tired of hearing Bill Laimbeer has it coming. Does anybody remember Steve Silpanovich, Laimbeer's latest attacker, shooting himself in the foot and then trying a Watergate-type coverup?

Speaking of shooting itself in the foot, the Missouri basketball team. I'll bet the Tigers will be better next year because they're rid of Derrick Mis-Chevious. They'll play more like a team next year and don't count out former Catholic Central All-Stater John McIntyre as a key role player.

As long as we're talking CC, what a year it was for the wrestling team, but the season was kind of ruined by the state high school athletic association running two tournaments (individual and team) at the same time.

A LOT of coaches held back their best wrestlers during the team competition, staged in the middle of the week, to save them for the Saturday individual events. Why not run the team event after the individual tournament?

That's enough steam for one day. See you at a baseball game or track meet sometime.

# Borgess dunks 'Skins

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Cristler Arena is no longer a distant dream. Now it's reality for the Redford Bishop Borgess basketball team.

The Spartans (23-3) will visit the house that Cazzie Russell built, taking on Ludington in the state Class B semifinals, at 1 p.m. Friday in Ann Arbor. The winner advances to the state championship game at 11 a.m. Saturday at the University of Michigan campus.

Borgess put on a devastating display Wednesday, routing Oak Park in a quarterfinal matchup at Eastern Michigan University's Bowen Fieldhouse, 78-59.

The Spartans did it with power and precision, pulling away from a 16-all first-quarter deadlock to win convincingly as Oak Park bowed out with an 18-7 record.

"These seniors have established high goals and one was to get to Cristler Arena," said Borgess coach Mike Fusco. "But once you get there, I hope we all remember there's a job to do."

All four seniors made their presence felt against the Redskins, but none more than 6-foot-7 center Parish Hickman, who scored 27 points in a variety of ways.

Hickman recorded five dunks and hit a three-pointer. He made 10 of 15 shots from the floor and drilled six of seven free throws.

The Michigan State squire also yanked down 13 rebounds, sharing team-high honors with Da Juan Smith.

Hickman was nearly perfect ex-

## basketball

cept for one play, an ill-fated 360-degree behind-the-head dunk attempt, which landed him a spot on the bench midway through the first quarter.

"Parish said the ball slipped out of his hands," Fusco said. "It wasn't worried about that as much as I was worried that he tried a 360."

But despite the slipup, Fusco says Hickman is "playing with a mission."

"He sets high goals for himself and the team," said the Borgess coach. "He's multi-talented. The last 10 games he's being more selective on his shots and it's made everybody better."

Hickman also made a difference on the defensive end, checking Oak Park's high-scoring guard/forward Heath Thomas.

Thomas scored 35 in his last outing, but on this night he had just 10. (Guard Shawn Jones paced the Redskins with 19.)

"WE WANTED to contest all shots on the perimeter because Oak Park likes to shoot the three-pointer," Fusco said. "We felt Parish's size on Heath would be an influencing factor."

Hickman, however, had plenty of help from fellow seniors Dwayne Kelley (12 points and five assists), Smith (10 points) and Eric Emmanuel (eight points and six rebounds). Smith, a 6-5 forward, scored eight of Borgess's 21 rebounds by half-

time. Oak Park, meanwhile, could snag only nine.

"Da Juan was just kicking butt on the boards," said Fusco, whose team led 34-23 at intermission. "Between the first and second quarters we talked about being more patient, taking better shots and digging in on defense a little bit more. We got the ball to Dwayne in the middle and when he gets the ball, he's a creator who can make things happen offensively."

ANOTHER PLAYER who made Borgess's offense more effective was sophomore guard Shawn Reper, who scored eight of his 18 points during a 24-11 Borgess third-quarter spurt to give the Spartans a commanding 54-34 advantage.

Respect made six of seven shots from the floor, including four of five from three-point range.

"Shawn was really hitting and he's been in double figures now the last three games," said the Borgess coach.

The final statistics reflected the lopsided final outcome.

Borgess made 29 of 48 shots from the floor for 60 percent. Oak Park was only 20 of 59 for 33 percent.

The Redskins were also out-rebounded, 43-25.

"We've been out-rebounded before, but it was a matter of not scoring points," said Oak Park coach Rick Rich. "We even changed defenses in the second half to get our minds working in a different manner, but if the shots don't go in, they don't go in. We had the shots."

But the shots are falling these days for Borgess. And Fusco cites the upperclassmen for the team's success.

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