

**Nebraska Press Conference Quotes
NCAA Omaha Regional
Saturday, Dec. 8**

Head Coach John Cook

Opening Statement

“First of all I want to give credit to Oregon. Coach Moore has worked very hard to build that program, and to get them to the Final Four. It is very well deserved, and I’m happy for him as a coach. I know how tough these regional finals have been, and to win these things are really hard. I want to give credit to the Oregon players. They took a big haymaker from us in game one, and they didn’t flinch they kept after it. They really just played really good volleyball. They were very consistent. We couldn’t get any runs on them, and they started getting runs on us. We just couldn’t match them blow by blow. I think (Alaina) Bergsma might be the best player we have played against all year. I am very impressed by her. They did a great job on the road here in Omaha in front of a big crowd. All the credit goes to Oregon, Coach Moore, and his staff.

On what Oregon does on offense that makes them so tough

“They run a pretty fast tempo and they have a great player. Bergsma, she is the difference in the match. It was like a heavy weight prize fight. We had to go blow for blow with her. When she made a big kill we needed to come back and make a big kill. We weren’t able to sustain that. The other one that snuck up on us is (Katherine) Fisher. She had a big night as well. She had 12 kills. They were silent kills and unnoticed, but she got some big swings for them. I think the other thing is that they won the long rallies. Normally we win the long rallies, and they won the long rallies. They worked hard to get into position, and to give those kids swings. They won most of the long rallies. Our kids played really hard. We gave great effort tonight. It was not for lack of effort. Oregon was just better. They have a player that is a level above anyone we have, Bergsma. She brought it tonight. When you get to this level and to try to get to a Final Four you have to have somebody who can just take over matches. I thought she did. She had the back row and the front row. She did a great job. She would get my vote right now for player of the year. If they go to the finals she should get it.”

On whether or not he wanted this group of seniors to get to the final four more than others

“It is the only thing they have not accomplished. They have won two conference championships. They slayed all their dragons and their demons from the last few years. They have had win streaks. They have beat three number one ranked teams. We have been ranked number one several times. Look at the Big Ten right now, four out of the Elite Eight teams are from the Big Ten. That’s the conference these guys have to battle in every day. They have done a great job of consistently winning and performing. They came back and beat Purdue after they blew us out last year. We probably have the best record against Penn State in the Big Ten. These guys did some great things, and this is the one thing they had yet to get done. That is why this is so hard for them.”

Senior Outside Hitter Gina Mancuso

On how their defense changed and/or got better after game one

"I don't know. I think they were a big block and I just don't think we were hitting open spots at certain times. At some times we were great, but they really hustled for balls and didn't let anything drop."

On the level of attackers on the other side

"I would say Oregon is probably the best offensive team we have played this entire year, absolutely hands down. They were quick and powerful. They run weird sets that are not normal, but they're good at it."

On what they want to pass on to the younger players

"My advice for younger players is, If you ever dream you have to sprint towards it and in defining moments you have to believe. Those are the two key things I would share."

Senior Setter Lauren Cook

On how she felt they were playing in the first set

"I think we came out with a lot of energy and really executed. We followed our game plan. We all did what we were supposed to do, with very little error."

On how they felt after game one, and if it was hard to believe things went the way they did after

"It was and it just shows that you can't get complacent. You can't get happy after winning one set of volleyball. You have got to win all three."

On whether or not they are at a place where they can look back on their whole careers at Nebraska

"I think it is tough to answer right now. It is still stinging pretty hard for both of us, and the other seniors. The last thing I can say is that Nebraska is always going to be a top program. People are going to expect greatness here being a part of this program, and that is what you will get."

On what they want to pass on to the younger players

"I hope they never have to feel like this. It is tough. I hope they understand what it's like to finish your season with a loss. I hope they use that to power them through next year and the years after that."