

2009 SCHEDULE/RESULTS

8/28-29	at Missouri Southern Invitational	
8/28	vs. Southeastern Oklahoma	L, 1-3
8/28	vs. Harding	W, 3-1
8/29	vs. Midwestern State	W, 3-0
8/29	vs. Missouri S&T	W, 3-1
9/4-5	at Abilene Christian Tournament	
9/4	vs. Incarnate Word	L, 2-3
9/4	at Abilene Christian	L, 1-3
9/5	vs. Angelo State	W, 3-1
9/5	vs. Cameron	W, 3-2
9/11-12	at Peggy Martin Classic – Central Missouri	
9/11	vs. Edinboro University	W, 3-0
9/11	at No. 8 Central Missouri*	W, 3-0
9/12	vs. St. Mary's (TX)	W, 3-0
9/12	vs. Missouri-St. Louis	W, 3-1
9/18	at No. 20 Nebraska-Omaha*	L, 2-3
9/20	at Fort Hays*	W, 3-1
9/23	Missouri Western*	W, 3-0
9/25	at Northwest Missouri*	W, 3-0
9/26	at No. 20 Truman*	L, 1-3
10/2-3	Pittsburg State Classic	
10/2	Dallas Baptist University	W, 3-0
	No. 5 Central Missouri*	L, 0-3
	Texas A&M Commerce	W, 3-1
	Abilene Christian	L, 1-3
10/9	No. 8 Emporia State*	L, 0-3
10/10	No. 7 Washburn*	L, 1-3
10/11	Fort Hays*	W, 3-0
10/14	Missouri Southern*	W, 3-2
10/17	Southwest Baptist*	W, 3-0
10/23	No. 15 Nebraska-Omaha*	W, 3-1
10/28	at Missouri Western*	W, 3-1
10/30	Northwest Missouri*	7:00
10/31	No. 18 Truman* (Senior Day)	3:00
11/6	at No. 9 Emporia State	7:00
11/7	at No. 7 Washburn	2:00
11/11	at Missouri Southern	7:00
11/14	at Southwest Baptist	2:00
11/19-21	NCAA Div II Regionals	TBA
12/3-5	NCAA Div II Finals	TBA

MATCHES 28 & 29

VS. NORTHWEST MISSOURI & TRUMAN

SEPT. 30 - 7 P.M. & SEPT. 31 - 3 P.M.

JOHN LANCE ARENA - PITTSBURG, KAN.

The Gorillas play three matches this week. They start the week on the road against Missouri Western on Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. Then the Gorillas return to John Lance Arena to play their final home matches of the season. Pitt State will face Northwest Missouri at 7 p.m. on Friday, followed by a 3 p.m. match against Truman on Saturday.

On Saturday, the team, coaches and fans will have the chance to honor seniors Emily Vosseler and Pamela Cartagena, as they play the last home match of their careers. See more on Emily and Pamela on page 4.

Up next: Pitt State ends the season the way it began ... on the road. The Gorillas face two of the toughest road matches of the season next week as they travel to Emporia State and Washburn. Pitt State meets up with Emporia State on Friday, Nov. 6, followed by a 2 p.m. match on Saturday, Nov. 7.



DIG PINK

Though the Gorillas have already hosted their Dig Pink match, it is still not too late to donate to the cause. Visit the Gorillas fundraising page through midnight Saturday to donate. Dig Pink is a Breast Cancer Awareness Rally being held all of October to raise awareness and funds, sponsored by the Side-Out Foundation.

Each year the Side-Out Foundation wants to make a statement by holding hundreds, potentially thousands, of featured high school and college matches across the country to help educate and raise funds to eradicate this terrible disease. Proceeds will go towards doing something significant and identifiable in the fight against Breast Cancer.

Anyone wishing to donate to PSU and the Side-Out Foundation's fundraising efforts can go to Pitt State's fundraising page at https://www.side-out.org/application/teams/team_page/2094. The Gorillas have set a goal to raise \$2000 this season. Last season the team raised almost \$800.

In 2008, 330 college and 285 high school teams raised \$390,000 through Dig Pink Rallies. This season 810 college and high school teams have raised almost \$115,000.

200 WINS

Head Coach Ibraheem Suberu earned his 200th career win at Pitt State with the 3-0 win over Southwest Baptist on October 17. He is the first coach in program history to earn 200 wins. He entered the season just needing 17 wins to reach this plateau. Suberu now has a 202-166 (.549).

Suberu was already the winningest head coach in the program's history. On Sept. 19, 2006, Suberu collected his 113th win at PSU to pass Joan Warrington on the school's all-time coaching victories list. He collected his 150th win on Oct. 16, 2007 in a three-set match against Rockhurst.

SCOUTING THE GORILLAS

The Gorillas are 19-9 overall and 9-5 in MIAA play.

As a team, the Gorillas are averaging 16.69 points per set and hitting at a .223 clip with an average of 13.95 kills per set. The team also records 17.57 digs per set and 1.58 blocks per set. The Gorillas aggressive serving style garners them 1.16 aces per set.

Pitt State is led by senior outside hitter Pamela Cartagena, who does a lot for the Gorillas offensively and defensively. She averages 4.35 points per set, including a team-leading 4.07 kills per set. She also is second on the team in digs with 4.11 per set. She leads the team with a .252 hitting percentage.

Senior Emily Vosseler keeps the offense running from the setter position and averages 11.36 assists per set. She is also becoming more of a threat in other ways as well. She has recorded 37 blocks and

2009 PITT STATE VOLLEYBALL

NO	NAME	POS	HT	YR	EXP	HOMETOWN/PREVIOUS SCHOOL
1	Emily Vosseler	S	5-10	SR	2L	Leavenworth, Kan./Imaculata High School
2	Riann Deere	DS/L	5-3	JR	TR	Lansing, Kan./Neosho County Community College
3	Pamela Cartagena	OH	5-7	SR	3L	Bayamon, Puerto Rico/Thompson High School
4	Molly Bergkamp	M/OH	5-9	JR	TR	Blue Rapids, Kan./Hutchinson Community College
5	Brooke Fay	M/OH	6-0	FR	HS	Parkville, Mo./Park Hill South High School
7	Andrea Torres	MB	6-1	FR	HS	Cochabamba, Bolivia/Colegia Aleman Frederico
8	Tesia Lahm	DS/L	5-6	SO	SQ	Carl Junction, Mo./Carl Junction High School
9	Samantha Franiuk	OH/RS	5-10	SO	SQ	Tonganoxie, Kan./Tonganoxie High School
10	Corrinne Stringer	OH	6-0	SO	TR	Topeka, Kan./University of Kansas
11	Cassie Wilson	DS/L	5-10	JR	1L	Pittsburg, Kan./Pittsburg High School
12	Leah Flynn	OH/RS	5-11	FR	HS	Topeka, Kan./Hayden High School
14	Rebecca Pearson	S	5-8	FR	HS	Kansas City, Mo./St. Pius X High School
16	Shannon Majors	OH	5-8	FR	HS	Topeka, Kan./Washburn Rural High School
20	Brook Jansen	M/RS	5-11	FR	HS	Shawnee, Kan./St. James Academy

Head Coach: Ibraheem Suberu (Park, Mo., 1993) - 11th Season

Assistant Coach: Lindsay Sowder-Hill (Pittsburg State, 2003) - Second Season

Student Assistant: Kaitlyn Smith - First Season

Manager: Wes Book - Second Season

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Name	Sounds Like		
Pamela CARTAGENA	cart-uh-HEY-na	Samantha FRANIUK	fron-YOOK
RIANN Deere	RYAN	TESIA LAHM	teh-SHA LAM
		IBRAHEEM SUBERU	EE-bra-heem Soo-ber-oo

57 kills on the season, both more than she has in her previous three seasons at Pitt State. She has also recorded 216 digs.

Cassie Wilson is the team's leader in digs with 4.74 per set.

It is the new players who are leading the Gorillas in blocking. Freshman Brooke Fay leads the team with 58 total blocks (11 solo, 47 assisted). Sophomore Corrinne Stringer is just behind with 46 blocks, while junior Molly Bergkamp has 43. Freshman Leah Flynn is also not far behind with 41.

Stringer and Bergkamp are also strong contributors offensively. Stringer averages 3.27 kills per set, second only to Cartagena, while Bergkamp averages 2.59.

SCOUTING THE BEARCATS

Northwest Missouri is 12-17 overall and 3-10 in the conference. The team's three conference wins were over Fort Hays State (3-2 and 3-1) and Missouri Southern (3-2).

As a team, the Bearcats average 14.74 points per game. They are hitting .200 with 11.62 kills per game, with assists on 10.69 of those kills. The team has 210.5 total blocks on the season for 1.95 blocks per game. The back court averages 13.98 digs per game.

Sarah Falcone is the team's leader a .302 hitting percentage and 2.53 kills per set. She is also the team's second-leading blocker with 91 total blocks on the season. Alex Hanna (2.34 kps), Ashley Mitchell (2.25 kps) and Amber Ryan (2.08 kps) are additional regulars in the Bearcat lineup that average two or more kills per set

Laira Akin in the team's setter. She averages 9.57 assists per set.

Defensively, Paige Spangenberg anchors the back court with 5.03 digs per set. At the net, Amber Ryan leads the team with 94 blocks and Ashley Mitchell is third with 81.

SCOUTING THE BULLDOGS

Truman and Pitt State are locked in a tie for fourth in the conference, both with a 9-5 MIAA record. Truman is 21-9 overall. The team's five losses came at the hands of Washburn (3-0 and 3-1), Central Missouri (3-2), Missouri Southern (3-2) and Emporia State (3-1). The Bulldogs were able to defeat Emporia 3-1 at Emporia in their most recent meeting on Oct. 21.

As a team, the Bulldogs average 15.98 points per set. They are hitting .202 with 12.99 kills per game, with assists on 11.91 of those kills. The team has 210.0 total blocks on the season for 1.78 blocks per game. The back court averages 16.82 digs per game.

Megan Sharpe is the team's leader a .364 hitting percentage and 3.09 kills per set. She is also the team's leading blocker with 86 total blocks on the season. Lauren Graybeal (2.49 kps) and Allison Barker (2.30 kps) are additional regulars in the Bulldog lineup that average two or more kills per set

Ashley Petak serves as the team's primary setter, averaging 6.61 assists per set. Kylie Easlon has also seen action at setter in 21 matches and averages 4.16 assists per set.

Defensively, Casey Bruno anchors the back court with 4.64 digs per set. Barker (3.16 dps), Heather Hargadine (3.11 dps) and Petak (2.59 dps) also make significant contributions in the back court. At the net, Graybeal is second on the team with 69 blocks, while Emily Briseno has 67 and Erin Hattey has contributed 51.

PSU VS. NORTHWEST MISSOURI

The Gorillas are 23-23-1 all-time against the Bearcats. Pitt State has won 15 of the last 16 meetings and has not lost a match to NWMSU since Sept. 29, 2004 in Maryville.

Pitt State won both meetings last season, taking a 3-0 (25-21, 25-17, 25-12) decision in Pittsburg on Sept. 26 and a 3-1 (25-17, 23-25, 25-13, 25-12) Halloween win in Maryville. Pitt State also took the match in Maryville this season, 3-0. A full recap is on the following page.

PSU VS. TRUMAN

The Bulldogs have dominated the series with Pitt State, holding a 40-4 advantage in the all-time series. Prior to last season, Truman had won 11 straight matches over the Gorillas. Pitt State added its fourth notch in the win column, though, in the meeting at Pittsburg. The Gorillas win the match 3-1 (25-23, 25-14, 21-25, 25-16). Truman got the better of the Gorillas in Kirksville, though, winning 3-0 (25-22, 25-21, 25-20).

Truman has the advantage so far this season, as they took a 3-1 decision in Kirksville in September. A recap of that match follows.

LAST TIME VS. THE BEARCATS

The Pittsburg State Volleyball team improved to 12-4 overall and 4-1 in MIAA play with a 3-0 win over Northwest Missouri State on Friday (Sept. 25) in Maryville.

The Gorillas took the first set easily, 25-18, but had to battle harder to win the final two sets. Pitt State won the second set 25-22 and took an extra point to beat the Bearcats, 26-24, in the third set.

Senior Pamela Cartagena led the team with 13 kills and 12 digs, but it was junior Molly Bergkamp who led the team with 17.5 points in the match. Bergkamp recorded 11 kills, three service aces, two solo blocks and three block assists on the night. Her five total blocks led the team, who outblocked the Bearcats 7.5 to 6.0 on the night.

Junior Cassie Wilson also had three service aces as she and Bergkamp combined for six of the 10 by the Gorillas in the match.

Ashley Mitchell led Northwest Missouri with 12 kills. Paige Spangenberg led all players with 25 digs.

LAST TIME VS. THE BULLDOGS

The No. 21 Pittsburg State volleyball team (12-5, 4-2 MIAA) lost a four-set match to No. 20 Truman (12-6, 3-3 MIAA), 3-1 on Saturday (Sept. 26) evening. The Gorillas fell by scores of 25-17, 16-25, 27-25, 25-18).

Pitt State senior Pamela Cartagena led all players with 16 kills. She also added 22 digs for a double-double. Emily Vosseler also contributed a double-double with 51 assists and 10 digs. Junior Molly Bergkamp added 14 kills, while sophomore Corrine Stringer recorded 13. Junior Cassie Wilson added 21 digs.

Pitt State outblocked Truman, 13.0 to 7.0, but Truman hit .209 to just .161 for the Gorillas. The Bulldogs also recorded five service aces in the match, helping to contribute to their win.

LAST TIME OUT

The Pittsburg State Volleyball team earned another MIAA win on Wednesday night, as they took down Missouri Western, 3-1 (23-25, 26-24, 25-20, 26-24) in a very tight match in St. Joseph.

In a match that was decided by only 11 total points, the Gorillas were helped by a .335 hitting percentage and four players hitting in double figures. Sophomore Corrine Stringer led the team with 22 kills. Senior Pamela Cartagena added 15, while Molly Bergkamp had 12 and Brooke Fay recorded 11.

Defensively, Cassie Wilson and Cartagena each recorded 19 digs.

The Gorillas were able to hit a better percentage, despite a strong blocking effort by Missouri Western. The Griffons put up eight total team blocks, twice as many as the four the Gorillas recorded.

Missouri Western's Meghan Voelz tied Stringer for the match lead in kills, as she also recorded 22.

PSU IN CONFERENCE ACTION

The Gorillas are 121-201 (.376) in conference action since joining the MIAA in 1989. That record improves to 81-91 (.471) since Head Coach Ibraheem Suberu took over the program in 1999 and to 37-22 (.627) over the last three seasons.

GORILLAS IN CONFERENCE STATS

Everyone in the MIAA, except league leader Central Missouri, has at least two losses in conference play. The Gorillas, who are 9-5 in league play, are tied for fourth. Central Missouri leads the league with an 12-1 record. Emporia State is second at 11-2 and Washburn is third at 10-3.

PERSONNEL BREAKDOWN

Starters Returning (3)

	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.
Pamela Cartagena	OH/RS	5-7	Sr.
Emily Vosseler	S	5-10	Sr.
Cassie Wilson	DS	5-10	Jr.

Starters Lost (5)

	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.
Valeen Finney	OH/RS	6-1	So.
Klaudia Grelowska	OH/RS	6-1	Sr.
Linda Igbinigie	MB	6-4	Sr.
Lindsay Quall	MB/RS	5-10	Sr.
Sammie Williams	RS/OPP	6-1	Sr.

Letterwinners Lost (1)

	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.
Samantha Ball	S	5-8	Fr.

Squadmembers Returning (2)

	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.
Samantha Franiuk	OH/RS	5-10	So.
Tesia Lahm	DS	5-6	So.

Newcomers (9)

	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.
Molly Bergkamp	MB/OH	5-9	Jr.
Riann Deere	DS	5-3	Jr.
Brooke Fay	MB/OH	6-0	Fr.
Leah Flynn	OH/RS	5-11	Fr.
Brook Jansen	MB/RS	5-11	Fr.
Shannon Majors	OH	5-8	Fr.
Rebecca Pearson	S	5-8	Fr.
Corrinne Stringer	OH	6-0	So.
Andrea Torres	MB	6-1	Fr.

Seniors (2)

	Pos.	Ht.	Exp.
Pamela Cartagena	OH	5-7	3L
Emily Vosseler	S	5-10	2L

Juniors (2)

	Pos.	Ht.	Exp.
Molly Bergkamp	MB/OH	5-9	TR
Riann Deere	DS	5-3	TR

Sophomore (3)

	Pos.	Ht.	Exp.
Samantha Franiuk	OH/RS	5-10	SQ
Tesia Lahm	DS	5-6	SQ
Corrinne Stringer	OH	6-0	TR

Freshmen (6)

	Pos.	Ht.	Exp.
Brooke Fay	MB/OH	6-0	Fr.
Leah Flynn	OH/RS	5-11	Fr.
Brook Jansen	MB/RS	5-11	Fr.
Shannon Majors	OH	5-8	Fr.
Rebecca Pearson	S	5-8	Fr.
Andrea Torres	MB	6-1	Fr.

**AVCA DIVISION II COACHES TOP 25
OCTOBER 19, 2009**

No.	School	Points	Record	LR
1.	Concordia-St. Paul (32)	800	25-0	1
2.	UC San Diego	763	21-1	2
3.	Cal State San Bernardino	733	22-1	3
4.	Central Missouri	703	26-3	4
5.	Nebraska-Kearney	657	25-1	5
6.	West Texas A&M	627	25-3	6
7.	Tampa	587	22-2	8
8.	Washburn	567	26-3	9
9.	Emporia State	531	24-3	7
10.	Indianapolis	498	28-1	T-11
11.	Minnesota Duluth	476	19-4	T-11
12.	Lewis	445	24-3	13
13.	Saint Leo	445	23-2	14
14.	Minnesota State	410	22-4	10
15.	Wayne State (Neb.)	334	23-4	18
16.	Hawaii-Hilo	302	22-1	17
	Southwest Minnesota State	302	19-7	15
18.	Truman	239	20-9	19
19.	Sonoma State	220	19-5	20
20.	Nebraska-Omaha	170	15-8	16
21.	Cal State LA	133	16-7	22
22.	Metro State	117	17-7	21
23.	Wingate	91	27-1	24
24.	PITTSBURG STATE	71	18-9	NR
25.	Chico State	60	19-6	25

Others receiving votes and listed on two or more ballots:
Abilene Christian 39; Hillsdale 36; Alaska-Anchorage 16;
California (Pa.) 14; Wayne State (Mich.) 12; Dowling 5; West
Alabama 4; Eckerd 3.

(All following stats are as of Oct. 27 - prior to the Missouri Western match) As a team, the Gorillas are fifth in hitting percentage and fourth in kills and assists. The team leads the league in digs. They are ninth in blocks and opponent hitting percentage and seventh in service aces.

Individually, Pamela Cartagena is second in the league in kills with 4.08 per set. She is also eighth in digs with 4.08 per set and third in points (4.37 pps). Emily Vosseler is second in assists with 11.21 per set and seventh in aces with 0.31 per set. Cassie Wilson ranks fourth in the league in digs with 4.74 per set. Corrinne Stringer is 10th on the kills list with 3.18 per set.

PAMELA CARTAGENA

Cartagena is a two-time All-American for the Gorillas. This is her fifth season in Pittsburg, and to say she has made an impact on the program is an understatement.

Cartagena has been a consistent bright spot for the Gorillas both offensively and defensively. She is near school records for both kills and digs and has averaged 3.67 kills and 4.55 digs per set for her career.

In her senior season, she has played some of her best volleyball to date. She set a new career high for kills with 30 against Cameron and has led a young Gorilla squad through the rigors of the MIAA schedule in hopes of making the NCAA-II Tournament for the fourth time in her career.

EMILY VOSSSELER

Emily Vosseler has served as the starting Pitt State setter for the last two seasons and has been a valuable part of the Pitt State program for five years.

After a red-shirt season in 2005, Vosseler served as more of a role player, but began to take on a larger role for the 2007 season, splitting time with starting setter Sarah Brannock. In 2008, Vosseler earned the starting position and earned honorable mention All-MIAA honors for her efforts.

This season, Vosseler has taken control of the offense. She averages 11.36 assists per set. She has more kills and blocks this season than her previous three combined and has also improved her numbers in digs and services aces.

STREAKY SCHEDULE

This season's schedule is quite streaky. The Gorillas began the season with 14 straight matches on the road and played only one home match in September. Now October hits. The Gorillas open the month hosting the Pitt State Classic sponsored by Holiday Inn Express on Oct. 2 and 3 and will play 10 straight matches at home. They play only one match on the road in October. The last home match of the season is on Halloween, as PSU hits the road again in November.

RECORDS WATCH

Pamela Cartagena entered the season prepped to set new records for both career kills and career digs. She is

currently third on the kills list with 1,730. That is still 95 away from the record of 1,825 set by Sammie Williams just last season and Cartagena needs to average 15.83 kills in each of the six regular season matches remaining. If the Gorillas play at least one post-season match, that lowers the average need to 13.57 and each match the Gorillas play improve Cartagena's chances of breaking the record.

Cartagena is second on the all-time digs list with 2,141. She needs 185 for the school record, which is currently 2,326 set by Dina Wathan from 2000-03. She needs to average 30.83 digs a match to reach this record.

Cartagena recorded her 2,000th career dig in the match against Abilene Christian on Saturday, October 3. She is only the second player in school history to record more than 2,000 digs in her career.

Against Missouri Western, Cartagena set the career record for sets played. She has now played in 471 sets in her four-year career, besting the record of 468 set by Dina Wathan from 2000-03.

Emily Vosseler has 1,193 assists on the season, which puts her eighth on the all-time single season list in that category. The record is 1,622 set by Sarah Brannock in 2006. Vosseler is also now second on the career assists list with 3,160. The record is owed by Megan Barth who had 3,580 from 1999-2002. Though the Gorillas would have to go deep in the post-season for Vosseler to break either record, she should be able to move up quite high on the list.

Cassie Wilson now ranks sixth on the career digs list with 1,109 and needs just 29 to move to fifth.

CARTAGENA NAMED MIAA HITTER OF THE WEEK

Pitt State senior outside hitter Pamela Cartagena was named the MIAA Hitter of the Week on Sept. 15, as voted on by a committee of conference SIDs.

Cartagena was named Most Valuable Player of the UCM Peggy Martin Classic as she led the Gorillas to a 4-0 record in the tournament, including a conference-opening win over No. 8 Central Missouri. She finished the weekend hitting at a .310 clip with 54 kills. Cartagena recorded double-doubles against Central Missouri (15 kills, 15 digs) and Missouri-St. Louis (20 kills, 18 digs). The 20 kills against Missouri-St. Louis marks the third time this season she has recorded 20 or more kills in a match. Cartagena averaged 4.50 kills and 3.92 digs per set. She also added three blocks and an ace and averaged 4.71 points per set.

Against Missouri-St. Louis, she recorded her 1,500th career kill, making her only the third player in PSU Volleyball history to record 1,500 or more kills. Cartagena is also now one of only two players in program history to have more than 1,500 kills and 1,500 digs in her career.

Cartagena is a two-time All-American from Bayamon, Puerto Rico. She is majoring in recreation and is the daughter of Pedro and Felicita Cartagena.

THREE NAMED TO PEGGY MARTIN CLASSIC ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Senior outside hitter Pamela Cartagena was named the Peggy Martin Classic Most Valuable Player, while senior setter Emily Vossler and sophomore outside hitter Corrinne Stringer took up two more spots on the six person All-Tournament team.

Cartagena was named MVP after leading the Gorillas with 4.50 kills per set on the weekend, while hitting at a .310 clip. She also averaged 3.92 digs per set, as she recorded two double-doubles. She tallied 15 kills and 15 digs in PSU's MIAA-opening win over No. 8 Central Missouri and added 20 kills and 18 digs in the win over Missouri-St. Louis. She also added three block assists and a service ace.

Vossler averaged 11.31 assists per game. She earned a double-double in the win over UMSL as she recorded 50 assists and tied her season-high with 15 digs. She recorded a career-high four service aces in the win over St. Mary's and added two more against Missouri-St. Louis. Vossler also added six kills and three block assists to the team effort on the weekend.

Stringer averaged 3.92 kills per set and hit .256 over the weekend's four matches. She recorded double digit kills in each of the matches, leading the Gorillas with 13 kills against St. Mary's and recording a career-high 16 against UMSL. She also added five blocks and 18 digs for the weekend.

RANKINGS

After two losses in the Pitt State Classic, the Gorillas dropped out of the top 25. The Gorillas are receiving the third most votes of teams not ranked in the top 25.

PSU again started the season as the No. 17 team in the country according to the AVCA Coaches Top 25 Preseason Poll. The Gorillas are slated to play eight matches against teams ranked in the preseason poll, with all of those matches being in conference action. PSU's highest ranked opponent is Emporia State at No. 3.

"This year's team understands its pre-season No. 17 ranking is because of the respect for what the Pitt State Volleyball program has become," said Head Coach Ibraheem Suberu. "They are working hard to earn their own identity."

RETURNING LETTERWINNERS

There are two crucial pieces to the 2009 Pitt State squad earning its own identity ... and its own spot in the rankings. Those crucial pieces are its seniors, outside hitter Pamela Cartagena (5-7, Bayamon, Puerto Rico) and senior Emily Vossler (5-10, Leavenworth, Kan.). Both are fifth-year seniors and they will be relied on for their experience and leadership.

Cartagena is no stranger to the rigors of the Pitt State schedule and the competitiveness of the teams the squad will face, especially in league play. Because of that experience and her ability to score points, Cartagena must be the anchor for her young team. In the past, Cartagena has had a strong cast of supporting veteran players around her. She has been one of several stars on the court, now she will be the main star that the offensive and defensive schemes revolve around.

"We will rely on Pamela to carry a big part of our offense and defense," Suberu said. "She will have to be the person that our pass defense and attack flows through more than in the past.

Vossler's role will be to be a steadying factor on the court for all the young players. Her experience on the court the last three years and as a starter last year give her the skills to be a more consistent player. Her consistency at setter is necessary for a smoothly run offense. At the end of last season, Vossler also began to take on a bigger defensive role, as she put up bigger numbers of blocks and digs. That trend will continue this season as her experience will be valuable both at the net and in the back court.

Junior Cassie Wilson (5-10, Pittsburg, Kan.) is the third Gorilla player who saw considerable time on the court in 2008. Her role will continue to expand in 2009, so much, in fact, that Coach Suberu describes her position as a utility player. In addition

to a continued defensive role in the back court, Wilson will also be relied on contribute offensively in the front court as well.

"Cassie has fashioned a very important role for herself as someone who can play both offensively and defensively," Suberu said. "He role will change match to match, based on where she is most needed. She is capable of being dominant as a libero, as well as provide stability at the net as an offensive player."

SETTERS

Training behind Vossler at the setter position will be freshman Becca Pearson (5-8, Kansas City, Mo./St. Pius X High School). Pearson has a strong presence on the court, good energy and communications skills and good defensive skills. As she works on more consistency in her set location and decision making, she will become more capable of being a bigger contributor.

OUTSIDE/RIGHTSIDE HITTERS

The outside/rightside hitter positions have a returner with one year of experience and two newcomers joining Cartagena. Sophomore Samantha Franiuk (5-10, Tonganoxie, Kan.) saw limited action last season, but came on during the spring and in early preseason practices. She has established herself as a point scorer, reads schemes better and has expanded her shot making range. Sophomore Corrinne Stringer (6-0, Topeka, Kan.) joins the Pitt State squad from the University of Kansas. She is a very physical player. She is adjusting to the Pitt State system very well and since arriving in Pittsburg has improved her range, form, footwork and passing. She will be counted on to produce points. Freshman Shannon Majors (5-8, Topeka, Kan./Washburn Rural High School) has a very good volleyball IQ and is evolving to be a physical force. She is improving her speed and vertical elevation so she will be able to play above the net consistently.

MIDDLE BLOCKERS

Five new players will be competing for spots in middle blocker positions. Junior Molly Bergkamp (5-9, Blue Rapids, Kan.) transferred to Pitt State from Hutchinson Community College. She will play middle blocker/outside hitter. She is quick and aggressive and her quickness will be an asset in the Gorilla's blocking defense. She will be able to produce points and will be a leader on the court. Junior Sydney Pemberton (6-2, Overland Park, Kan.) developed a high volleyball IQ while playing the last two seasons at Johnson County Community College. She will be a force in both middle blocker and right side hitter positions as she is capable of high point production and is a defensive force at the net. Freshman Brooke Fay (6-0, Parkville, Mo./Park Hill South High School) is a very athletic middle blocker/outside hitter with tremendous range. She possesses advanced blocking skills and is working on learning the rhythm of the Pitt State offense. Freshman Leah Flynn (5-11, Topeka, Kan./Hayden High School) has the potential to be a 3-to-4-point scorer per set. She has the ability to be multi-dimensional in her offensive role and has caught on quickly during preseason. Freshman Brook Jansen's (5-11, Shawnee, Kan./St. James Academy) attention to detail, determination to excel and understanding of the game will allow her to become a dependable point scorer for the Gorillas, whether in a middle blocker or rightside hitter position. If she continues the progress she has made in preseason, she will see more time as the season progresses.

DEFENSIVE SPECIALISTS

Pitt State has two players focusing as defensive specialists in 2009. Junior Riann Deere (5-3, Lansing, Kan.) transferred from Neosho Community College where she played libero for two seasons. She is a quick, high energy player, who is very team oriented. She will be able to provide the Gorillas with consistent passing, providing shut down, ball off the floor defense that is necessary to give the offense second and third chances to score points. Sophomore Tesia Lahm (5-6, Carl Junction, Mo.) has improved her communication skills and her vocal presence has been impressive in preseason workouts. That improved communication has helped her improve as a passer and defensive stopper. She will be counted on to contribute significantly this season.