

Great games, great memories, great champions

Reynolds Coliseum was one of the four corners of the universe years ago, or at least in the college basketball universe.

During the glory days of Big Four Basketball Reynolds Coliseum was a gathering place for some great mens' college basketball.

In the early years of the building, a man from Indiana named Everett Case dazzled crowds with his Wolfpack Basketball teams. A now defunct tournament named the Dixie Classic also took root there.

Reynolds was a stop on Tobacco Road, which consisted of four schools in the triangle area - Duke, NC State, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Wake Forest.

But over the years since the glory days of Case's Wolfpack teams, things were rougher at NC State.

The basketball team went through two scandals under Norm Sloan in the 1970s and the late Jim Valvano in the late 1980s.

But while most of the team's latest trouble has revolved around getting back to the NCAA tournament, it has left its house on campus for the new Entertainment and Sports Arena, near the fairgrounds and Carter-Finley Stadium.

But although there were no basketball or college rivalries in Reynolds on Saturday, the high school volleyball teams proved they were strong as well.

Saturday's state championship volleyball games, which were played consecutively,

were like a trip down memory lane, back when Reynolds would fill to capacity to watch Case's Wolfpack teams face "Bones" McKinney's Demon Deacon squad from elsewhere in Wake County, Al McGuire's teams from Chapel Hill, and teams from Duke.

Reynolds Coliseum was the home to a different brand of basketball, a brand that saw no players leave early for the draft of the NBA, a brand that was made of players who were never presented expensive gifts from shady athletics boosters - often the student athletes were just happy to be there.

Saturday's volleyball matches had something in common with the glory days of college basketball in North Carolina.

No scouts hovered around the star players at the end of the game promising fame and fortune if they only signed the dotted line. The only people I saw surrounding players from Kings Mountain were proud friends and parents who made the trip to Raleigh and congratulated an elated volleyball team after winning.

Instead of a new car and huge discounts on designer clothes as possible gifts - dinner at a Raleigh restaurant was the order of the night.

Although it may not seem like it now, a new car will become old, designer clothes on the racks today will be on the sale rack tomorrow, boosters will leave a promising athlete at the first sign of trouble, but the memories of a state championship never leaves.

It becomes documented with the events of the day in the newspaper, part of the video with the evening news, and the topic of sportswriters every year when playoff time comes.



Ben Ledbetter

Staff Writer

VOLLEYBALL

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shown it all year."

East Chapel Hill Coach Michelle Wood said her team, which has made four straight trips to the state championship, had a chance to come back in the second game when Allison Harn blocked Cole.

"Our blocking hadn't been that great previous to that," Wood said. "When she blocked her single I thought that kind of sparked us and we went on a roll."

While Kings Mountain made numerous blacks on East Chapel Hill, Wood said her team had trouble making hits count.

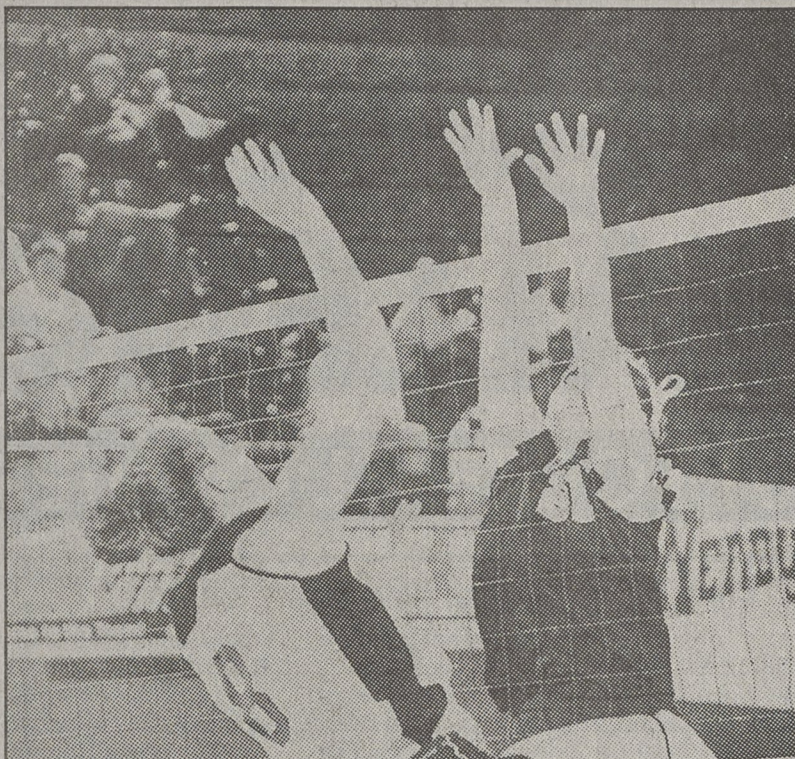
"I think we got some hits, we just couldn't put our hits away," Wood said.

Although it has yet to win a title, Wood said her team's consecutive trips to the title match

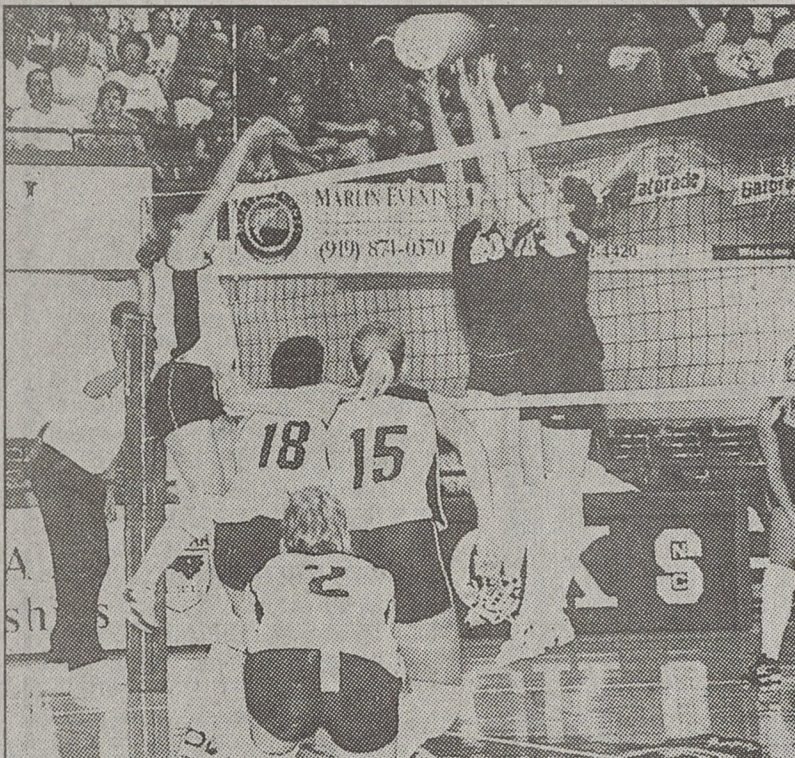
will lead to a win later on.

"We lost six seniors last year, and four starters and we came back again," Wood said. "I think we sort of set a tradition that we play hard all the time."

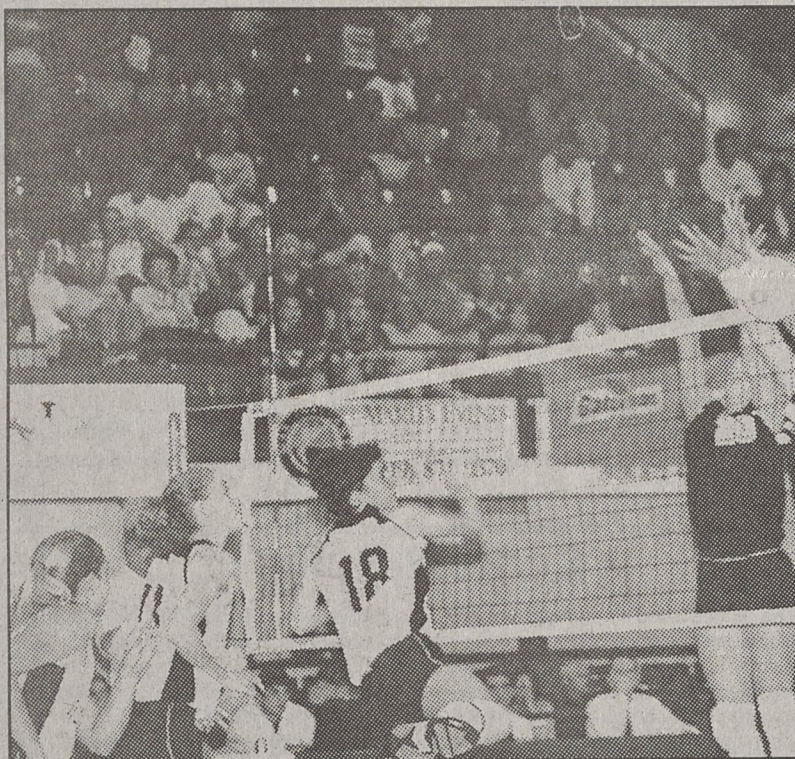
NOTES: All four matches Saturday featured a school from the Durham area...The only match out of the four played Saturday that was not a sweep, Durham School of the Arts upset four-time defending champion Hendersonville...The Mountaineers made their 15th appearance in the state playoffs with an overall post-season record of 19-13 before Saturday...All three Mountaineer losses were to Newton Fred T. Foard this season, but Kings Mountain defeated Foard in the state quarterfinals...Prior to Saturday's game, Brinkley averaged 8.5 assists per game and Cole had a 57.5 kill percentage...East Chapel Hill's playoff record before Saturday's game was 16-4.



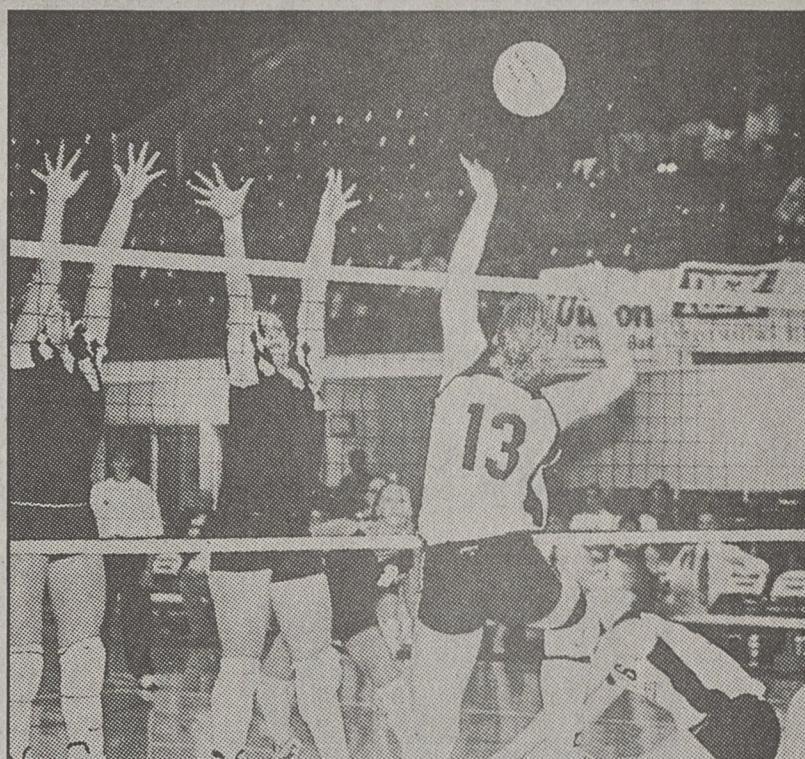
Kings Mountain's Ashely Leigh knocks the ball over the net as East Chapel Hill's Laurel Dreher attempts to block it.



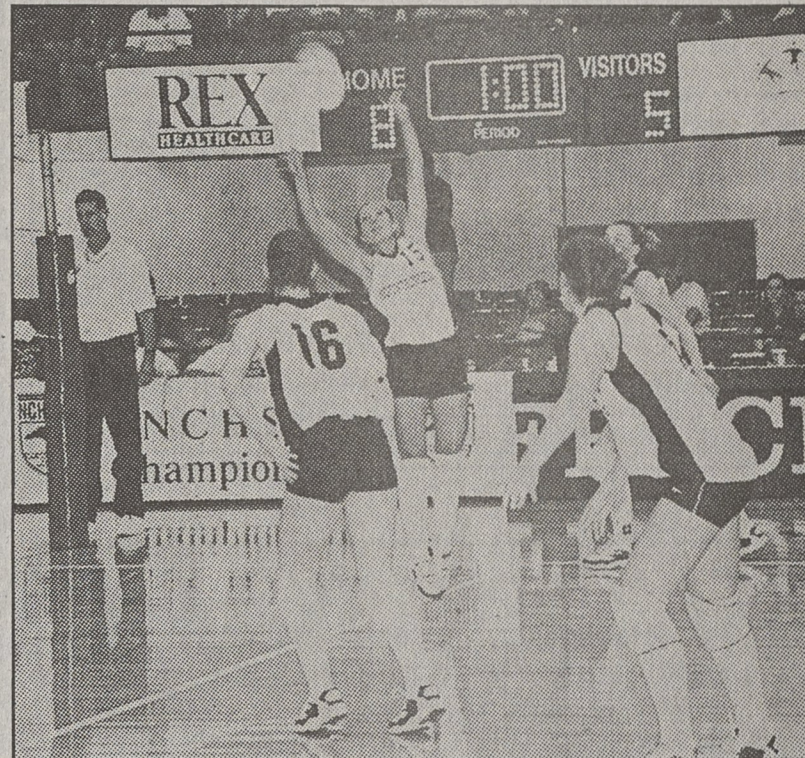
Kristin Hardin watches the ball after spiking it as a couple of East Chapel Hill players prepare to make a block.



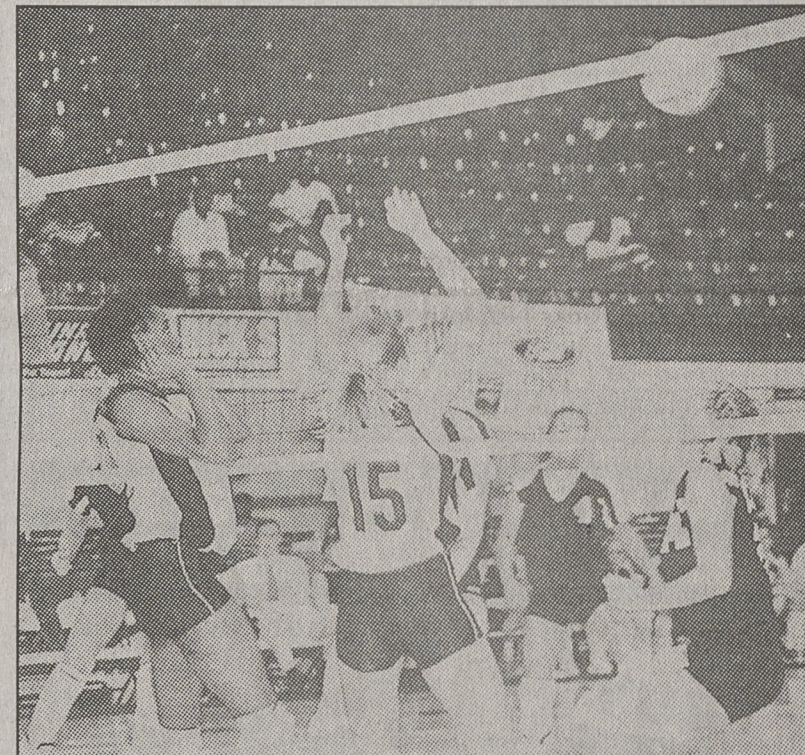
Clockwise, from left, Kristin Hardin, Carrie Brinkley, and Courtney Osteen watch for the ball from the East Chapel side which came from an earlier Mountaineer hit Saturday during the state championship volleyball game.



Lindsay Hamrick, gets ready to put the ball over the net amid two East Chapel Hill blockers Saturday during the state volleyball game.

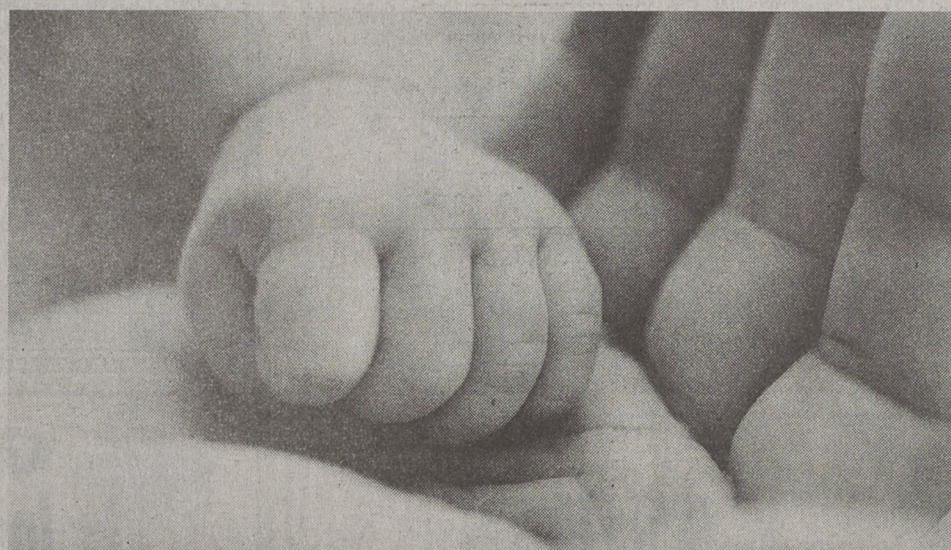


Carrie Brinkley, named MVP for the state championship game, sets the ball as Pam Parker and other Mountaineers look on.



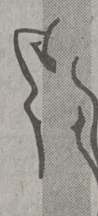
Carrie Brinkley and a teammate watch the ball as East Chapel Hill's Lia Barrett and Amanda Bradford plan their next move.

Photos by Ben Ledbetter



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