

Thompson shows volleyball versatility

By TONY SANTORI
Senior Writer

Versatile, unselfish and consistent are some of the words that Lady Gamecock volleyball Coach Kim Hudson uses to describe Jodi Thompson, whose actions do nothing to refute what her coach says.

Thompson has played numerous positions for USC since arriving

a big college that I needed to play club volleyball."

Playing club volleyball set the stage for Thompson's versatility.

"I got into setting a little then," she said. "Even in high school, I had never set. I was an outside hitter."

"Then they recruited me here as a setter, and I learned how to set really quick."

Despite the constant shuffling of positions, Thompson has been the most durable player for USC the past two seasons. She started all 32 matches in 1992 and appeared in 117 out of 118 games. She attributes this durability to a strenuous off-season program set by her coaching staff.

For someone who has played hitter and setter for the majority of her career, Thompson's greatest contribution to help the Lady Gamecocks improve is defense.

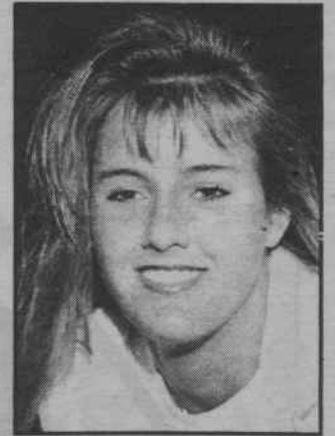
"My defensive skills are probably my biggest attribute to the team," she said. "They will help us get to where we need to go."

And exactly how far will the Lady Gamecocks go this year? According to Thompson, the team's new positive attitude under Hudson has the team thinking optimistically.

"I think we have already improved over last year because one of our goals was to create a better attitude and to be more positive in the gym," she said.

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"We set our team goals to be in the top half of the conference, and we wanted to go on to post-season play."



Jodi Thompson

The Lady Gamecocks have gotten off to a good start this season by winning their first six matches.

Thompson is a solid student as well. She was named to honor societies in high school and earned a 3.6 grade point average this past semester at USC, where she is majoring in sports administration.

"I'd like to work with a pro team definitely," she said. "I'd like to work in their marketing department."

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from San Antonio two years ago. In fact, it has not yet been determined exactly where she will end up playing.

Apparently, it doesn't matter where the coaches decide to use the 5-foot-9 junior.

"We've asked her to do the most difficult thing that there is to do as a player," Hudson said. "And that's to play multiple positions."

In 1992, as a setter, Thompson led team with 1,162 assists.

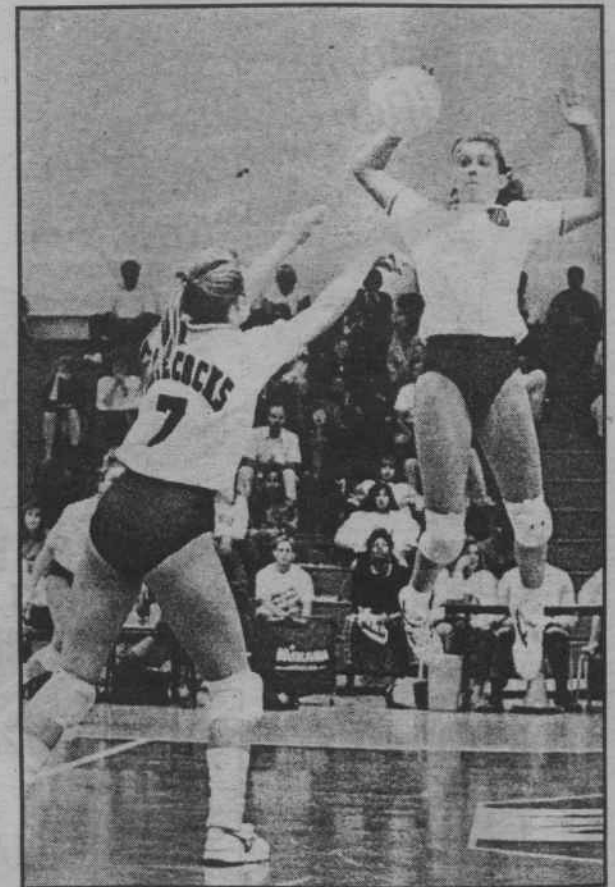
"She's just a great ball handler," Hudson added.

Thompson started playing volleyball, along with basketball and running track, when she was in the seventh grade.

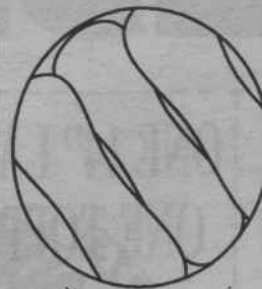
"Those were the only sports we had," she said.

When thoughts of college scholarships began dancing in Thompson's head in high school, she decided to concentrate on volleyball.

"In my sophomore year, my coach told me about a club program," she said. "He said that if I had any aspirations about going to



VOLLEYBALL



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