After a record year for the Cornell Rams it only makes sense they are recognized for their hard work and success throughout the year. This recognition came in the form of four all-conference selections, three all-region selections, two All-Americans, and a conference coach of the year, making this season the most decorated in the program’s history.

Jeff Meeker- Midwest Conference Coach of the Year
The Rams’ Jeff Meeker was selected MWC Coach of the Year for the second straight season. Meeker picked up his fourth conference Coach of the Year honor in 12 seasons on the Hilltop. He won the award twice in the IIAC (2010, 2004), and now two times in the MWC. Meeker was also voted the top coach in Midwest Classic Conference in 1997, while at Iowa Wesleyan.

Katie Sickelka- 2nd Team Midwest Conference Selection
Sickelka, who prepped at Cedar Rapids Kennedy, gained her first all-conference award. She ranked sixth in the MWC in hitting (.274), a percentage that hiked to .310 in conference-only matches. Sickelka averaged 1.76 kills and 0.69 blocks. “She has been a consistent player for us all season and she has really elevated her game down the stretch showing the kind of dominant player she can be,” praised Meeker.

Taylor Dicus- 1st Team Midwest Conference, Honorable Mention All-Region
Dicus, of Mount Vernon, was among six players chosen to the honorable mention team. The 6-foot-2 Dicus stands 11th nationally at 1.20 blocks per set. She has 124 total blocks on the year, and a school-record 427 stuffs in 96 career matches. Dicus leads all Cornell front-line players with a .338 hitting percentage. She is second on the team with 273 kills (2.65 kpa). Dicus was honored on the All-MWC First Team for the second consecutive season, to go along with first team honors and freshman of the year award in the Iowa Conference in 2011.

Kylene Weber- 1st Team Midwest Conference, 1st Team All-Region, Honorable Mention All-American
Weber grabbed her first all-region award, one day after she was tabbed First Team All-MWC for the second consecutive season. A four-time MWC Defensive Performer of the Week, Weber ranks 10th in Division III at 6.01 digs per set. She is already the program’s career digs leader with 1,830. Weber has registered 625 digs on the year. The Mount Vernon native is serving at a .913-percent clip with 38 aces, second on the team. Weber is the only player in Cornell history to record 600 digs in back-to-back seasons. She is also the second All-American selection in the program’s history.

Kathleen O’Connor- Midwest Conference Player of the Year, 1st Team MWC, 1st Team All-Region, 1st Team All-American
This year Kathleen became Cornell’s only Female 1st team All-American selection ever. O’Connor, the AVCA National Player of the Week on Oct. 8, ranks second among all active Division III players with 1,732 career kills and third with 4,824 attack attempts, both school records. The Waukegan, Ill., native this season stands seventh nationally at 5.03 points per set, and 17th in kills with a 4.17 average. O’Connor, a three-time conference Player of the Year, enters the national tournament with 429 kills, 375 digs (3.64 dpa), 71 blocks (0.69 bps) and 43 service aces (0.42 aca) in 103 sets played. She headlined this year’s All-Midwest Conference Teams, placing in the league’s top 10 in four statistical categories. O’Connor is a four-time first team all-conference performer, and earned honorable mention All-America recognition in 2011.

Cornell’s volleyball team celebrated a third consecutive conference tournament title with their home fans in the Small Multi-Sport Center.

The top-seeded and 20th-ranked Rams were sharp from the start and powered past third-seeded St. Norbert – 25-17, 25-14, 25-19 – in the championship match of the Midwest Conference Tournament. Cornell (28-3) secured a spot in the NCAA Division III Tournament.

The Rams claimed their fourth MWC volleyball crown, also winning it in 2012, 1988 and 1983. Coach Jeff Meeker’s squad heads back to nationals for the third straight year, after taking the Iowa Conference Tournament title in 2011 and the MWC last season.

Cornell punched an NCAA automatic berth against the Green Knights (16-16) for the second year in a row. The Rams needed only 1 hour, 1 minute to sew up this one in recording their 16th consecutive victory, 15th straight at home.

The Rams’ record-setting season saw another mark go down Saturday. Junior libero Kylea Weber became the program’s all-time leader in digs with 16 tallies against St. Norbert. The Mount Vernon native raised her career total to 1,830, breaking the previous mark of 1,816 held by Amber Hein (2004-07).

Weber is the third Ram this fall to break a major career record. Kathleen O’Connor set the program’s all-time mark for kills, while Taylor Dicus established a new standard for total blocks.
The Rams were unbeaten at home this season posting a perfect 9-0 record. As if that wasn’t impressive enough, they were an outstanding 27-1 in sets played, dropping their only set loss to a very good Wartburg team in front of a crowd of over 1000 cheering Cornell fans.

“The support we get from our fans really motivates the team to perform to the best of our abilities. Our home crowds have been amazing all season both in size and in volume,” commented Coach Neef. “There were many times this year that we could barely hear in the huddle because of our crowd.”

The volume was almost always an issue with an average crowd size of 750 screaming fans at all of the Rams’ home contests. 750 doesn’t seem to be a very large number until you compare it to the average 170 fans that attended all of Cornell’s away matches this season.

With more home matches on the schedule for next year, the Rams cannot wait to hear the roar of their supporters as they continue their push for a third consecutive Midwest Conference title.

**EUROPE HERE WE COME**

It is hard to imagine that on Saturday, May 10th our 6 seniors will graduate! It is also exciting to think that on Monday, May 12th we will all be on our way to Europe; what a way to finish a Cornell career and what an exciting adventure for Cornell Volleyball.

In preparation for our trip we are working hard to raise money and with our spring season and foreign tour training dates we will have over 20 practices in April and May.

We will be competing in 4 matches against local club teams while we experience the history and culture of some amazing places. Our journey will start in Prague, the capitol of the Czech Republic and we will wind our way through 5 countries, ending with a gondola ride and a tour of St. Mark’s Square in Venice. We plan to travel to Vienna, Austria spend time in Maribor, Slovenia and see the amazing waterfalls of Plitvice in Northern Croatia.