

Dixon thrives at Missouri and with USA Volleyball



In 2020, like everyone else in the country, Anna Dixon had to face a lot of adversity.

Not only was Dixon moving on from the Kansas State volleyball program to Missouri, which is stressful enough, the idea of being able to play through the spread of COVID-19 brought its own level of stress.

Instead of letting that get to her, Dixon took full advantage of the opportunity presented to her in a difficult SEC schedule.

Dixon, an outside hitter for the Tigers, was named to the All-SEC team as sophomore. That performance guided her to being one of Missouri's top hitters at the net as junior.

Most recently, Dixon received another honor added to her long list of achievements.

On Monday, the Louisburg High School graduate was named to the USA Volleyball Women's Collegiate National Team, which includes 38 of the top players in the United States.

Dixon is no stranger to success with USA Volleyball as she was named to the Women's Junior National Team in 2019.

"Earning a spot on the collegiate national team is a huge honor," Dixon said. "I'm so excited to learn from some of the best athletes and coaches in the country."

The 2022 Collegiate National Team will train June 19-25 at the National Team Training Center in Anaheim, Calif. Athletes will train among the best collegiate players in the country, watch the WNT (Women's National Team) training sessions, study the USA systems, meet with Tokyo 2020 Olympians and be observed by the WNT staff.

It was welcome news for Dixon, who experienced a bumpy 2021 season on the team level. The Tigers, who had a young team in a difficult SEC, finished the year with five wins.

Still, Dixon is using it as a positive as she enters her senior campaign later on this fall.



"Our record was obviously not what we wanted this year, but this group of young girls has an unreal amount of potential," Dixon said. "Having a losing season is so tough, but we made sure we came in every practice going 10 times harder and always strived to learn more. We focused more on growing and connecting together which allowed us to make tremendous strides. Our gym is full of so much talent and the future is so bright for this group."

The Tigers relied on Dixon's experience at the net throughout

last season. She finished with 380 kills in 110 sets played. She also had 21 aces, 173 digs and 41 blocks on the defensive end.

It was a strong runner-up performance after earning All-SEC honors in her first year with program as a sophomore in 2020-21. That season, the SEC split up the season into fall and spring campaigns due to COVID-19.

She was second on the team that year with 273 kills and produced double-digit kills in 13 matches.

"My sophomore season was a long hard nine month season," Dixon said. "I had the opportunity to learn from many older athletes and was pushed so much as a player. Keeping my play consistent for nine months was probably my biggest struggle and something I'm still working on changing.

"Being named All-SEC with some awesome woman in our conference was a huge honor. I'm thankful for my teammates who pushed me everyday to be able to accomplish that."

The jump from Big 12 competition from when she was at Kansas State, to Missouri and the SEC has been a noticeable one.

"SEC play was definitely something I had to adjust to," Dixon said. "Every team you come up against has so much talent and I feel like the conference is just overall more competitive. My favorite part has been traveling to the different schools and seeing the campuses."

After a tough junior season, Dixon is excited to see what her volleyball future holds. Although she is technically a senior, she has an extra year of eligibility due to COVID-19 if she choose to use it.

When her time in college comes to an end, Dixon has her sights set to possibly continuing her career by possibly playing overseas.

As exciting as that possibility is for her, Dixon is focused on the upcoming year for the Tigers and is looking forward to seeing her team make a big jump.

“(Last season) was a huge growing year for me physically and mentally,” Dixon said. “Being one of the older girls on the court, I got to learn a lot about leadership skills and how to bring our team together while dealing with adversity. It was such a good learning experience for me and I am so excited to see what next fall will look like for us.”