

# HUFF HALL



This year marks the 33rd season that the Illinois volleyball program has called George Huff Hall its home. Huff Hall is a versatile multi-use facility and is home to Illini volleyball, wrestling and men's and women's gymnastics. Huff is known for creating the circus-like atmosphere that fostered the term "March Madness" when it was the longtime home of the Illinois State High School Association state basketball tournament.

Illinois has been one of the nation's toughest places for visiting teams as the Illini have compiled a 455-184 (.712) home mark over 47 seasons, including a 308-126 (.710) record at Huff Hall. Prior to 1990, the Illini played primarily at Kenney Gym, while hosting some matches at the IMPE Building (now the ARC), where they accumulated a combined 147-56 record. Additionally, the Orange and Blue are 2-2 all time at State Farm Center. Illinois hosted top-ranked Hawaii at then-Assembly Hall in 1981, then returned for the first time on Oct. 16, 2009, when the Illini topped No. 6 Minnesota, 3-0, in front of a school-record crowd of 7,632. The Illini swept Iowa at the Center on Sept. 27, 2013, in front of 7,061 fans prior to hosting the 2013 NCAA Regional, featuring Wisconsin, Florida State and Purdue. Despite a blizzard outside, the Illini's Sweet 16 matchup with Purdue drew a strong crowd of 4,631, the third-largest showing in program history.

Illinois won 33 home matches in a row from 1987-89 and 22 in a row at Huff from 1991-92 and 2010-11. The Illini have 12 seasons with at most one home loss, going undefeated at home in 1985 and 1988.

Much of Illinois' success can be attributed to the home court advantage created by Illini fans. The Orange and Blue have consistently been ranked among the top 10 in the nation in attendance, including seven of the past 10 seasons. Illinois has had 13 official sellouts at Huff Hall, including an all-time record of 4,536 fans on Oct. 6, 2014, on the inaugural IllINOISE Night against Wisconsin and the new standard of 4,521 fans on Dec. 8, 2018 to watch the Illini defeat the Badgers to advance to the program's fourth NCAA National Semifinal appearance. The Fighting Illini had over 3,000 fans a total of five times in 2019 with 14 of the top-20 all-time top crowds coming in the last 11 seasons.

The Illini have averaged over 2,500 fans and have ranked in the top 20 in the nation in both total and average attendance in the last eight of nine seasons. There was no home attendance last season due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Fighting Illini won consecutive NCAA attendance titles in 1992 and 1993. In 1992, the Illini broke the NCAA single-season attendance record as 52,666 fans packed into Huff Hall for 17 matches, which remains the most in Illinois history. Illinois led the nation in average attendance the following year, drawing 2,657 fans per event.

Huff Hall's gymnasium, located on the first floor, contains enough space for two volleyball practice courts and the volleyball match facility.

Creating an intimidating home court advantage for the Fighting Illini, seating is located on all four sides of the court, with permanent seating on the East, West and South sides for a capacity of 4,152.

Huff also houses a training room, a weight room, equipment rooms and locker rooms (used by the men's and women's track & field, volleyball and wrestling teams) in the basement, as well as many academic offices and classrooms on the first, second and third floors. Additionally, athletes can access the 200-meter indoor track at the Armory via an underground tunnel that connects the two buildings.

Through the years Huff has gone through multiple renovations, with the women's locker and squad rooms completely renovated in 2002. Two years later, the men's locker and squad rooms along with the training and weight rooms were fully renovated.

Prior to the 2014 season, Huff Hall underwent a massive renovation, demonstrating the DIA's commitment to volleyball. A brand new floor was put in, replacing the old basketball court with a more springy volleyball surface to protect the student-athletes' joints. The bleacher seats on the East and West sides were replaced, while permanent seating was added to the South side, increasing the seating capacity from roughly 4,050 to 4,536. With the new South bleachers came a new position for the scoreboard on that end of

## RECORD AT HOME

YEAR	RECORD	ATTENDANCE	AVG.
1974*	7-1	---	---
1975*	9-5	---	---
1976*	8-4	---	---
1977*	7-2	---	---
1978*	8-1	---	---
1979*	3-2	---	---
1980*	7-8	---	---
1981* <sup>^</sup>	9-9	---	---
1982*	5-4	---	---
1983*	3-10	---	---
1984*	9-6	---	---
1985*	13-0	17,915	1,378
1986*	15-1	26,034	1,627
1987*	16-2	24,974	1,859
1988*	16-0	33,729	2,108
1989*	12-2	26,707 (5th)	1,908 (3rd)
1990	12-5	29,731	1,651
1991	13-1	31,391 (6th)	2,242 (4th)
1992	16-1	<b>52,666 (1st)</b>	3,098 (2nd)
1993	11-3	34,539 (3rd)	2,657 (1st)
1994	9-6	29,106 (7th)	1,940 (5th)
1995	10-4	32,856 (4th)	2,347 (4th)
1996	8-5	31,381 (7th)	2,414 (5th)
1997	9-5	27,465 (10th)	1,962 (10th)
1998	12-3	27,419 (10th)	1,828 (10th)
1999	9-4	24,162 (13th)	1,859 (11th)
2000	5-8	18,263 (16th)	1,405 (16th)
2001	11-4	21,731 (16th)	1,449 (16th)
2002	6-6	15,017	1,251 (18th)
2003	14-1	23,963 (14th)	1,598 (13th)
2004	10-3	22,890 (14th)	1,761 (10th)
2005	6-7	19,685	1,514
2006	7-7	20,687	1,478 (20th)
2007	5-8	17,747	1,365
2008	13-3	20,179	1,345
2009 <sup>^</sup>	14-1	29,480 (13th)	2,106 (15th)
2010	14-1	30,646 (14th)	2,043 (16th)
2011	16-1	42,068 (10th)	2,475 (10th)
2012	5-7	33,713 (15th)	2,809 (9th)
2013 <sup>^</sup>	10-6	49,871 (7th)	<b>3,117 (9th)</b>
2014	14-1	45,410 (9th)	3,027 (8th)
2015	9-4	39,260 (9th)	3,020 (6th)
2016	8-5	33,614 (10th)	2,586 (7th)
2017	7-5	30,287 (20th)	2,524 (13th)
2018	15-2	48,551 (7th)	2,856 (10th)
2019	7-4	33,003 (15th)	2,750 (11th)
2020-21	4-6	--	--
2021	5-7	27,848 (15th)	2,312 (12th)
<b>Total</b>	<b>461-192 (.706)</b>	<b>1,073,988</b>	<b>Huff: 2,392</b>

\* Kenney Gym/IMPE      <sup>^</sup> At least one match at SFC  
 () NCAA Rank      No attendance records prior to 1985  
 No attendance in 2020-21 due to COVID-10 Pandemic  
 All-Time Record at State Farm Center: 2-2

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the gym. Four large ceiling fans were added above the seating areas on either side of the court to help keep the crowd cool, and new bathrooms were constructed in the basement. Additionally, a new LED scorer's table was installed for the 2015 season.

In the spring of 2016 more changes were on the way as all balcony seating was replaced, with orange chair-back seating, navy bench seating and a new seating area for media was installed in the lower balcony. The upper balcony was also replaced with navy bench seating, changing the seating capacity from 4,536 to 4,152.

More improvements came in the spring and summer of 2018 as the team and locker room received a full upgrade and a new Taraflex volleyball floor came in August of the 2019 season.

Huff Hall is named for longtime Illinois Athletic Director and coach George Huff. Huff served as Illinois' Athletic Director from 1901 to 1935, during a time in which the Fighting Illini athletic programs enjoyed unparalleled success. Huff was also the driving force behind the construction of Memorial Stadium in 1923.

Prior to Huff's tenure as athletic director, he served as head football coach from 1895 to 1899 and baseball skipper from 1896 to 1919. Known by many of his close friends and business associates as "G," Huff served as manager of the Boston Red Sox in 1907.

Originally called the "New Gymnasium," Huff Hall was designed in the Georgian-Revival Style by Charles A. Platt and University Architect James M. White. The building's architecture matches that of the Armory, Main Library, the Union, and other campus buildings. At the conclusion of its \$772,000 construction in 1925, Huff Hall replaced the Military Drill Hall (now known as Kenney Gym Annex) as the home for Fighting Illini basketball. The "New Gymnasium" was renamed Huff Hall in 1937 following the longtime athletic director's passing.

Illinois athletics has enjoyed a proud athletic tradition in the gymnasium at Huff Hall. Huff Hall served as home for Illinois basketball from 1925 to 1963, when the Fighting Illini cagers won 339 out of 418 games

(.811), eight Big Ten championships, and earned two NCAA Final Four appearances. Even though it was more than twice the size of the old Drill Hall where Illinois had previously played, it was realized soon after construction that the building was too small to hold all the Illinois fans.

In 1925, a writer for *Illinois Alumni News* stated, "It seems high time that the Stadium (referring to Memorial Stadium) be roofed over for basketball. We can't imagine any other way to get in all the customers." The Illinois basketball team played to raucous capacity crowds for nearly 40 years while at Huff Hall, forcing some fans to wait several years to obtain tickets.

The gymnasium in Huff Hall has hosted its fair share of championships at the collegiate and high school levels over the years. In 1940 and 1947, the Fighting Illini hosted the NCAA Wrestling Championships at Huff Hall. In 1930, 1933, 1946, 1948 and 1958, the Big Ten Wrestling Championships came to Huff. Not to be outdone, the IHSA used the gymnasium at Huff Hall for nine of its state wrestling tournaments in the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, prior to the championships moving down Fourth Street to State Farm Center.

Huff Hall also served as host for the 1991, 1995 and 2003 Big Ten Women's Gymnastics Championships; the 1992, 1995 and 2004 Big Ten Men's Gymnastics Championships; and was the site of the 1993 and 1999 NCAA Men's Gymnastics East Regional.

Huff Hall has played host to many NCAA volleyball tournament matches, beginning with the 1992 first round and regional volleyball matches. Huff would go on to be the site of a 1994 NCAA first-round volleyball match, a 1995 NCAA second-round volleyball match, and the first and second rounds of the 1998, 2001, 2003, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2018 NCAA Volleyball Tournaments as well as the 2018 NCAA Champaign Regional. The first and second rounds of the 1997 NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament were also played in the gymnasium at Huff Hall.

TOP HOME CROWDS			
RK.	ATTEND.	OPPONENT	DATE
1.	7,632	Minnesota*	10/16/2009
2.	7,061	Iowa*	9/27/2013
3.	4,631	Purdue*^	12/13/2013
4.	4,536	Wisconsin	10/4/2014
5.	4,316	Stanford^	12/11/1992
6.	4,261	Purdue	10/1/2011
7.	4,211	Ohio State^	12/3/1992
8.	4,152	Nebraska	9/27/2019
	4,152	Wisconsin^	12/8/2018
	4,152	Purdue	11/24/2018
	4,152	Penn State	11/10/2018
	4,152	Stanford	9/8/2017
13.	4,141	Penn State	9/24/2010
14.	4,123	Nebraska^	12/10/1992
15.	4,050	Ohio State	10/18/1991
16.	4,050	Penn State	11/27/1992
17.	4,021	Michigan State	10/15/2011
18.	4,002	Eastern Michigan^	11/30/2018
19.	3,997	Penn State	10/9/2015
20.	3,905	Penn State	11/11/2011
21.	3,873	Purdue	10/25/2014
22.	3,770	Iowa State	8/31/2012
23.	3,754	Louisville^	12/1/2018
24.	3,684	Michigan State	11/2/2019
25.	3,632	Purdue	11/16/2013
26.	3,607	Rutgers	11/13/2015
27.	3,569	Nebraska	9/29/2018
28.	3,538	Washington	9/13/2013
29.	3,513	Michigan State	10/24/1992
30.	3,497	Penn State	10/15/1993
31.	3,476	Nebraska	9/28/2013
32.	3,462	Northwestern	11/7/2015
33.	3,419	Purdue	11/13/1992
34.	3,398	Northwestern	11/8/2014
35.	3,391	Ohio State	11/12/2011
36.	3,386	Michigan	10/23/1992
37.	3,344	Louisville	8/28/2015
38.	3,341	Marquette	12/7/2018
39.	3,325	Minnesota	10/1/2014
40.	3,269	Iowa State	9/1/2012
41.	3,269	Indiana	11/14/1992
42.	3,257	North Carolina	8/30/2014
	3,257	Southern Illinois	8/30/2014
44.	3,222	Nebraska	10/21/2012
45.	3,216	Penn State	11/15/2019
46.	3,209	Wisconsin	9/23/2012
47.	3,179	Nebraska	10/17/2015
48.	3,172	Nebraska	9/11/1992
49.	3,161	Minnesota	11/6/1993
50.	3,153	Penn State	10/28/2017

^ NCAA Tournament  
\* Played at State Farm Center