

## ■ Chief competition

U.S. coach April Heinrichs evaluates China, Germany and Norway, which were the Americans' foes at the Four Nations and will be their primary rivals at the Women's World Cup.

**CHINA:** "China is clearly an unbelievable team. They pass and receive the ball, ping the ball around, are quick in possession, have total control of the ball at all times. They're quick and athletic, and that makes a difficult matchup for us."

**GERMANY:** "They continue to be the most tactical, sophisticated, combination-play team in the world. The way they're defining the team around Birgit Prinz — how she carries them on her shoulders — they've got a determination Germany has not had in a couple years."

**NORWAY:** "Norway is so good, so consistent, they're always inevitably there at the end of the tournament, always in the hunt for the championship. When Ragnhild Gulbrandsen returns, they can go back to their style of playing balls [in the air] and flicking it on to [the forwards]."