

Sports

Swimmer Gilmore conquers injury and doubt

By Lauri Hoppie
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

UNL swimmer Shauna Gilmore, a redshirt sophomore, has accomplished what most redshirted athletes do: She has become stronger, faster and more experienced in competition. But she did it while fighting a severe shoulder injury.

Last October, Gilmore tore two of four muscles in her right rotator cuff while lifting weights.

Coach Ray Huppert said the cuff, where the arm meets the shoulder, is an over-used muscle and especially susceptible to injury. Every swimming move pulls the hand and uses the rotator cuff, he said.

After the injury, Gilmore spent about seven months out of the water trying to rebuild the muscle.

"We tried to get it to the point where I could pick things up," Gilmore said. The pain was constant, she said; she couldn't raise it above her head.

Gilmore, a freestyle and butterfly sprinter, started with weight training, ice and ultra-sound treatments.

But Gilmore said she wasn't sure her shoulder would ever be the same after about three months of rehabilitation. Gilmore went to California to see a shoulder specialist, who recommended a less-advanced rehabilitation program.

Besides working on her own, Gilmore had to go to every team workout. Just to watch.

"I'd be damned if I'd let her get away from swimming," Huppert said. Keeping in touch with the team is important for every athlete, injured or not, he said. Gilmore might argue with him, Huppert said, but he believed staying close to the team helped her desire to rebuild her shoulder and start swimming again.

Gilmore said one of the worst parts of her rehabili-

tation was watching those workouts.

"I was tired of coming over here and watching other people swim," she said. "Last year I was so down and depressed about swimming that I didn't even want to come to meets."

Gilmore gained about 20 pounds from inactivity and eating to cure her depression. Trainers told her she could exercise — but only if the exercises didn't jar or hurt her shoulder. That wasn't much, she said.

Despite her depression, Gilmore said she never really considered not returning to competition if her shoulder healed properly. Swimming would be hard to give up because she's been at it for so long, she said. Gilmore began racing when she was 9 years old. She continued racing through high school in Grand Junction, Colo. She also played tennis and basketball.

Choosing UNL wasn't hard, Gilmore said. She came for UNL's swimming and academic programs, she said.

"And I like the attitude of Nebraska people. It's not out of their way to say, 'Hi! How are you?'" she said. Huppert said he had some doubts about Gilmore's return.

"I'd be lying if I said I thought she never had doubts or that I never did," he said. But there was reason to doubt.

Injuries scare both athlete and coach, Huppert said, because neither knows if the injuries will heal 100 percent — or if they'll heal at all.

Despite these unknowns, Huppert said, Gilmore never gave up. Now, her shoulder is stronger than ever and her times are faster than when she was a freshman, he said.

As a freshman, Gilmore swam the 200-yard freestyle at 1:53.3; last week she clocked at 1:52.2. Last year's 100-yard free time was 53.1; this year's 52.4. Last

year's 100-yard butterfly was 59.3; this year's 59.2.

Gilmore began swimming again this summer. She started slow: Eight laps a workout. It took all summer and fall to progress to a full workout of 250 to 300 laps.

"They say it's like riding a bike, and you never forget how to do it," she said. She found the saying true when she climbed on the starting blocks for her first races, she said.

Gilmore has adopted another saying since her injury: There's always a purpose in mind for everything.

Gilmore, a B+ student, said her time away from swimming gave her a chance to reflect on what purpose her life might have. She changed her major from engineering to pre-medicine or pre-dentistry. Although her dentist father is pushing her toward his profession, Gilmore said, she is more interested in sports medicine.

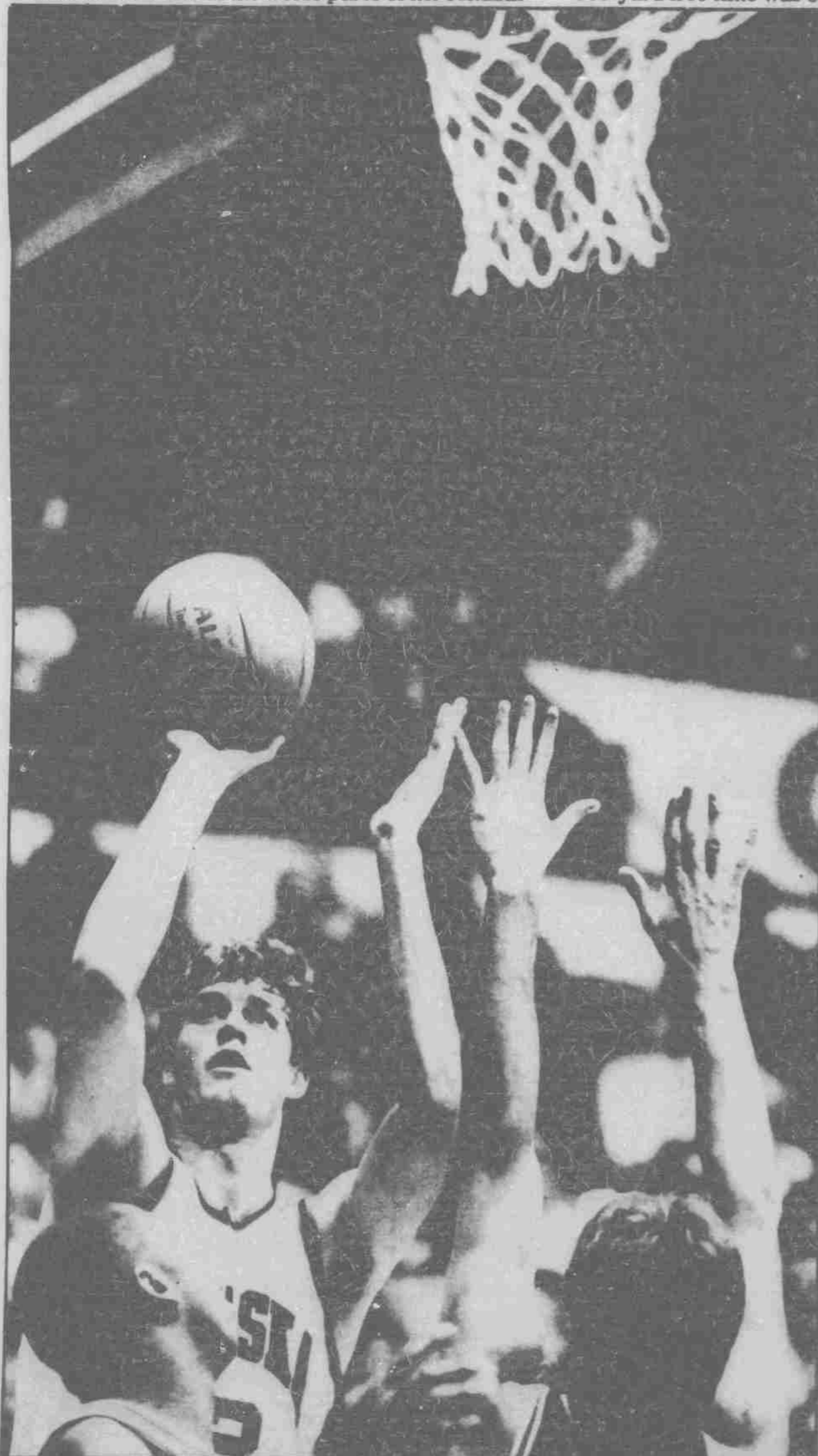
Gilmore said her injury gave her time to do things she might not have done if she were swimming.

"I got to go to formal," she said of a dance at her sorority, Kappa Delta. Although not many athletes belong to fraternities or sororities — three of 21 women on the team belong to a sorority — Gilmore said she enjoys hers.

Huppert is not opposed to Gilmore's activities outside of swimming.

"She's the kind of person who will devote 110 percent to swimming, yet still be a good student, and active and well-rounded in other areas," he said. "She's a good leader in that sense — she leads by actions, not by mouth."

"She's proving to herself and to others that an injury is not the end of her career."



David Creamer/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska center Dave Hoppen puts up another errant shot in the Huskers' 53-51 victory against Wisconsin Wednesday night. Hoppen was held to 3 for 10 shooting.

Husker cagers hope to break Tech's winning-at-home habit

By Kevin Warneke
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

Texas Tech has a habit of winning at home.

During his 14-year stint, coach Gerald Myers has racked up a 144-36 record at home.

Nebraska will try to add a blemish to that record Saturday when the Huskers travel to Lubbock to meet the 4-2 Red Raiders.

Myers said his home record isn't anything special.

"I can't say why we play so well at home," Myers said. "It's whatever reason Nebraska plays so tough at home."

Nebraska coach Moe Iba said he isn't so sure.

"They're a very good team," Iba said, "and good teams play well at home."

Texas Tech's 4-2 record could be deceiving, Iba said. The Red Raiders have suffered defeats to Washington and Iowa.

The Huskers will try to stop Texas Tech's one-two scoring punch of guard Bubba Jennings and forward Quentin Anderson. Jennings, a 5-10 senior, is averaging more than 16 points a game.

Anderson a 6-9 senior, leads the Red Raiders in scoring, averaging more than 18 points a game. He also leads the team in rebounding.

Iba said Nebraska guard Brian Carr will be assigned to stop Jennings, while forward Ronnie Smith will guard Anderson.

Meanwhile, the Red Raiders will have to put the clamps on high-scoring Nebraska center Dave Hoppen.

But Myers said his team will concentrate on stopping all Nebraska players, not just Hoppen.

"We're playing Nebraska, not just Hoppen," he said. "We need to do a good job on the whole team."

Texas Tech will have the advantage of a week layoff before the Nebraska game. But, Myers said, it's no advantage.

"Our workouts are tougher than most games," he said.

Nebraska racked up two victories this week and boasts a 6-0 record. Iba said the team will use its two days of practice to work on offense execution.

With final exams, Iba said, some players might be worrying about tests instead of basketball.

"They should be," he said.

Sports world changes guard as basketball courts heat up

Analysis by Scott Ahlstrand
Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

Well, winter is finally here and with the advent of the new season comes a changing of the guard in the sports world.

Both pro and college football are winding down their seasons with only one week of regular season play and playoffs and bowl games remaining. In football's place, basketball is just warming up in indoor arenas across America.

With the transition in sports comes a changing dialogue. Hang time no longer refers to the air time of a punt, as it does in football, but instead is used to describe the athletic ability of a forward or guard (but almost never a center). A facemask in football brings on a penalty. In basketball, a "facial" ("in your face") is admired. Finally, a human eraser in football brings to mind Lawrence Taylor, in basketball, Pat Ewing.

Teamwork is perhaps more evident in college basketball than in any other sport in America. Every shot and pass is of pivotal importance. Each game matches one

coach against another in a chess game of strategies. Combine these factors with the enthusiasm of college fans and the sheer athletic grace of the game and you can see why college basketball is the top dog of winter sports.

Locally, the college basketball game is experiencing a flourish of excitement. The Big Eight looks to be sporting some of its strongest teams in years.

Oklahoma is undoubtedly the conference favorite with Wayman "I wish I was a point guard" Tisdale leading the way. The Sooners have dropped two games to highly ranked Illinois but appear to have the makings of a top-20 team.

Closely following Oklahoma will be Kansas, Iowa State and Nebraska. Kansas is led by Calvin Thompson, native Omahan Ron Kellogg and freshman phenomena Danny Manning.

Iowa State narrowly missed knocking off powerful Indiana earlier this week. The Cyclones just missed a last second shot that would have tied the Hoosiers.

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