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Nebraska nine meet Missou in decisive three game series

by WARREN OBR Associate Sports Editor Nebraska and Missouri's big battle this weekend will be for second place. But next weekend these two teams could decide the Big-8 baseball

championship. Sixth place Nebraska can finish anywhere from a tie for second to a tie for last. Third place Missouri can finish anywhere from first place to a tie for seventh.

And next week both clubs could be spoilers when they oppose present co-league leaders Iowa State and Oklahoma in the last scheduled Big-8 games. Iowa State and Oklahoma begin a three game series Monday that will leave one of them in sole possession of first place.

Cornhusker coach Tony Sharpe is looking forward to the Missouri series this weekend and he thinks his team is too.

"We were disappointed in losing three games to Oklahoma, but we got good pitching from (Glen) Gilmore, (John) Housman and (Bruce) Cramer down there," said Sharpe. "We still have a chance to tie for second, though, and I think our kids are ready to go."

Missouri meanwhile has been an in-and-out team. At home the Tigers have been almost unbeatable (8-1), but they've lost all six games on the road.



Todd

Missouri will probably start Bill Todd, all Big-8 as a sophomore, in the first game. Todd has ridden his fastball to a 5-2 record with a 2.62 ERA this season.

The Cornhuskers, who've beaten every team they've played at least once except Oklahoma, will use the pitching rotation of Glen Gilmore, Ryan Kurosaki and John Husman with Bruce Cramer in relief, according to Sharpe. Kurosaki had been leading the Big-8 in ERA until he was socked with 9 earned runs in four innings against Oklahoma, but Sharpe says there is no problem.

"Ryan just had one of those

days that all pitchers have," said Sharpe. "He couldn't throw a strike when he needed one, and he walked a lot of people."

Peter Bethell will probably be the only Husker line-up change from last week replacing Jim Smith at shortstop. Smith hurt his knee in the Oklahoma series.

Other starters will be Tom Novak, Gene Stohs, and Bob Munson in the outfield, Steve Achelpohl at third base, Sam Sharpe at second base, Pat Elgert at first base, and Randy Spiehs at catcher.

Rich Sanger, who was a linebacker on the freshman football team, will suit up for his first game as a pitcher. The Colorado native "may see some duty," according to Sharpe.

Examining the season thus far, Sharpe thinks this may be one of the stronger years for Big-8 baseball.

"All the teams are stronger because they all have more personnel," said Sharpe. "Last year everyone had young players who've matured this season, and they've added good freshman ball players.

"And that may be our case this season," concluded Sharpe. "We'll have a lot of our players back next season, so now we're looking to the freshmen who'll have three years left.

Nebraska's doubleheader Friday starts at 1:30 p.m. with Saturday's single bill at 1 p.m.





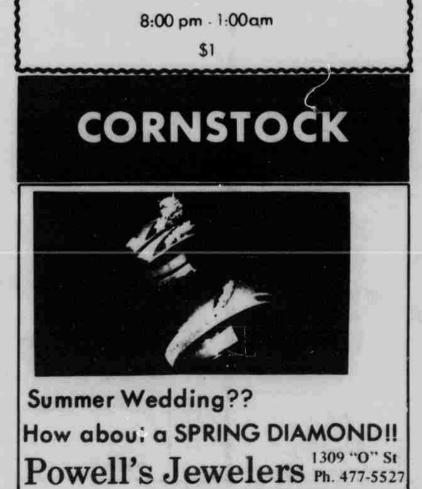


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STARTS SUNDAY



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