

Husker baseball squad attempts cellar stair climb

by Kent Seacrest

One thing nice about being last is that there is only one way to move-up.

That's the position the Nebraska baseball team finds itself in after getting off to a poor 0-3 start in Big Eight play. Nebraska is not only in the cellar in league standings, but also at the bottom of the conference in hitting with a .163 average and pitching with a 6.3 earned run average.

The Huskers hope to begin moving up this weekend when they host Kansas in a three-game home series at Sherman Field. A double-header is set for 1:30 p.m. Friday followed by a single game Saturday at 1 p.m.

The Jayhawks go into the series against the Huskers with a 2-1 conference mark and with the best overall record in the league at 9-2.

The Huskers started their 1972 season by winning four and losing six in their first two series against Oral Roberts and Houston. During a double-header against Houston Husker Coach Tony Sharp and Houston Coach Lovette Hill did the improbable in the world of college baseball when both won their 300th career victory. They split the double-header by identical 4-3 margins.

The Huskers then started their Big Eight campaign against Oklahoma State last week on the wrong foot by scoring only two runs and losing all three games.

"We're hoping the team will lift themselves up after a bad Big Eight start," Sharpe said. "We played very well at Oral Roberts and Houston, but two bad innings against Oklahoma State killed us."

To help get the Huskers on the winning track, Sharpe is going to employ a new pitching rotation. "Gene Stohs who had been pitching and playing outfield for us is strictly an outfielder from here on," Sharpe said.

"Ryan Kuroski will take over the first spot in the pitching rotation. Denny O'Doherty, a freshman from Creighton Prep, will pitch the second game against Kansas Friday, with Saturday's start up for grabs between Chad Seymour, Terry Redler and Glenn Gilmore."

Kansas pitchers Steve Corder and Bob Cox, two juniors who both have 3-0 records and earned run averages of 0.00, are expected to start in Friday's double-header. Three times this year Corder and Cox have combined to pitch the Jayhawks to twinbill victories.

Netters return for home matches

After four straight road matches, the Nebraska tennis team returns this weekend for two matches on the varsity courts.

The Huskers, who own a 4-2 season record, meet Nebraska Wesleyan Friday at 3:30 p.m. and Northwest Missouri Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

The UNL tennis team this season has recorded easy wins over Doane, Luther College, Oklahoma Baptist and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. But the Huskers on a recent southern road trip lost to Big Eight powers Oklahoma, 9-0, and Oklahoma State, 8-1.

gary seacrest sports

Sports are becoming a microcosm of American society and a good example of this is the recent strike by major league baseball players in order to obtain a 17 per cent increase in their already rich pension fund.

Two long standing features of American society are greed and the labor strike. But many sports fans are becoming concerned because baseball players are now exhibiting greed and going on strike.

However it seems baseball fans across the nation are mad at the players because baseball is failing at its main task—to provide an emotional release from the unpleasant things of life.

The current issue of Sports Illustrated noted that sports are no longer providing the fan an "escape into vicarious accomplishments and triumph." The magazine said, "Now the fan, beset by withholding taxes, sales taxes, school taxes, busing crises, shameless politicians, rising prices, endless debts, turns to his favorite sports and gets—rising prices, shameless owners, greedy athletes, franchise switching, contract jumping, lawsuits, haggling, arguing, disputes, everything but the fun and enjoyment he is seeking."

Sports are definitely hurting themselves by failing to satisfy the needs of the fan. Instead of showing the best in American society, sports are increasingly showing the worst.

The first Nebraska football game is still five months away, but the Huskers are already making headlines as well as drawing fans to their spring practices. Interest in the spring drills is amazing.

Unfortunately, many people in displaying their love for Husker football forget that there are other spring sports on campus that deserve recognition and support. The interest in the football drills proves that football is king in Nebraska anytime of the year.

News stories concerning spring practice leave the impression the Huskers face major difficulties and are undergoing a rebuilding year in Bob Devaney's last season as head coach.

True, Nebraska did lose such great players as Jerry Tagge, Jeff Kinney, Larry Jacobson

and Dick Rupert and do not have an experienced quarterback returning. But there are many indications that the Huskers have a solid team and might have a good chance to win an unprecedented third straight national championship.

Biggest reasons for optimism include: (1) three returning All-Americans in flanker Johnny Rodgers, defensive end Willie Harper and middle guard Rich Glover, plus All-Big Eight defensive back Joe Blahak; (2) five offensive and five defensive starters returning from the 1971 national championship squad; and (3) the momentum gained from going undefeated in 32 straight games.

Knowing Devaney he plans to go out in style when he retires. . . .

Remember all those boring Big Eight basketball games this season in which the winner was the team that could build a lead and then stall the rest of the game? Such slow-down games may soon become a thing of the past.

Big Eight Commissioner Chuck Neinas recently said the conference is considering a 30-second clock during the next basketball season. Under the proposal, a team would have 30 seconds from the time it gains possession of the ball to take a shot.

Nebraska Coach Joe Cipriano and Missouri Coach Norm Stewart have said they favor the use of the clock. "I think there's no question about it improving the game from a defensive standpoint too," Cipriano said. "I think it'll help the whole game."

Cipriano is right. After all, a basketball was designed to be put through a hoop, not deflated.

K-State leads golf meet

Kansas State jumped into the opening round lead in the first annual Cornhusker Invitational Golf Tournament being played at Holmes Park Golf Course.

The Wildcats total of 307 is one stroke better than Nebraska's first team and six shots ahead of the Huskers' second squad.

Bob Philbrick of Kansas State had medalist honors in Thursday's round with a one over par 73. The Huskers' Rick Schultz followed with a 74.

Friday's concluding round in the tournament will get under way at 12:30 p.m.

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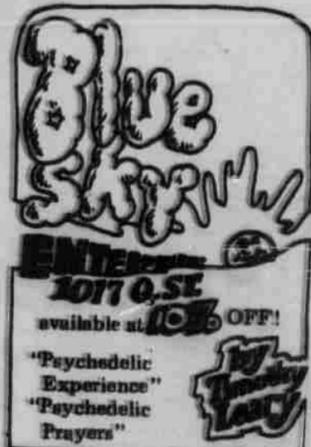
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