

Bluejays wing way toward prominence

While UNL's youthful cagers have been struggling to stay in the top division of the Big 8, the Creighton University Bluejays have winged their way into the national top 20.

Last week in Milwaukee, the Bluejays upset Marquette University, solidifying their chances for an NCAA tournament bid. The Warriors had lost only two of their last 100 games at home before Creighton came to town.

Despite masterminding this surge to basketball prominence, Creighton Coach Eddie Sutton has not been popular with all the folks in Omaha.

Some Bluejays partisans contend that Sutton tends to play his friends, and the rafters of the Civic Auditorium often echo these and other sentiments during a game. It must be frustrating for a coach of a 19-4 team to encounter such criticism on his home court.

Creighton fans are traditionally critical. Whereas most home crowds limit themselves to throwing paper cups at referees, Bluejay backers often take to lobbing bottles onto the floor to protest a bad call.

steve taylor taylored sports

The truth is that Sutton has worked miracles at the hilltop school this year. He has taken average players and molded them into a well disciplined, patient team that comes up a winner against teams it has no business beating. If Creighton's success continues in a post-season tournament, Sutton will be a prime candidate for coach of the year.

Gatecrashers

UNL's nonconference football schedule next year is not what one would call intriguing (three so-so Big 10 teams and Oregon University), but undoubtedly every one of the home games will be sold out.

It will be interesting to see if this somewhat lackluster line-up discourages Lincoln's notorious pack of adolescents known as gatecrashers.

At one game, a strong-willed youth was a bit too slow and a policeman caught up with him just as he got to the top of the fence. The humorless officer tried to disperse the curious crowd watching the confrontation as he tried to coax the boy down. Finally, realizing that the boy was being made a fool of by the wisecracking rebel, he snapped: "All right, that's it. We're going downtown." The boy answered from his lofty perch: "Can you drop me off at Miller & Paine?"

Stadium guard Kevin Stokke remembers the time a fragile-looking youth nearly broke his neck trying to see the Huskers play without benefit of a ticket. When Stokke caught him on the fence, it left the youngster with a difficult decision. He could either climb down into the arms of a stadium guard or make a 15 ft. drop to a spot inside the stadium. He jumped.

Last-minute surge clips MU, 88-87

By Dennis Onnen

Columbia, Mo.—Paced by Jerry Fort's career high of 33 points and Steve Erwin's clutch free throw shooting, UNL surged from 15 points behind to nip Missouri University Saturday 88-87.

Behind 58-43 early in the second half, the Huskers came back to take an 84-83 lead with 1:06 left on a tip in by Rickay Harris. Twenty seconds later, Erwin was fouled going for a rebound.

Missouri called a time-out in an attempt to rattle him, but Erwin said after the game that it didn't bother his concentration. He made the free throws to give the Huskers an 86-83 lead, their biggest of the game.

Did Husker Coach Joe Cipriano give him any special instructions during the time-out?

"I told Erwin to say the Lord's Prayer," Cipriano admitted. After Al Eberhard brought the Tigers within one point with a basket, Erwin was fouled again with 16 seconds left. He calmly made both free throws amid jeers from the crowd of 7,446, the Huskers now led 88-85.

Fort set two records during the contest. His 15 field goals broke the Husker record of 14, formerly held by four players. He also increased his point total for the year to 404, far surpassing Tom Baack's sophomore record of 388.

"I wasn't thinking about the records," he said. "I like to win." His record setting field goal was a typical 18-foot jump shot from the right side that brought the Huskers within one, 83-82. "I didn't get going until late, but I'm glad I did," he said. "That's when it counted."

Missouri changed from a man-to-man defense to a zone defense early in the second half, and two Huskers said the switch contributed to the Husker comeback.

"It was the wrong thing to do," Bob Siegel said. He explained that the zone defense gave him more room to shoot, something he quickly took advantage of. His two consecutive baskets over the Tiger zone midway in the second half pulled Nebraska within seven points and revived the Husker's hopes. He also led Husker rebounders with seven.

Fort said the switch also helped him after he had trouble against the man-to-man defense at the beginning of the second half.

"I got my confidence back against the zone," he said. "It took the pressure off me."

The win upped UNL's record to 11-10 and 4-5 in the Big 8, propelling the Huskers past Colorado University into fourth place. It also was UNL's first road win in the Big 8.

The loss was Missouri's seventh in a row, plunging the Tigers deeper into seventh place.

sports shorts

Husker swimmers trounced Southwest Minnesota, 97-16, Saturday to close out their dual season with a 4-5 record.

Nebraskans were first and second in 10 of the 11 individual events, and the Huskers also took both relays.

Double winners were Jack Alexander in the 500- and 1,000-yard freestyles, John Williams in the 200-yard individual medley and 200-yard backstroke and Dave

Watermeier in the required and optional diving events.

Bill Davis in the 200-yard freestyle, John Dahir in the 200-yard butterfly, Scott Martin in the 100-yard freestyle and Terry Reding in the 200-yard breaststroke were other Husker winners.

Nebraska used strength in the middle distance events to

defeat Brigham-Young University, 70-61, Saturday, extending its home dual winning streak to 25 meets.

Chuck Malito, Jeff Wisemiller, Dan Speck and Roger Chadwick won the 440-, 600-, 880- and 1,000-yard runs, respectively. Bob Unger tied the Memorial Stadium record of 4:08.8 in winning the mile run and defeating BYU ace Paul Cummings.

Other individual winners

for Nebraska were freshman griddler Dave Gillespie in the 60-yard dash and Paul Anderson in the low hurdles.

Husker wrestlers ended their dual schedule with a 7-6 record Saturday, falling to Wyoming University, 39-8. Bob Johnson and Bruce Conger were the only Husker winners, while Tony Jennings managed a draw.

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