

Husker machine needs to get gears together

Analysis by Jim Zalewski

The world champions of baseball, the Cincinnati Reds, are called the Big Red Machine. Last year's Husker version of Big Red baseball appeared to be a machine with its gears out of synch. With a minor overhaul, a little oil and polish and a southern style tune-up, assistant coach Bob Gates said this year's squad should be in the race to catch the University of Oklahoma in Big 8 Conference baseball.

"We need to develop consistency, to get all parts of our game going for us at once," Gates said. "Last year we had games where we'd get great pitching and lose 2-1, then come back the next day and get beat 9-6. We've got to get our hitting and pitching going for us at the same time."

The Huskers finished second in Big 8 pitching last year, third in team hitting, but last in team defense while compiling a 13-20 overall mark. A mark of any good baseball team is strength up the middle, which the team lacked last year. Only two seniors are gone from last year's squad, indicating a veteran and more mature 1976 team. The analysis breaks down as follows:

Shooting for 2.00 staff ERA

Pitching. Dave Buehrer, senior, and Kirk Eyemann, junior, figure to be the Huskers' one-two punch on the hill. Sophomore lefties Steve Nagel, Jerry Yingling and Larry Winum should add more depth with a year of experience under their belts. Senior Randy Benish, a fireballing righthander, also could capture the third starting spot. Boyd Batenhorst, senior, and frosh Jeff Costello are expected to be the chief firemen in the bullpen.

"We finished second in pitching, but our E.R.A. (earn-

ed run average) was still over 4.00 last year," Gates said. "We've got to shoot for 2.00 as a staff if we're going to fight for the title. If Yingling and Nagel find their control, we should be okay."

Infield. Winum, junior Terry Dopp and Benish figure to share duty at first base. Returning senior starter Gary Healey, who hit a .388 in conference play last year, holds down second. Sophomore Jeff King and junior Bobby Thomas, football starting split end, are battling at shortstop, while senior Dick Anderson remains at third. Sophomore Doug Miller provides vital relief duty at second, short and third.

"We may have to sacrifice some hitting for some good defense this year," Gates said. "Shortstop is still unsettled, and we have to have someone at the position who can do the job defensively."

Outfield is strongpoint

Outfield. Possibly the team's strong point. Senior Norm Glisman will be a three-year starter in right, junior Paul Haas is a returning starter and excellent flyhawk in center and slugging junior Steve McManaman gets a shot at left. Benish and Dopp also figure to see outfield duty.

"Our outfield played real well last year," Gates said. "Leftfield is somewhat open right now, but overall we've got some good experience back."

Catching. A two-man battle. Sophomore Jon Henne and junior Ron Miltenberger may divide time in doubleheaders until one asserts himself. It appears to be an even battle heading into the spring trip.

"It's kind of risky carrying only two catchers, but we

couldn't justify keeping a third man just for indoor workouts," Gates said. "If one establishes himself, he'll probably get more playing time; otherwise they'll likely split doubleheaders. We could be in trouble if one of them gets injured."

The Huskers departed on a 14-game southern swing Sunday, opening a 46-game slate. Four games apiece are scheduled with the University of Houston, Rice University and Lamar Community College. The final doubleheader is March 24 against Dallas University.

Houston no pushover

Houston will be no easy mark. The Cougars already have been beaten defending Big 8 champion Oklahoma 5-0 this year. Rice finished 20-16 last year, while Lamar ended up 27-26 and tied for its conference title.

"We'd like to win all 14, but our purpose is to see who can play," Gates said. "We can experiment more. We plan on pitching all ten pitchers, with at least two throwing every game. We're not taking anyone we're not planning on playing."

Gates and head coach Tony Sharpe, who has been ill for a large part of the preseason training, have until the May 8 Big 8 baseball tourney to repair and tune their machine. After that, they'll either capture the checkered flag of the conference title race or eat the dust of a faster, more synchronized machine.

Tiger's Smith leads best five list

Opinion by Jim Hunt

Now that the basketball season is over, it is possible to look back and pick out some outstanding performances. The following is my list of the five best Husker opponents in the Coliseum this year.

Leading the list is the University of Missouri's (MU) Willie Smith, Big 8 Conference player of the year. Smith, a 6 ft. 2 in. senior from Las Vegas, scored 20 of MU's 29 first-half points in the 62-57 Tiger win against the Huskers. The two-time All-Big 8 selection finished the game with 28 points, hitting 11 of 24 shots from the field and six of seven free throws.

The win also pushed MU into sole possession of first place in the Big 8 with a record of 5-0. The loss dropped the Huskers to 4-1 in the Big 8 and snapped an eight-game winning streak.

At the other guard position is Kansas State University's (KSU) Mike Evans. Evans, a 6 ft. 1 in. sophomore from Goldsboro, N.C., pumped in 30 points in KSU's 65-53 win over the Huskers. Evans, an All-Big 8 selection, scored 19 second-half points to help KSU rally from a 27-23 half-time deficit.

Evans hit 13 of 21 shots from the field and four of five from the free throw line. The win helped KSU slip by the Huskers into second place in the Big 8 with a 8-2 conference record. The loss dropped the Huskers to 7-3.

The best forwards to face UNL in the Coliseum this year were the University of South Carolina's Alex English and Norm Cook of the University of Kansas (KU).

English, a 6 ft. 10 in. senior from Columbia, S.C., scored 20 points in the Gamecocks' 69-68 loss to the Huskers. He entered the game with an average of 24

points a game and was hitting almost 53 per cent of his shots.

English, a starter for the Gamecocks since his freshman year, hit seven of 11 shots from the field and six of nine free throws. He also collected a game-high eight rebounds.

Cook, a 6 ft. 9 in. junior from Lincoln, Ill., scored 21 points in the Jayhawks' 57-54 loss to the Huskers. Cook, another All-Big 8 selection this year, showed outstanding shooting ability from both short and long range.

The most outstanding center to play at the Coliseum this year was the University of Washington's James Edwards. The 7 ft. Edwards scored 18 points in the Huskies' 57-63 win. He scored 13 of his points in the first half and dominated play when he was in the game.

sports shorts

Two Husker women tracksters qualified for the national meet with their performances at the Big 8 Conference meet Saturday in Manhattan, Kan. Sophomore Cindy Dixon took third in the 880-yard run in 2:20.4, one-tenth of a second under the qualifying standard.

Freshman Peggy Liddick qualified in the long jump with a leap of 17 ft. 5½ in., good for third place. She also took fifth in the 60-yard hurdles and sixth in the 60-yard dash.

In the shot put, freshmen Debbie Raddatz and Pam Koontz placed third and sixth, respectively. Freshman Bev Batenhorst captured third in the high jump, tying the school record of 5 ft. The mile relay team finished fifth in a school record time of 4:20.7.

In the five-team race, Kansas State University edged Iowa State University, 93½-90½, for the title. The Universities of Colorado and Kansas tied for third with 31 points each, while the Huskers trailed with 19 points.

UNL's distance medley relay team placed fifth in the 12th Annual NCAA Indoor Track Championships in Detroit Friday and Saturday.

Husker freshmen Ron Fisher and Ron Mahoney, sophomore Harold Stelzer and junior Matt Reckmeyer finished third Friday in a qualifying heat with a time of 10:02.50. In the Saturday finals, the team was clocked in 9:55.76.

Senior Chuck Malito ran a 50.3 in the 440-yard dash preliminaries and failed to qualify for the finals.

The University of Texas-El Paso won an unprecedented third consecutive team championship. Kansas State, the Big 8 Conference champion, tied for seventh place.

Three UNL wrestlers failed to place in the NCAA National Championship wrestling tournament Thursday through Saturday in Tucson, Ariz. Senior Tony Jennings, 134 lbs., freshman Court Vining, 150 lbs., and senior Bob Johnson, 190 lbs., each lost in the early rounds Thursday.

In first-round consolation action Friday, Jennings lost 4-0 to Toshi Donishi of the University of Washington and Vining was defeated by Brigham Young University's Steve Sanderson, 17-1.

Johnson beat Bruce Young of Arizona State University, 5-0, before losing to Neal Brendel of Yale, 5-4, in the second round of the consolations.

Iowa University won the team championship, followed by Big 8 champion Iowa State.

UNL's golf team placed sixth in a 10-team field in the Menger Hotel Intercollegiate Golf Classic Tuesday through Friday in San Antonio, Tex.

Nebraska's 1,257 total was 81 strokes behind champion Oral Roberts.

Sophomore Doug Smith led the Huskers with a four-

nebraskan sports

round 310 score. Other scorers for the Huskers were freshman Tony Pesavento, 315; junior Craig Moyer, 318; freshman Steve Statton, 319; freshman Dave Donachie, 329, and junior Todd Thorson, 330.

The UNL women's gymnastics team failed to qualify any individuals for the finals of the regional tournament Thursday and Friday in Brookings, S.D.

The Huskers scored 79.6 points and finished 10th in the 20-team field. The tournament was won by Southwest Missouri State University with 108.28 points.

Two benefit basketball games sponsored by the Heritage Foundation and Volunteers-in Probation will be played Tuesday in Lincoln High's Johnson Gym. Ticket price is \$1 with children under six admitted free.

The first game at 7 p.m. pits high school coaches from Lincoln East and Northeast against Southeast, Lincoln High and Plus X coaches. The second game at 8 p.m. will feature the UNL football players against UNL football coaches.

The women's intramural swimming and diving meet will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Women's Physical Education Bldg. pool. Entries must be made at the pool at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday.

There will be one diving and eight swimming events in the meet. For more information, contact intramural coordinator Gale Wiedow at 472-3467.

Patty and Dan Gapen of the Anoka, Minn., Gapen Tackle Co. will be the featured speakers at the sixth and final fishing seminar cosponsored by the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Dept. and the Surplus Center.

The Gapens will speak on family fishing tonight at 7:30 in the Lincoln High School auditorium. This will be the final seminar in the five-year series.

Student football tickets for the 1976 season will be on sale in the South Stadium ticket office March 29 through April 2. The ticket office will be open from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on those days.

The \$20 season ticket includes admission to six home games next fall. Only full-time students will be permitted to buy tickets this spring. Seat location will be determined through a lottery.

For more information, call the ticket office at 472-3111.

The intramural power lifting meet last Tuesday and Wednesday, was won by the Lincoln Health Club.

Individual weight class winners and total pounds lifted: 114 lb. Chris Buechle, Abel 5 (530 pounds); 123½ lb. John Dier, Tau Kappa Epsilon (675); 132½ lb. Dave Hejl, 1641 (725); 148½ lb. Lee Fordyce, Lincoln Health Club (1,055); 165½ lb. Jobe Fix, Lincoln Health Club (985); 181½ lb. Bob Phillips, Lincoln Health Club (1,090); 198½ lb. Bill Hill, Lincoln Health Club (1,150); 200 lb. Steve Torrence, Lincoln Health Club (1,190) and 242 lb. Evan Jolitz, Lincoln Health Club (1,465).



Photo by Steve Swanson

South Carolina's Alex English, honorable mention All-American, scored 20 points in the Gamecocks' 69-68 loss to the Huskers Jan. 6.