

sports

Lady Huskers seek win to set record, earn playoff

By Rick Huls
Sports Editor

The Nebraska women's basketball team has two reasons for wanting a victory tonight against interstate rival UNO at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

A UNL victory over the Lady Mavericks would assure a berth in the AIAW Region VI playoffs. The two split again this year, forcing a third game to decide the state's representative. The Lady Huskers won 59-49 in Omaha and UNO grabbed a 50-48 decision last Saturday in Lincoln.

A win would also give UNL 23 wins for the year, breaking the all-time record for any Nebraska basketball team. The Lady Huskers broke the women's record Monday night with a 78-56 win over South Dakota, upping this season's mark to 22-12. The previous best was a 21-16 record in 1975-76 under George Nicodemus. The 22 wins ties the school record which was set last year by the NU men's basketball squad.

But, first in Gallagher's mind is a win over UNO.

"It's a do or die situation," Gallagher said. "Both teams will have intensity this time."

Scrappy style

Gallagher was referring to the scrappy, aggressive style of ball UNO played against the Lady Huskers Saturday.

"UNO was really ready to play. You could see it in the first couple of minutes when they went ahead 6-0," Gallagher added. "But I do think we'll be mentally ready to play this time."

Gallagher said she has made adjustments for UNO's bothersome zone defense.

Gallagher was quick to point out that her team took 25 more shots but hit only 27 percent from the field.

"We really had problems with their zone last time. And we weren't taking bad shots either. They just weren't falling for us," she explained.

However, Gallagher said she was pleased with every other aspect of the game. UNL out-rebounded the Lady Mavs by two, had one more assist and committed four less turnovers.

Gallagher said her team must do something to stop UNO center Barb Hart.

Bench developing

"Hart really hurt us after we had contained her in the first game," Gallagher said. "Janet (Smith) had a little trouble with her so we might change things around a bit."

The UNL coach said she remains pleased with the play of her freshmen, Ami Beiriger and Janet Smith.

"They've been a tremendous help lately. Both still make mistakes because they're freshmen but either one can start for us," Gallagher added.

"Slowly but surely our bench is starting to develop," Gallagher said. "And it was good to see everybody get a chance to play last night (Monday)."

Diane DelVigna led UNL with 24 points, while Carol Garey and Laura Tietjen hit for 12 and 10 points, respectively.

"I think the girls were angry about the UNO game and took it out on poor old South Dakota."

UNO, who has represented the state the past two years in the regionals, comes into Wednesday night's game with an 18-12 record. Tipoff is set for 7:30.

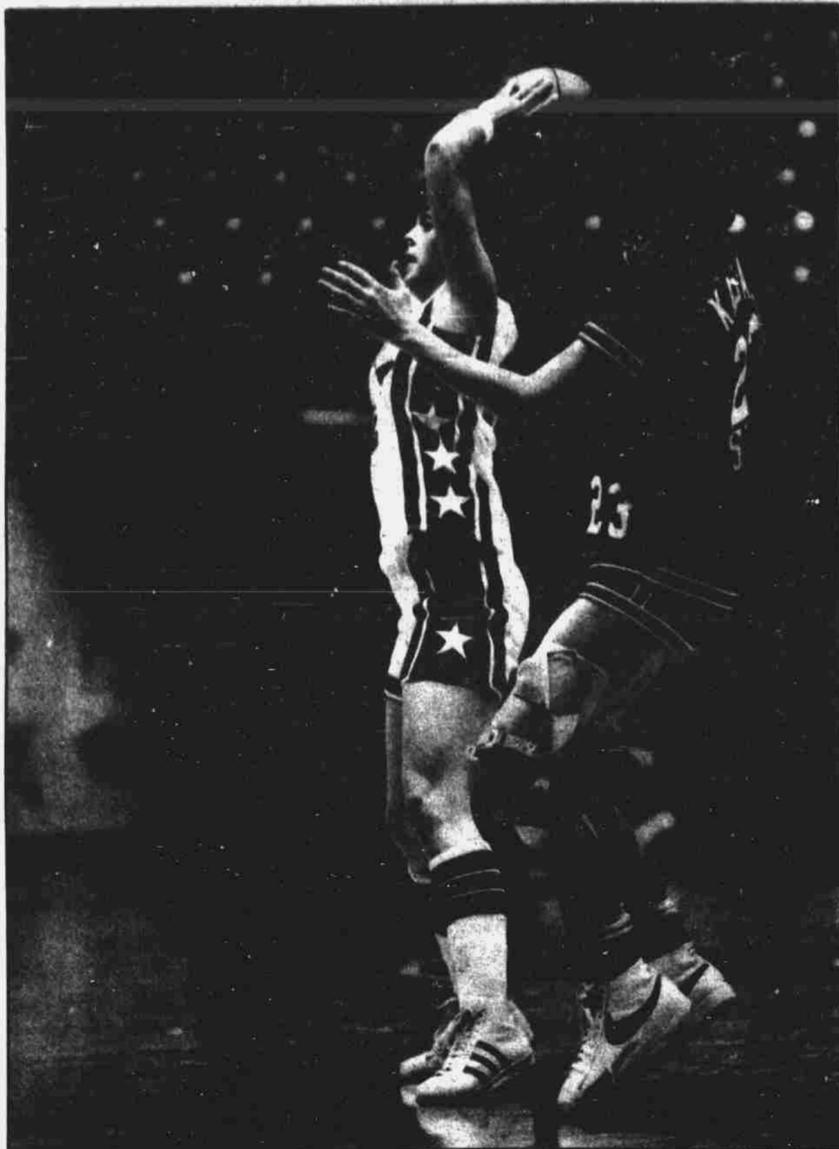


Photo by Mary Anna Golon

Ami Beiriger blocks a Kansas State play.

Huskers swimmers ready for weekend

By Sara Martens

A year's worth of work will be summed up in one meet when the UNL swimming and diving team enters the Big Eight Championships this weekend.

"The whole year comes down to one meet. You're up for it without even trying," Nebraska swimmer Jerry Olszewski said.

Olszewski, a junior college transfer from Fullerton, Cal., said the Huskers will be physically and mentally ready when the meet begins at noon Thursday in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

NU Coach Cal Bentz said the Nebraska pool is an advantage to the Huskers and to everyone else who benefits from swimming in a fast pool.

"Other conference facilities are not comparable to ours. Lincoln does a good job hosting the meet and our work force of officials is as good as any in the country," Bentz said.

The Huskers will be out to improve their team score and conference placing, Bentz said. For the past seven years the Huskers have finished last among the seven Big Eight swim teams. The 1978 team scores 72 points, while Colorado was sixth with 201.

Last year's champion, Kansas, is the favorite for the meet, Olszewski said.

Kansas Coach Bill Spahn said, "We're going up hoping we will win, but we're not overconfident."

Steve Graves, a three event champion last year, returns for the Jayhawks along with one-meter diving champion Kurt Anseimi and three-meter champion Mark Hill, Spahn said.

Husker diver Steve Elliott did not compete in the Nebraska Kansas dual, but Spahn said Elliott will provide excellent competition for both divers.

The meet will be closer than last year's, Spahn said. He expects a vast improvement in the Husker total.

"Nebraska potentially has a lot of good swimmers and I know Cal (Bentz) will have them ready," he said.

Bentz would not predict how his team will finish, but Olszewski said the Huskers have fourth place wrapped up.

Bentz, in his first year at UNL, said the team is healthy and is finishing the tapering and resting phase of training.

Bentz is said he is hoping for a large crowd at the three-day meet.

Preliminary events begin at noon each day, with finals beginning at 7:30 Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening.

Blackman snuffs out NU season

Manhattan, Ks.—Nebraska's hopes for advancement in the Big Eight post-season tournament evaporated Friday night as the Huskers suffered a gut-wrenching 61-60 double-overtime loss to Kansas State before 8,450 screaming fans in Ahearn Fieldhouse.

Kansas State's Rolando Blackman sank a pair of free throws with five seconds left to finish the Huskers and send the Wildcats to the quarterfinals against Oklahoma in Kansas City's Kemper Arena.

The Huskers came within a hairbreadth of winning several times, but Kansas State, powered by Blackman's clutch shooting, always fought its way back.

"I thought we played as hard as we could ever play, but we just couldn't get a break," said Nebraska Coach Joe Cipriano.

The season-ending defeat gave NU a 14-13 final record.

Nebraska, which had played two previous overtime games this season and had won both, could not turn the trick a third time.

Come back

The score was tied, 53-53, at the end of regulation play as the Huskers clawed their way back from a 4-point deficit late in the second period on baskets by Curt Hedberg and Mike Naderer.

Each team scored four points in the first extra period to set the stage for the dramatic second overtime.

KSU led, 59-58, with 1:24 left in double overtime when Brian Banks lofted a jump shot from the top of the key that missed.

The Wildcats came down with a rebound, but Naderer intercepted an outlet pass to prevent a Kansas State stall. Naderer then drilled a jump shot with 13 seconds remaining, giving the Huskers 60-59 lead.

K-State called timeout, and as play resumed Blackman took a pass, drove to the basket and was fouled by Banks, with five seconds left.

Cool shot

Blackman coolly flipped both freethrows through the net, and Bob Moore's desperation shot missed at the buzzer.

Ironically, it was Moore's last-second shot that lifted the Huskers to an overtime win against Kansas earlier this season.

"I was really proud of our boys," Cipriano said. "Even though the law of averages was against us, I thought we could win it here tonight. I thought we had the better team."

"It could have gone either way," said KSU Coach Jack Hartman. "Both teams played extremely hard and extremely well. We were fortunate."

Blackman, Nebraska's nemesis in two earlier games this season, scored 16 points, as did backcourt mate Tyrone Adams.

Andre Smith, whose inside play and freethrow shooting buoyed Nebraska, was the Huskers leading scorer with 18 points.

Naderer, whose outside shooting almost won the game twice, added 12. Carl McPipe, playing his last game as a Husker also hit double figures, finishing with 10 points.

NROTC basketball squad takes first

The Nebraska Navy ROTC basketball team took first place in the 25th Annual NROTC Midwest Tournament held Feb. 24 and 25 in Great Lakes, Ill.

The Nebraska team won the two-day, 16-team tournament by defeating Vanderbilt University 50-39 in the championship game Sunday.

The tourney featured several major schools including Notre Dame, Michigan, Marquette, Louisville, Ohio State and Purdue.

Nebraska, who went undefeated through four games, depended on a well-balanced attack throughout the tournament and averaged 57 points per game compared to their opponents 45.7 points per game.

The Huskers, coached by Lt. J.G. Carl Gruenler and Senior Chief Petty Officer Howard Stillinger, defeated Notre Dame (66-53), Louisville (66-48) and Illinois (46-43) before advancing to the finals.

The first place finish was the Husker's first championship in the history of the tournament.

Michigan, who has dominated the tournament in the past few years and won titles in 1977 and 78, finished in fifth place.

Other teams participating in the tournament included: Miami, Ohio, Wisconsin, Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa State, Illinois Institute of Technology and Northwestern.