

sports

NMSU team injured, depleted for game

By Ron Powell

With all the misfortunes the defending Missouri Valley Conference champion New Mexico State has experienced this season, head coach Gil Krueger might be singing the blues.

The problem is no one can hear him singing because Krueger has a case of laryngitis.

"He's had a pretty bad case of it for two or three weeks now," said New Mexico State's defensive coordinator Tony DeBlasse, who is serving as the team's press

spokesman. "I hope he gets better soon because we need some leadership around here."

The Aggies 2-3 coming into Saturday's game against the Nebraska have had so many injuries and players quit the team, its surprising Krueger hasn't lost more than his voice.

On offense, the Aggies have lost three starters to injuries. Senior flanker Scott Meader was the team's leading receiver, before he broke his wrist. Senior Steve Solaja and junior Harold Oliver were the Aggies' starting tackles until knee injuries put them out.

Three players who have played key roles in the Aggie offense have quite. Split end Jeff Evans, who was the team's leading receiver a year ago with 48 receptions for 926 yards, quit the team before the season started. Gary Steele, a part-time starter at tailback last year, also did not return.

THE THIRD PLAYER to leave the team was tailback Howard Greathouse. Greathouse, the aggies' second leading rusher, had rushed for 183 yards and caught seven passes for 44 yards this season before leaving the team.

To add to the Aggies' tailback problems, redshirt freshman Tryone Pope, the starter at the end of spring practices, is ineligible.

Despite the problems, the Aggies' offense is still averaging 330 yards a game. One of the offensive leaders is senior fullback Ray Locklin (6-3, 225). Last season, Locklin rushed for a team-leading 866 yards. This year Locklin has rushed for 450 yards, again the team's best.

"Locklin is a quality back," said New Mexico State offensive back coach Jim Nagel. "He's a back that can run with power, and for a back his size, has good speed as well."

According to Nagel, the strength of the Aggie offense is its passing game, which is averaging 188 yards a game.

Spearheading the passing attack is junior college transfer, quarterback Butch Kelly (6-3, 200). This year the junior has hit on 59 of 126 passes for 883 yards and six touchdowns. Kelly, however, has thrown nine interceptions, with five of them coming in last week's 30-16 setback to state rival New Mexico.

"I HOPE WE can do a better job of throwing the ball against Nebraska than we did last week," Nagel said. "Although we had 213 yards through the air, we threw it to the opponents five times, which was a key factor in the game."

Kelly's main target this season has been junior split end Chris Holloway (5-10, 175), who has hauled in 17 passes for 268 yards and three touchdowns. Last year's split ends, senior Jor Hixon (6-3, 170) is back after 33 receptions for 473 yards in 1978. This year Hixon has seven catches for 92 yards, but has been slowed by bruised ribs.

Taking Meader's flanker spot has been a deep threat, freshman Bobby Humphrey (5-10, 160). Humphrey has caught seven passes for 224 yards, an average of 32 yards a reception. He's scored twice.

The tight end is sophomore Terry Locklin (6-4, 212). Terry, the brother of Ray Locklin, has been playing with a light shoulder separation, but still has five catches for 98 yards.

"Our receivers and quarterback are young and inexperienced, but they're doing a good job," Nagel said. "They've improved every game."

Nagel said one of the problems the offense has had is inconsistency. In the first five games, New Mexico State has outscored their opponents 61-23 in the first half, but the opponents have come back to outscore NMSU 97-27 in the second half.

"When we look at what breaks down, it is usually something that happens because of inexperience," Nagel said. "We've had to do some shuffling of positions because of injuries and this has led to a lot of new players playing positions for the first time."

"A BIG FACTOR in our second half breakdowns is the fact we have people banged up missing all week of practice and then playing hurt on Saturday," Nagel said. "Because of that, their conditioning is poor and they fade by the end of the game."

"After watching the Nebraska defense on film, I don't think they have a weakness," Nagel said. "A few teams have had some success passing against them, and this is how we're going to attack them. But we have to establish a running game first, before our passing game will be effective."

Injuries also have affected the Aggie defense. The Aggies lost All-Missouri Valley Conference defensive tackle Dan Plantz after knee surgery. NMSU's other tackle, junior David Day (6-3, 248) is a doubtful starter with a dislocated knee cap.

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All-Stars win title

A seven-run fourth inning keyed The All Stars to a 9-2 romp over Theta Xi fraternity in the All-University Men's Fast Pitch softball championship Tuesday night.

Chris Mannix's two-run homer, following Scott Fiedler's three-run triple sparked The All Stars, who trailed 2-0 entering the fourth.

The All Stars added two more runs in the fourth and another two runs in the fifth frame.

Mike Swarts and Steve Mannix had two hits each for The All Stars, who finished the season with a perfect 7-0 record.

Mark Mannix was the winning pitcher. Dave Ernst suffered the loss for Theta Xi, which finished the season at 3-1-1.

Dave Fuelberth knocked in both of Theta Xi's runs with a two-run homer in the third inning.



Photo by M. Billingsley

Nebraska Connie Gonyea lets go during a recent women softball practice.

Creighton game ends softball season

By Shelley Smith

Nebraska women's softball coach Don Isherwood said he'll probably never see it but he would like women's softball to be moved to a fall sport.

In the spring, he said, the weather is usually bad and there aren't enough good weather months to play a lot of softball.

"In fall, the weather's better and there's more time to play," he said.

The Huskers, this year, played their first fall season ever. Isherwood said he likes having the extra playing time, but added the team wasn't as mentally prepared for it as he hoped.

Although 10-5, the team's attitude has been somewhat lax, he said.

"I'm not disappointed with their attitude though, I kind of expected it," he said.

"Fall ball is new for them and spring may mean a little more mental psyching," he said.

"In spring they really gear towards making nationals," he said.

Before a fall softball season was established, the Huskers used the fall to practice for scrimmages.

Being good in fall softball, Isherwood said, involves "just getting used to it."

ISHERWOOD SAID HE would like to expand the program to include more Big Eight schools. Iowa State and Kansas are the only other Big Eight schools participating.

Isherwood said he hopes the fall season will improve the team, and get it ready for spring.

The members have logged a lot of time together this past spring and summer by playing summer league softball, which should be beneficial, he said.

However, he said the team's hitting hasn't been as good as it should be. He said he was particularly disappointed in the returning players.

Their hitting is "way down," he said. The Huskers returned starters to every position but two, he said.

The Huskers will wind up their season Sunday with a double header against Creighton University and hitting well is the key to winning, he said.

Creighton has given the Huskers three of their five losses,

es, and Isherwood said he is looking at Sunday's match-up as the Huskers' most important fall game.

"It's a coach's job to prepare a team more mentally," he said.

However, he added, it isn't always easy to do so.

"A TEAM CAN'T really get up mentally for every game—it's impossible," he said.

Although, he said, Creighton can hit well, he thinks the Huskers can beat the Lady Jays, and added that it would be nice to end the season with a win.

The Huskers have beaten Creighton only once this year—the last contest between the two was a 1-0 Nebraska loss in eight innings.

The Huskers split a double header with Northwest Missouri State University last weekend, winning the first game 9-5 but dropping the second game 2-0.

Isherwood said freshman pitcher Linda Mizener from California is "everything I expected her to be."

Mizener's earned run average is .49 for the season, and she has begun to hit well too, he said.

Connie Gonyea, who rotates with Mizener has also been pitching well, he said. Both have 5-2 records.

Julie Uryasz, a senior first baseman, is the only Husker to hit over 300 yards this fall.

Uryasz, besides being a good hitter, has also been outstanding defensively, Isherwood said.

ISHERWOOD ALSO PRAISED senior Kathy Foley who plays centerfield.

"She's been really effective at centerfield and has started to hit the ball too," he said.

Foley and Uryasz are the only players that will graduate this spring, and Isherwood said he thinks the team should be strong next year as well.

This year, the Huskers, because of a divisional change in their region have automatically qualified for the regional playoffs, Isherwood said.

All 14 teams in region six will play at regionals, he explained, because Region six is comparatively small.

Isherwood said the Huskers will play several of the teams they will meet in regional play this spring. By winning and proving superiority, he said the Huskers should be able to "dance on into the regionals."