

sports

Sprinter Ottey breaks own record

By Shelley Smith
Sports Editor

Merlene Ottey has done it again.

Not that anyone had doubts, but setting two world records in as many meets, is uncommon, even for the fastest female 300-meter dash runner in history.

Ottey, a Husker freshman from Jamaica, broke her week old record (34.13) by almost half a second (to 33.64), and edged out Olympian Rosalyn Bryant to win the most anticipated race in the two-day Husker invitational.

However, Ottey was not the only record setter in the event, nor could she claim sole rights to a standing ovation from about 3,500 fans.

Bryant, a 1600-meter relay silver medalist in the World Cup Games in Montreal last summer, set an American record with her 34.07 time. (Ottey does not qualify for the American record because she is from Jamaica.)

Although leading until the final 30 yards, Bryant was beat by Ottey, but said she wasn't upset with second place. It was the first time she had run a 300-meter race in five years, and as she stood on the second step of the winner's box, she grabbed Ottey's hand and raised it in admiration of Ottey's performance.

Fantastic runner

"I think she is a fantastic runner," Bryant said.

"She's what I expected her to be, from what I heard about her times," she said.

Bryant said she admires Ottey's style and attitude, which makes her a "different" competitor.

"She reminds me a little of myself. She's a quiet, meek

person and her confidence is inside. She doesn't need to talk, talk, talk," Bryant said. "She showed she could do it on the track—that's the best type of confidence to have," she said.

Ottey had been sick with a cold all week, and said she was nervous about how she would run Saturday. However, she said her headache went away before the race.

"I knew I could go under 34 (seconds) and when I ran 33.6 I was really impressed with the time," she said.

"With even more competition I could go faster," she said, but added she will not concentrate on bringing her time down for fear of peaking too soon. Ottey said her best race—the one she is gearing towards—is the outdoor 200-meter dash.

"My race"

Bryant said she would like to run against Ottey again—"but I'd like to meet her in my race—the 440 (yard dash)."

However, Ottey, with a somewhat startled look, said she would not want to run the 440-yard dash against anyone.

"I like the shorter races," she said, and proved her ability by winning the 60-yard dash.

Jenny Gorham, another top Husker sprinter from Kansas City, Mo. finished second in the 60-yard dash, and third in the 300-meter race behind Bryant and Ottey. But, because of strenuous practice last week, freshman Gorham was replaced by Tami Essington on the mile relay team, which came from behind to beat Iowa State and qualify for the national meet.

Nebraska beat runner-up Kansas 139-77½, Iowa was third, with Iowa State finishing fourth.

Husker Sharon Burrill won the high jump at 5-10, and Nancy Kindig and Sondra Obermeier finished 1-2 in the pentathlon.



Photo by Colin Hackley
Husker freshman Merlene Ottey from Jamaica breaks her week-old world record in the 300-meter dash Saturday.

Tight press aids women cagers

By Jim Faddis

Intensity. Hustle. Defense. Coach Lorrie Gallagher said these characteristics have been missing from the UNL women's basketball team the past few weeks, but they found their way back into the Nebraska lineup Saturday as the Huskers defeated Oklahoma State 74-70.

Defense was the key that enabled the Huskers to defeat the Cowgirls, Gallagher said, after only three weeks since Oklahoma State had beaten them in the Big Eight tournament 69-64.

"We used our full-court press to force Oklahoma State in to making a lot of turnovers," Gallagher said.

Throughout the game, the Huskers would jump to an eight or 10 point lead, only to have the Cowgirls fight back to even the score. But then the Huskers press forced Oklahoma State into committing a turnover, and Nebraska kept the lead.

Final seconds

But the game was not decided until the final four seconds. With Nebraska leading 72-70, Husker guard Ami Beiriger sank a shot after getting the rebound of her own missed free throw.

The Huskers were more intense Saturday than they

had been in the Big Eight tournament, Beiriger said.

"In the Big Eight tournament, we would play hard for a while and then let up," Beiriger said. "But tonight we played hard the whole game."

Playing a pressing defense helped the Huskers intensity, Beiriger said.

"When you press, you have to hustle to make the press effective," she added.

Nebraska also moved the ball better on offense, said Husker guard Chris Leigh, who made five of nine field goal attempts.

"We passed better and were able to hit the open person," Leigh said.

Foul trouble

The Huskers also stayed out of foul trouble, which was different from the first time they played Oklahoma State, Gallagher said.

Diane DeVigna led a balanced Nebraska scoring attack with 17 points, followed by Beiriger with 14, Kathy Hagerstrom scored 12 points, Carol Garey added 11 and Chris Leigh finished with 10.

Garey was the Husker leading rebounder with 10, followed by Janet Smith with nine.

The win moves Nebraska's record to 17-12. The Huskers next game is Wednesday against Missouri in Columbia.

Loss to Missouri puts Huskers in tie

After three days of sole possession of second place in the Big Eight, the Nebraska men's basketball team found itself back in a three-way tie with Missouri and Oklahoma Saturday night.

The Huskers, plagued with foul trouble, were downed by Missouri 73-60 Saturday night in Columbia.

The Huskers rallied to within five points of the Tigers with 10:14 left on the clock, however, Husker leading scorer Andre Smith fouled out trying to grab an offensive rebound.

Smith, whose job was to cover Missouri's Steve Stipanovich, sat out most of the first half with three fouls.

Jack Moore, the Huskers 5-9 guard was Nebraska's leading scorer with 16 points, however, was only five for 14 from the field. Tim West, playing before his home-state fans ended with 14 points.

Missouri's Curtis Berry was the Tigers leading scorer with 19.

Nebraska, now 14-8 for the season and 5-3 in the conference, meets Kansas in Lawrence Tuesday night.

Mat men crushed 31-9 in wrestling dual

By Paul Martin

You wouldn't expect a coach to be pleased after his team was beaten 31-9 in a wrestling dual, but such was the case with UNL Head Wrestling Coach Bob Fehrs.

His team had just been crushed by national power Oklahoma Saturday night in the track area of the Bob Devaney Sports Center, yet Fehrs saw something positive in the loss.

"Our kids wrestled hard and I was especially proud of our effort," Fehrs said. "After all, Oklahoma beat Missouri 40-0 last night."

Earlier this season Missouri handed the Huskers, now 13-5 in dual action, a 32-3 setback.

Oklahoma coach Stan Abel said he thought Nebraska wrestled an inspired match.

"I really think Nebraska wrestled fired up," he said. "Bob (Fehrs) has really got the program here going in the right direction," Abel added.

Nebraska went scoreless through the first six weight classes, falling behind 25-0, before they picked up back-to-back wins from 167 and 177-pounders Tim Neumann and Jim Kimsey.

Edged Evans

Neumann edged Oklahoma's Richard Evans 9-8 while Kimsey registered a pin against the Sooners' Joe East in 5:20, thus accounting for the Huskers' nine team points.

Neumann, who was in firm control of his match through the first two periods, narrowly eluded a takedown by Evans in the last seconds of the match to escape with the close decision.

Evans, clearly disappointed with the narrow loss, let his displeasure be known to referee Lou Miloni, who didn't like what he heard. Miloni expelled Evans from the wrestling area for the remainder of the dual.

Kimsey had little trouble disposing of Oklahoma's East, building a substantial

lead before marking up the pin near the second period's end.

Fehrs said he saw improved performance from his team. He said he felt they wrestled well against Oklahoma, a team that he added was obviously better than the Missouri squad that defeated the Huskers more handily.

Different outcome

"We didn't wrestle Missouri like we did these guys," Fehrs said. "If we had, it could have been a completely different outcome."

Several matches that were close could have gone either way, Fehrs said, and could have made a difference had they gone the Huskers' way.

"We lost the first two by very close scores," he said. "We also had a very close one at 190 pounds."

Nebraska's first two wrestlers, 118-pound John Shearer and 126-pound Brad Smith, were both decided by their Oklahoma opponents.

Shearer led for nearly half of his match before dropping an 11-6 match to OU's Shelby Stone. In a see-saw battle with Clint Burke, Smith escaped nearly being pinned in the second period but was eventually decided by a narrow 8-7 margin.

In the 190-pound match, UNL's George Rambour had Edcar Thomas on his back for much of the second period but could not manage to get the pin. Thomas came back and decided a determined Rambour 10-8.

Rambour, as well as Smith, recorded pins in a 25-14 win against Kearney State in a dual that preceded the Sooner match.

Abel said after his team defeated Missouri in a highly emotional match last Friday night that they were showing some signs of fatigue.

"We were wrestling really tired but Nebraska was wrestling very good also," he said. "Bob Fehrs' kids are really responding to his coaching," Abel said.

Fehrs' team will see their next action when they host Colorado Feb. 8 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.