

Sports

Road trip readies Huskers for Big Eight

By Stu Pospisil

Nebraska's baseball team will be better prepared for the big Eight conference season as a result of the Huskers' two-week trip to California, Hawaii and Nevada, NU Coach John Sanders said.

The Huskers, 15-8, open conference play against Missouri in Columbia with doubleheaders Saturday and Sunday.

Because Nebraska played some of the nation's top teams, Sanders said he has a better idea of what to expect from his squad.

"We won some close games and were competitive in others," Sanders said. "We know why we did well and why we didn't."

Nebraska won ten of its 18 games on the trip, including victories over Southern California, Hawaii and Nevada-Las Vegas, all nationally-ranked.

A winning record "wasn't necessarily the point of making the trip," Sanders said. "We played some good teams in tough situations."

Nebraska is ranked 22nd in the latest *Collegiate Baseball* magazine ratings.

"We're potentially a good ball club," Sanders said. "The question is how we react to adversity and the ups and downs as the season progresses."

Nebraska's pitching staff withstood the toil of five doubleheaders, Sanders said. "Considering the lack of rest they had, they did well."

Shortstop Jeff Carter, who hadn't practiced at the position this season until Turner Gill's departure, "struggled a little defensively, but it was because of little preparation," Sanders said.

"He didn't have the opportunity to field many ground balls, although Jeff played shortstop in the fall (when Gill was playing football)," Sanders said. "Jeff will get even better at the right time — the

conference season."

Two Husker newcomers, freshman centerfielder Paul Meyers and designated hitter Rich King, a red-shirt freshman, are the team's No. 3 and No. 5 hitters.

"They are untested players who are playing well for us," Sanders said.

Nebraska's preparations for the weekend series with Missouri were not affected by the weather, he said. Thursday's workout, the only one that had been planned for this week, was moved indoors to the Schultz Field House.

"Missouri is sound, steady and they play well together," was Sanders' assessment of the Tigers, who are picked as one of the Big Eight favorites.

Nebraska will start Jeff Anderson and Chris Knust in Saturday's noon twinbill, and Phil Harrison and Mark Honner in Sunday's games.

Rec Scoreboard	
(Sportsmanship ratings in parentheses)	22-10, 21-16
Men's Indoor Soccer Playoffs	Loser's bracket
Blue Mooses (3.4) 1, Bonzai (3.8) 0	Instant Offense def. Beta Theta Pi #6 22-14, 14-22, 22-12
Phi Kappa Psi (3.7) 2, Caspian (3.7) 0	Delta Upsilon #1 def. Burr Two West 21-19, 14-21, 21-17
Men's three-on-three Basketball Playoffs	Abel Eleven B def. Harper Two B by forfeit
Winner's bracket semi-finals	Instant Offense def. Delta Upsilon #1 21-7, 21-18
R Street def. Alpha Tau Omega #4 22-16, 22-18	CJ's def. Abel Eleven B 22-18, 22-14
Sigam Phi Epsilon A #1 def. Doobie Bros.	Instant Offense def. Alpha Tau Omega #4 21-4, 21-18

Athletes have ability to control their lives on and off the field

In talking with a close friend from UNO, it came to my attention that athletes on college campuses are often kept so busy with practices, workouts, studying and the like, that once they are finished with a daily routine, there is very little time for campus involvement. In addition, the coaches, according to my source, stress studying and

these prideful young men who dedicate their lives to "Go Big Red" extended this dignity into areas of organizational development here on campus?

The student-athlete also knows "the system" as well or better than most of the students who now appear as "student leaders." His/her understanding of the recruitment process, for example, would enable him/her to assist student leaders in their own recruitment programs, whether they be aimed at academia or fraternities.

Finally, the student-athlete represents the culmination of what campus life is supposed to be about. As a role model their presence ensures that those who follow will be physically as well as mentally capable of one day becoming leaders. There are many "bookworms" who can go to school here four years and never enter a workout room; but there are no athletes here who can avoid entering the classroom.

Case in point: What would happen if the Board of Regents had to look out across the meeting room and deal with issues raised by their prize athletes? Who would be in a better position to advance important causes (i.e., the Black Studies controversy at UNO or the search for a Cultural Center at UNL) than an athlete who does, indeed, pay tuition with money AS WELL AS WITH SWEAT AND PAIN?

What would happen if athletes, regardless of hue, would band together to do more than become members of fraternities? What if these pristine performers used their visibility and popularity to back up student demands for more compatible class hours, lower tuition, the hiring of more minority and female faculty, updated computer facilities, the provision of more financial aid and so on?

What is essential here is that athletes are multi-dimensional as other students here. However, their unique situation provides them with exposure to the kinds of situations that we, as "average students" could certainly benefit from.

From these ideas then, springs an inevitable question: Where are the athletes? Is there a rule banning their involvement? Why do coaches have to give special permission to them in order for them to attend black conferences and so on? If there are no rules banning such activity, why don't athletes band together, form an organization of some kind and then use the kind of clout they wield to address those issues that are of importance to them as students first and athletes second.

Can you imagine the impact and importance that such an organization would have here in "Big Red (Neck) Land?" And the idea of having athletes call their own shots would, in and of itself, be enough to make those who have historically ignored us pay close attention.

Tournament adds quantity but quality of teams is down

Well, now, the Fabulous 53, which next year will become the Sensational 64, is now down to the Sweet 16.

It isn't the NBA playoffs. There aren't that many teams in the league. If there were 66 teams in the NBA, you could bet your bottom dollar that 64 of them would qualify for the playoffs.



John Kopetzky

High school basketball it isn't. That's been over for a couple of weeks now, and besides, this is a college paper. We don't worry about high schools.

Could it be something totally unrelated to sports? Could it be, say, the number of Copples who are now in court? No, it's not that either. I'm just a sports columnist.

What I'm referring to is the NCAA basketball tournament. We started a couple of weeks ago with 53 teams and quickly eliminated 37 of them. The Sweet 16 will become the Final Four by next Sunday. The national title game will be played in Seattle on April 2.

I love college basketball. I think it beats the pro games all to heck. The NCAA Tournament (and the NIT for that matter) are among my favorite sports events each year.

But they're ruining my tournament. There were 53 qualifiers this year. How they came up with a nice cardinal number like 53 is beyond me. Maybe it's a convenient stopover between last year's 52 and next year's 64. But I think even 53 teams is about 20 too many.

Any time you invite more teams to anything, you dilute the product. As college basketball's popularity soared in the past decade, more and more teams were added to the post-season party. Even with 53 teams, the Huskers can't qualify. This wanton expansion has produced some unusual results.

Marquette won the title in 1977 with seven losses. Indiana won it in 1981 with eight losses. And last year, North Carolina State won the whole ball of wax with a glorious 26-10 record.

Granted, all three of these teams deserve credit for being able to win six or seven games in a row, but does that necessarily make them the best team?

Let me put it another way. Was Miami the best team in college football last year because they beat Nebraska in the Orange Bowl? North Carolina State was not a better team than Houston last spring, any more than Miami was better than the Huskers at the Orange Bowl.

Back in the days when just one team per conference qualified, many teams were left out that were, in reality, deserving of a spot in the tourney. Suddenly, the NCAA has done a complete about-face and now invites darn near anybody from all kinds of conferences.

Why doesn't the NCAA Tournament selection committee just pick the top 32 teams in the country, regardless of what conference? If five teams from the ACC are judged to be among the top 32, let them play. If the champion of the Big Sky conference has a 17-13 record, as does Nevada-Reno this year, why should they be included in the tourney?

With their ruling demanding that at least one team be chosen from each conference, the NCAA has powerhouses like Houston Baptist, Alcorn State, Richmond and Rider in their lineup this year. These teams, automatic qualifiers because of the conference tie-ups, no more belong in the NCAA Tournament than Nebraska does in the NBA playoffs.

Once upon a time, getting an NCAA bid was something special. What's the thrill in knowing you're among the top 64 teams in the nation? And what of the NIT? Their 32-team field, theoretically anyway, would include the number 65 through 96 teams in the nation. That's a farce. This year's NIT had teams like 15-13 Ohio State and 16-12 Iowa State.

You think the folks in the NCAA offices would have taken a lesson from the NBA. As the pro playoffs have grown and grown and grown, the popularity of the sport has gone down and down and down. Isn't it logical to assume the same fate awaits the college game?



Matthew Stelly

keeping in shape. The result is a student-athlete whose social life is apolitical and who spends most of those moments in activities outside of the campus milieu.

I then asked myself, "what would happen if the athlete were free to do as he pleased?" What would happen if the same person who operates with teams, leads other individuals into weekly "combat" and who understands the principles of unity, organization and winning was to become actively involved in the defense and development of campus organizations?

Further, I decided it important to look into what the student-athlete brings with him to campus, and which of those would be most beneficial to the socio-political life of campus organizations.

First off, is it not true that the collegiate athlete occupies the dual roles of athlete and student? Does he not have to perform in an at least average capacity in both in order to retain these statuses? In a word, the student-athlete has to be concerned about taking care of business in two areas which would, by extension, call for a high degree of discipline and long-range planning, would they not?

Take note, for example, the visibility of the athlete walking across campus. And recollect, if you will, the shock that some of us encounter when we watch television and hear an athlete who sounds like a Rhodes scholar.

Additionally, participating in groups enables an individual to learn the full range of his capacity toward making contributions. The athlete is made aware of his limitations and works within them. Whether he is a benchwarmer or the star of the team, he is part of a unified effort aimed at one singular goal — winning. And as part of that process, he would be an invaluable source of inspiration and consultation for those student organizations who seek purpose, identity and direction. With his understanding of roles, his involvement and function within a team, and his willingness to fulfill a particular role, the student-athlete would make a campus leader par excellence.

And what of winning? Isn't the winning attitude the basis of all productive action? And aren't all organizations no more than the sum total of their parts? What would happen if