

Sports



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Maurtice Ivy looks to pass the ball during the Missouri game Jan. 28. Ivy and the Cornhuskers will try to improve their 7-5 Big Eight Conference record Saturday against Oklahoma.

In spite of loss to Missouri Huskers feeling good about game, hopeful for tournaments

By Rob White
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska women's basketball team was up against more than just Missouri when they took the court Wednesday night in Columbia. And even though they dropped an 87-81 decision, the Cornhuskers still came away with something positive from the game.

"We lost the battle, but we won the war," Nebraska coach Angela Beck said. "We had a tough fight psychologically, because we've never won there in eight games. So with that history you can see where we were at psychologically."

"We feel now as a team and as a staff, that if that is the best there is in the Big Eight and we can play them within six points on the road, then we'll be alright and have a chance in the Big Eight championships to fare well."

The Huskers had been deadlocked for first place in the conference with the Tigers and Kansas State. All took 7-4 records into play this week, but the loss by the Huskers dropped them one game behind with two to play.

"We want the rings (for the conference championship), but maybe it just wasn't in the cards for us this year," Beck said. "But still, the mood of the team is healthy, we know we'll be in the upper half of the bracket (in the conference tournament) and we could still get in there if someone gets upset."

Missouri's final two games will be on the road, including a matchup with Kansas State. The Wildcats, besides playing Missouri, will have to play at in-state rival Kansas.

If Nebraska wins its final two games (a home match with Oklahoma Saturday and a game at Oklahoma State), the Huskers would clinch at least a

share of second place, while a loss by the winner of the Missouri-Kansas State game would give the Huskers a tie for first.

Beck said that when the Huskers play Oklahoma Saturday, the Sooners will have something to prove.

"I think they're a frustrated team, they were upset on their home floor in the last game," Beck said. "They'll be hungry, and I think they're embarrassed about their place in the league." Oklahoma is No. 7.

The Sooners use the same offensive strategy that has given the Huskers problems lately, Beck said.

"They have a pretty balanced scoring attack," she said. "They like to try to stick the ball inside and wheel and deal in there, and that's been pretty effective against us lately."

Nebraska lost to the Sooners 87-81 in Norman Jan. 24 in the first meeting between the two teams this year.

"We had it within five points late in the game and then Tice (Ivy) fouled out," Beck said. "We were in the game all the way. They had some problems stopping our running game, and that's what we'll try and do again."

Saturday's contest will mark the final home appearance of seniors Stacy Imming, Angie Miller and Shelly Block. Beck said she is anticipating an enthusiastic Nebraska team for the game.

"I hope so," she said. "I've been putting a lot of pressure on our seniors to pull through this year, because we're confident we'll win a lot of games in the future."

"Imming has been playing extremely well, just playing her heart out, Miller is starting to come around after having mono, and Block does all the things that go unnoticed. Those three kids have contributed more to the success of the program than a lot of people realize."

Huskers to meet No. 13 Sooners

By Tim Hartmann
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska men's basketball team will attempt to rebound from Wednesday's 80-64 loss to Missouri when it travels to Norman, Okla., Saturday to face the No. 13-ranked Oklahoma Sooners.

The loss at Missouri snapped a three-game Nebraska winning streak and dropped the team's record to 16-9 overall and 5-6 in the Big Eight Conference. Oklahoma, coming off a 108-84 victory against Colorado Wednesday, is 20-5 and 8-3. Oklahoma is tied for first place in the conference with Missouri and Kansas, while Nebraska is in fifth place.

The Lloyd Noble Arena has not been a friendly place for the Cornhuskers; they have compiled a 2-9 career mark there. The Huskers have lost their last five games at Lloyd Noble, including a 87-80 defeat last year.

Nebraska coach Danny Nee said the key to winning on the road is consistency.

"When you go on the road you have to make your free throws, you have to make your layups, you can't turn the ball over, you can't allow second shots," Nee said at his Monday press luncheon.

Going into Wednesday's game with Colorado, all of Oklahoma's starters were averaging more than 10 points a game, led by senior guard Tim McClasiter's 20-point average. Forward Darryl Kennedy is second in scoring at 16.5, and center Harvey Grant follows at 15.4. Guard Ricky Grace averages 10.7, and forward David Johnson, 10.

At his press conference Nee said he can coach his players several ways to help them win on the road.

"The first thing is redefining their game responsibilities as clearly when they go in the game they have no doubt, no hesitation," Nee said.

"Two is to try and polish up or improve or coordinate the offenses, (so) that we don't make mistakes turning the ball over, we make better choices on our passes," Nee said. "Then help the kids by preparing them... where the shots are going to come, and then practice those shots," Nee said. "Because you can kind of now predict where you're going to get the shots, how you're going to get them. If they're prepared for that, if they start executing that, then they have a better chance of winning."

"That's where the room for improvement (is). There are a lot of things we could be doing better."

Huskers last lap in free style

By Kyle Schurman
Staff Reporter

"Student athlete" may have a fuzzy definition at some universities, but it has a clear definition at NU, said Cornhusker swimmer Doug Hubner.

Hubner said he chose Nebraska over other schools, including Arkansas, Texas, Southern Methodist and Kansas because of the balance between athletics and academics that Nebraska has.

"I see athletics as a way to get an education, and Nebraska stands out in that department," Hubner said. "Nebraska has great organization that others don't have. We also have the luxury of an established scholastic program with good tutors, who really help when you go on the road."

Doug's brother John is a swimmer and a sophomore at Nebraska. His

brother Mike is a high-school senior in Tulsa and is being recruited by Nebraska and others for swimming. However, Doug said he hasn't put any pressure on his brothers to come to Nebraska.

"Both of them had their own chance to choose where they want to go," Hubner said. "However, they know that Nebraska gives its athletes a great education."

Hubner is a sprint freestyler for Nebraska, and he swims the 50, the 100- and the 200-yard freestyle events. Nebraska coach Cal Bentz had nothing but praise for Hubner.

"He is a good, consistent sprint performer for us," Bentz said. "He will have a very good championship season, and he has the capability of making NCAA cuts in both the relays and individual events."

Hubner is a senior criminal-justice

major and will graduate in May, so he set some high goals for his final season.

"I want to qualify for the NCAA's in both the 100 and 50 freestyle," Hubner said. "I would really like to end my career by placing at the NCAA's. I'm looking forward to ending the season on a positive note."

Hubner said the No. 16 Huskers are on track to accomplish their goals.

"We want to score in the top 20 at the NCAA's. This team has the talent to do so," he said.

Hubner said his favorite events are the 100-yard freestyle, 400-yard medley relay and 400-yard freestyle relay. Hubner swims the 100-yard freestyle in both relays.

Hubner won the 50- and 100-yard freestyle at the Husker Invitational in December. Bentz said he thinks those wins helped improve his consistency.



Hubner

By Rich Cooper
Staff Reporter

The last time the Nebraska's men's gymnastics team faced UCLA in a dual, the Bruins, behind 1984 Olympian Peter Vidmar, won. Later that year, UCLA won the NCAA Championship, ending Nebraska's winning streak of five consecutive championships.

Sunday night at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, No. 1 UCLA will face No. 4-ranked Nebraska at 7 p.m.

Nebraska men's gymnastics coach Francis Allen said he doesn't like to remember 1984 because nothing seemed to go right that year.

Allen said the meet against UCLA will be the toughest his team has had this season. He said the Huskers' success will depend on junior Kevin Davis' performance. Last Sunday night Davis injured his wrist while working out on the high bar. Allen said he doesn't know how serious the injury is, but he expects Davis to compete against the Bruins.

Allen said Nebraska needs freshmen Patrick Kirksey, Bob Stelter and Mark Warburton to have excellent meets.

"I think the freshmen are finally coming around. I guess we'll find out how much they

have improved this weekend," Allen said. "To beat UCLA we are going to have to buckle down and turn out some good routines. It's going to come down to what team performs and who stays on the events."

Against Oklahoma on Feb. 7, the Huskers fell 12 times but still managed to score a 179. The meet against the Bruins is going to be close, Allen said.

If the freshmen can score at least a 9.0 on every event, he said, it will give Davis, Tom Schlesinger and Neil Palmer the chance to score high.

All three upperclassmen can score a 57 in the all-around, Allen said. In the meet against UCLA fans will get to see five potential Olympians: sophomore Curtis Holsworth, the 1986 NCAA pommel-horse champion from UCLA; Tony Penedá, a member of the 1984 Mexican Olympic team; and Davis, Schlesinger and Palmer.

"I'm not expecting my team to peak for this meet," Allen said. "But I know they are going to be psyched up for it and I'm anticipating an excellent meet from our guys."

Nebraska's women's team will have its hands full with Big Eight Conference rival

Oklahoma in a dual in Tulsa Friday night. The last time the Huskers competed against the Sooners, at the Heartland Invitational on Feb. 7, they won 184.90 to 182.20.

Nebraska women's coach Rick Walton said this weekend's meet will be more difficult because the Sooners will have 1986 Big Eight all-around champion Tatiana Figueiredo back, as well as Kelly Garrison-Stiebs. The Sooners will come out with "fire in their eyes," he said.

"This meet could be a preview to the Big Eight Conference meet and the Midwest Region meet," Walton said. "When we beat Oklahoma two weeks ago, it was the first time I had beat them since coming here, and I don't think they liked that too much, so they are going to be coming after us Friday night."

Walton said he will only use two all-arounders against the Sooners. In the meet against Auburn the top all-arounder for the Huskers was sophomore Crystal Savage, who scored a career-high 37.50. Jeaneane Smith finished only one-tenth of a point behind her.

Walton said the reason he's competing with only two all-arounders is because nobody else on the team can put together four solid events.

Gym coach puts the past behind him