

Sports

Softball sweep will brush NU into fame

By Rich Cooper
Staff Reporter

Nebraska softball coach Ron Wolforth said he expects a tough game Saturday, when Iowa State comes into Lincoln for a Big Eight Conference doubleheader at the Nebraska Softball Complex. The games are scheduled to start at 1 and 3 p.m.

Nebraska, 26-9 and ranked No. 4 in the NCAA is 2-2 in the Big Eight, and Iowa State is 21-20 overall, 3-1 in the Big Eight, and second place behind undefeated Kansas.

Wolforth said that the last few times the Cornhuskers have met the Cyclones the games have been very close. Because of this, he said, an intense rivalry has developed.

"I can tell you right now there is no love lost between these two teams," Wolforth said. "I think the reason for that is because we have dominated them for so long I think they are almost possessed with beating us."

Against Iowa State, the Huskers have won six of the last seven games.

The last time Nebraska lost to Iowa State was Sept. 21 in a 2-1 decision in Lincoln. In the fall season the Huskers won 6-2 in Lawrence, Kan., and at the Road Runner Classic last March in Los Cruces, N.M., Nebraska won 1-0.

Wolforth said Nebraska and Iowa State match up well because both teams play the same style of softball.

"Iowa State plays a lot like us," Wolforth said. "Their pitchers throw the ball hard, their hitters are very aggressive, and they are a solid defensive team. They are definitely not intimidated by us. We do better against hard-throwing pitchers and both our pitchers throw the ball very hard."

Wolforth said Iowa State probably will use senior pitcher Kelli Alberts in both games. She is 13-5 this season and 32-17 in her career.

Nebraska will counter with Lori Sippel in the first game and Donna Deardorff in the second, Wolforth said. Sippel has won seven consecutive games and has allowed only one unearned run in her last 51 2/3 innings for an earned run average of 20.

Deardorff has pitched 36 innings without allowing an earned run and has an ERA of .29. She is coming off last weekend's home-opener victory against Missouri, in which she allowed only one hit.

Wolforth said he hopes that his team has finally come out of its batting slump. In practice this week, he said, Jane Kremer, Margie Ogradowicz, Janelle Frese and Lori Richins have been hitting well.

Nebraska is now 15-0 in games in which they have scored first in the first inning. In 35 games, the Huskers have outscored their opponents 31-6 in the first inning and 107-40 overall.

Wolforth said the doubleheader against the Cyclones could be the turning point for Nebraska.

"This is the most critical series of the season for us," Wolforth said. "If we sweep Iowa State, then we will be on our way, but if they sweep us we're going to be in a hole and have to dig ourselves out. So much is riding on this series."

Huskers try to bat back

By Steve Sipple
Staff Reporter

Nebraska's baseball team will try to bounce back from Wednesday's 21-4 loss at Wichita State when it plays Oral Roberts today at 2 p.m. at Buck Beltzer Field.

Coach John Sanders said he's confident that the Cornhuskers can rebound against Coach Gary Vaught's Titans.

"I think we'll be fine," Sanders said. "When you play 60 games you'll have peaks and valleys."

"You can't dwell on the loss."

Oral Roberts, from the Midwestern Collegiate Conference, is 20-9 and ranked No. 29 by Collegiate Baseball. They are on a five-game road wing that includes one game against Creighton, two against the Huskers and two at Wichita State.

Oral Roberts swept two games from the Huskers in Tulsa, Okla., last year, and Sanders said he expects

a formidable challenge again this year.

"They have a good ball club," he said. "They have beat Oklahoma twice, and we look for a good series from them."

Sanders said he is impressed with ORU's speed and pitching. Second baseman Steve Hecht leads the team with 51 stolen bases in 57 attempts.

A spokesman at the Oral Roberts Sports Information Department said Vaught said it is likely pitchers Kyle Irvin, 6-3 with a 4.32 ERA, and Brad Harwick (5-2, 7.58) will start.

Sanders said he hasn't decided on his starters but will probably use Rocky Johnson (3-1) and John Lepley (3-1). He said John Kohli (4-0) and Phil Goguen (8-0) will pitch Saturday.

Saturday's game is Bat Day. The first 200 children through the gate will receive a "Go Big Red" miniature bat.

Tennis teams to meet Jayhawks

By Mark Derowitsch
Staff Reporter

Despite its 15-7 dual record, the Nebraska men's tennis team is in for a stiff challenge today against the Kansas Jayhawks.

Kansas takes a 16-10 dual record into the match. Assistant coach Michael Center said the Jayhawks are confident about the match and next weekend's Big Eight Tournament.

"We have a very good chance to win the Big Eight Tournament," Center said. "We've beaten everyone in our region and we have the talent to win the tournament, so we must go out and prove it. We see ourselves as the favorites."

But Center also said that the Jayhawks aren't taking the Huskers lightly.

"They always play very well against us," Center said. "I think that they are a very good team and it is very critical

for us to do good, to keep pace with Oklahoma State.

"Everyone needs to concentrate on themselves and not get caught up with the Big Eight Tournament next weekend. If we think about Oklahoma State and the tournament, we could be in a lot of trouble."

Coach Kerry McDermott isn't counting the Huskers out, either.

"We're still in the thick of the Big Eight race, but the Kansas dual is really important, he said. "If we can beat the Jayhawks that would be great, but we need to win at least three or four of the nine matches."

One key match will be the No. 1 singles between Steven Jung and Mike Wolf of Kansas. Jung was named Big Eight player of the week for his victory against the defending conference champion.

"If Steven can beat Wolf it would give him a good shot at the No. 1 seed in

the Big Eight Tournament," McDermott said. "I'm expecting a great match between those two."

Wolf is a three-time NCAA qualifier and has 10-4 record this spring.

"Mike Wolf is capable of beating anyone," Center said. "He's playing real well right now and he's excited about winning the Big Eight as a team. He set goals earlier this year to win the Big Eight in both singles and doubles."

The women's team also will be in action this weekend when Nebraska faces Kansas State on Friday and Kansas on Saturday. The Huskers take a 4-15 record into weekend play.

The Jayhawks have finished second in the Big Eight the last two years.

Kansas will be led by Tracy Treps, who won the No. 1 singles title last year, and Jeanette Jonsson, who won the No. 2 singles title last year.

The Wildcats have a 6-8 dual record.

Huskers fall before second-string pitchers; Shockers walk and run to 21-4 victory

By Jeff Apel and Steve Sipple
Staff Reporters

WICHITA, Kan. — A potentially bad situation could not have worked out any better for Wichita State coach Gene Stephenson.

Stephenson, whose Shockers will face Southern Illinois in a Missouri Valley Conference series this weekend, elected to rest his best pitchers for Wednesday night's game against Nebraska at Eck Stadium.

That strategy paid off, as eight Shocker pitchers who posted a combined earned run average of

4.73 held the Cornhuskers scoreless through 7 2/3 innings en route to posting a 21-4 victory.

Stephenson said he was surprised that the 33-13 Shockers scored 21 runs against six Nebraska pitchers.

The Nebraska pitchers, who entered the game leading the Big Eight conference with a 3.91 ERA, surrendered 19 hits to Wichita State. Four hits were home runs, two by Mark Standiford.

"I think we hit the ball. We got a few clutch hits, but our first five innings we only hit one ball," Stephenson said. "The rest were on walks."

Wichita State jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the contest when the Shockers touched Nebraska pitcher Joel Sealer for a pair of runs in the bottom of the first inning.

With one out, Mike Lansing drew one of the eight walks issued by Sealer in 2 2/3 innings. A single by Tim Raley advanced Lansing to second, and consecutive walks by Standiford, Dan Raley and Eric Wedge enabled the Shockers to score two runs.

Nebraska's next game is today, when the Huskers play Oral Roberts in a single game at Buck Beltzer Field.

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