

Nee wants an end to fights on the court

By Mark Derowitsch
Senior Reporter

In view of many recent fights in college basketball, Nebraska coach Danny Nee said he'd like to see officials put a quick stop to brawls in collegiate athletics.

At his press luncheon Monday, Nee said the NCAA should impose suspensions for players involved in on-court altercations.

"I just don't think fighting's part (of basketball)," Nee said. "But I do think officials take a really important responsibility of controlling it. I think they have to come down on the fighters hard, like with suspensions.

"We're not hockey."

Nee said fighting has been prevalent for a few teams this season, but because of those teams, college basketball's overall reputation has been damaged.

"But I don't think it's gotten totally out of hand," he said.

Nee said the players are almost always the ones to blame for fights.

"I don't think the coaches should be held totally responsible for every reaction of his players out on the floor," Nee said. "But I do

think there's a certain amount of control you have to have on your own players and bench is necessary. I think when a fight breaks, you go over the line.

"If you want to be a boxer, then be a boxer."

One team that has been involved in several fights this year is Georgetown. Last Saturday, the Hoyas' Perry McDonald started a scuffle with Jerome Lane of Pittsburgh by striking Lane's head with his elbow.

Lane's retaliation set off two other confrontations and the game had to be ended prematurely.

Nee said some of the blame for rough actions goes to university authorities and coaches.

"Just like the Missouri Antlers (a group of Missouri students that vocally and physically harasses opponents)," Nee said. "There's a certain amount of acceptance of the style of play, and I think there is a responsibility by (Georgetown coach) John Thompson for his players."

But, Nee said, not all roughness in basketball is bad. He said Cornhusker forward Beau Reid plays a very physical style of basketball, which helps Nebraska at times.

"I think Beau Reid is a very aggressive and physical player in that he's adjusting to playing in the Big Eight," Nee said. "I think he gets in positions that can become controversial because of his physical play."

Nee said that although fighting is bad for basketball, a team must concentrate on the next game instead of dwelling on the past.

"When your team does lose a couple close ones, what you try to do is just keep them focused on the moment — what we're trying to do and to get better," Nee said.

Nee said he tries to keep his players away from outside influences that might affect the Huskers.

"I tell them when they read the papers and they see all these nice things said about them, 'Don't believe them, because you're probably not as good as they say,'" Nee said. "And when we're losing or playing poorly, I also tell them they're not as bad as what they're writing."

"If you can leave out the outside influences, keep them away from the team and let them focus on what they're supposed to be doing, I think they can survive."

Nee said No. 1-ranked Temple has blocked

out all of its distractions this season, which has led to the Owls' unprecedented success.

"(Temple coach) John Chaney is keeping the press away from his players," Nee said. "They're staying on the exact same schedule as they were before."

Nee also said the Huskers, who are 13-13 overall and 4-6 in the Big Eight, don't let streaks affect them.

"We'd be doing the same things if we we'd won five games in a row instead of losing five games in a row," he said. "We didn't do anything different to prepare for Colorado."

The Huskers broke a five-game losing streak Sunday afternoon by defeating Colorado 75-67.

In other Husker notes, guard Henry T. Buchanan was held out of Tuesday's practice because of a sprained right ankle.

Nee said that even though Buchanan saw abundant playing time against the Buffaloes, he wasn't at full strength.

"Buchanan's still limping around on that bad ankle," Nee said. "He's hiding it — he's not healthy. He has to play better."

Gymnast adjusts to new team and 'higher caliber' of meets

By Lori Griffin
Staff Reporter

Lisa McCrady is right where she wants to be.

McCrady, a freshman on the Nebraska women's gymnastics team, said she is happy to be in Lincoln. She also said she knew from the beginning that she wanted to be a Cornhusker.

McCrady said she was impressed with the Nebraska training program and the progress the Huskers have made under fifth-year coach Rick Walton.

McCrady said she heard about the training program from her uncle, Tim McCrady, who played wingback for the Huskers from 1978-82. She said he told her she would never have to worry about injuries because the Nebraska trainers would take care of the problems immediately.

McCrady, an advertising major from Rosemont, Minn., is a native Nebraskan. She said the decision to come to Nebraska was easier because she already knew people here.

McCrady said she has participated in gymnastics for about eight years. She said she was an active child and began dancing and tumbling to get rid of some of her energy.

McCrady said her love for tumbling helped her interest in gymnastics grow.

But she said her tumbling caused her to get a late start in gymnastics. Her teammates had been competing for four or five years when she first began to compete, she said.

McCrady, the Minnesota High School Champion in 1987, said she has made the adjustment to collegiate competition. She said she likes the team aspect at Nebraska.

"I feel the pressure is not on me," McCrady said. "I am not carrying the

pressure. It is a lot more fun to compete. I want to compete for the team."

McCrady said she has adjusted some of her routines to make them more competitive at the collegiate level.

"The higher caliber makes me more competitive," McCrady said. "The harder tricks force me to do better."

Walton said the Huskers developed a new uneven-bar routine for McCrady because it was her weakest event. He said the change paid off: McCrady has gone from an 8.85 score in her first collegiate uneven-bar competition to a 9.5 in a dual meet against Penn State earlier this season.

"Things are starting to click for Lisa," Walton said.

Walton said McCrady is having a great season for a freshman. He said she worked hard in the fall and has improved throughout the season.

McCrady said she is pleased with her progress.

Her most memorable moment as a Husker this season was her third-place finish in the all-around competition in a triangular meet against Oklahoma and Georgia, she said. She finished third behind former Olympian Kelly Garrison-Stevens and Oklahoma All-America Kassie Fry even though it was only her second collegiate meet.

McCrady said her team goal is to help the Huskers place in the top five in the 1988 NCAA Championships, which will be in Salt Lake City on April 22 and 23. She said her individual goals are to progress from meet to meet and remain consistent, an area in which Walton said she needs to improve.

McCrady said she is glad she came to Nebraska.

"It has been a wonderful experience," she said. "Nebraska has a great coach, a great team, and there is no place I'd rather be than here."

"I've grown as a person and as a gymnast."

Report: Turf safer than grass

By Mike Kluck
Staff Reporter

Artificial turf has been targeted as the cause of many football injuries, but a study conducted by the National Collegiate Athletics Association shows that artificial turf is no more harmful than natural grass.

The study, which was released in the Feb. 3 edition of The NCAA News, shows that natural grass causes more injuries and a much higher rate of serious knee injuries, especially to defensive players.

According to the study, 171 players from 15 Division I-A schools suffered injuries on natural grass last

season, compared to 145 on artificial turf. The study also showed that 108 defensive players suffered injuries on grass, compared to 73 on artificial turf.

Nebraska athletic trainer George Sullivan said injuries caused by a grass surface are different than those on artificial turf.

"If an athlete gets an abrasion on an artificial field, it usually is a turf burn and not much of a problem," Sullivan said. "However, an abrasion on a natural field is usually a deep cut that is dirty and provides problems."

Sullivan said many injuries are

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Ward Willems/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska freshman outfielder Bobby Benjamin dives back in an attempt to avoid a tag by Wyoming first baseman Sky Smeltzer.

Debate goes on as NU faces Bluejays

By Steve Sipple
Senior Reporter

Controversy continues over whether the Nebraska baseball team should be awarded the victory in the second game of Sunday's double-header against Wyoming.

Nebraska coach John Sanders said Monday, "We are under the guise that we won the ballgame."

But Wyoming coach Bill Kinneberg said he wasn't so sure.

There was uncertainty about who won the game after Wyoming rallied to tie the game 11-11 with four runs in the top of the seventh inning. The game, which was played at Buck Beltzer Field, was stopped because of darkness before the Cornhuskers could take their final turn at bat.

Sanders said Sunday the game possibly would be suspended and finished this weekend in Laramie, Wyo., on Wyoming's home field. The Huskers travel to Fort Collins, Colo., this weekend for games against Northern Colorado and Colorado State. Laramie is about 60 miles north of Fort Collins.

Sanders said he and pitching coach Tom Pratt reviewed the Big Eight rulebook and decided a trip to Laramie wasn't necessary. He said Big Eight rules say non-league games can't be played on a suspended basis. That would mean Nebraska would be declared the winner because it led 11-7 after its final at bat in the sixth inning.

"It really doesn't matter what they think," Sanders said. "We won the game."

Kinneberg said he thought he and Sanders agreed before Saturday's game that they would

play the series on a suspended basis.

"He'll say we just played Saturday's game on a suspended basis," Kinneberg said. "My assumption was we were playing suspended rules over the whole series."

Sanders said Sunday night that if the teams were going to finish the game, they would have to do it Monday. Kinneberg said the Cowboys couldn't do that because the players had to attend classes then, and it would have been too expensive to stay in Lincoln.

Kinneberg said he'll pursue the matter with the NCAA today.

Sanders could not be reached for a response on Kinneberg's comments.

Win or no win, Sanders said, the series with Wyoming gave Nebraska momentum heading into today's 1:30 p.m. game against Creighton at Buck Beltzer Field.

"We played well against Wyoming," Sanders said. "Overall, our defense was really good and we were opportunistic offensively. In games one and two, our pitching was stable, and in game three we showed signs of stability."

"Obviously, we're anxious to play Creighton."

Sanders said the game is important because it provides Nebraska with another quality, Division I opponent, not because a rivalry exists between the state's only Division I schools.

"It's just a game; there's no rivalry," he said. "If you play rivalries in baseball, you're crazy. You can't sustain that bonfire mentality that you see in football. In baseball, you can't deal with that type of thing."

Sanders said he probably will start John Lpley on the mound and use Joel Sealer pitching in relief. Lpley earned his first victory of the season Saturday against Wyoming, pitching seven complete innings and giving up two runs on two hits. He struck out six batters and walked only four.

Creighton coach Jim Hendry is undecided on a starter, but will throw "three or four different people," he said.

The Bluejays are led by Collegiate Baseball magazine preseason All-America catcher Scott Servais. Servais, who played last August in the Pan-American Games, batted .272 with eight home runs, 10 doubles and 42 runs batted in last year.

Hendry said Servais has improved since last season.

"He's shown really positive signs," Hendry said. "He's a much improved hitter. The Pan-Am Games really helped his confidence. I look at him as an even more polished catcher and an improved hitter."

But Servais isn't Creighton's only offensive weapon. Senior first baseman Oneri Fleita led the Bluejays last season with a .383 batting average, hitting 20 doubles and 73 RBIs.

Nebraska and Creighton split a home-and-home series last year. Nebraska won the first game in Omaha 5-3, with Lpley picking up the win. Creighton came to Lincoln the next day and won 10-5.

Sanders said the teams probably won't play if temperatures drop into the 30-degree range with a strong wind. Forecasts today call for highs in the upper 20s to lower 30s.