## Buchanan's shot doesn't fall, but crowds' faces do

**NEE** from Page 8

at the right time and place.

"I thought it was a good shot and the time was about appropriate, too, because it still came off and there was time for a tap," he said. Nebraska center Pete Manning tipped Buchanan's shot, but it missed and Grayer grabbed the rebound to secure the win for the Cyclones.

Van Poelgeest said he thought Manning was fouled on his follow

"I was waiting for the whistle," van Poelgeest said

Buchanan said he is not pleased

with the amount of fouls being called on the Huskers in the Big Eight seaBuchanan said he was happy with the way Nebraska played. He said the way Nebraska played. He said fouls compared to Iowa State's 21.

"I don't think it's fair, to be honest," he said.

Iowa State coach Johnny Orr, who was ejected after a arguing a foul during Iowa State's 83-66 loss to Kansas State Wednesday, said he was content with the officiating Sat-

"I thought the officiating was certainly better than it was at our place the other day," Orr said. "There were some strange calls, but they were minor to what we've been get-

Nebraska's effort against Iowa State was the Huskers' best performance of the conference season

"We played for 40 minutes instead of playing in spurts," Buchanan

Buchanan scored six points against the Cyclones, including a 30foot, three-point basket with no time left in the first half to give Nebraska a 38-36 lead. The Huskers led by as much as 10 points in the first half, but Nee said early leads don't mean

'It's a game of spurts, and early

part of the game because of the way the games go back and forth," he said.

Iowa State opened the second half by applying full-court pressure on Nebraska and built an eight-point lead. Nebraska battled back and built leads as big as four points before Iowa State outscored the Huskers 10-4 in the last 3:35 to post the win.

Lafester Rhodes scored 24 points and pulled down 12 rebounds to lead the Cyclones, while Terry Woods scored 11 and Robinson added 10.

"It feels good to get a win on the road," Orr said. The Cyclones had lost their first five Big Eight road games. The loss dropped Nebraska

leads like that are not a significant to 13-15 overall and 4-8 in the conference, while Iowa State improved its record to 18-10 and 4-8

Nee said both teams played well. "It certainly didn't look like two teams that had lost a lot of basketball games," Nee said. "I thought it was a pretty good game."

In addition to van Poelgeest's 19 points, Johnson added 12, Jeff Rekeweg scored 11 and Reid and Derrick Vick added 10 for the Huskers.

Nebraska's next game is Wednesday, when the Huskers make their final home appearance of the season by facing Kansas State. The game begins at 7:35 p.m. at the sports

# Gymnast pummels pain, comeback pressure

By Richard Cooper Staff Reporter

His teammates call him "Iron Mike," but not because he looks like World Heavyweight Champion

Instead, Nebraska gymnast Mike Epperson has earned the nickname because of the comeback he's made following reconstructive wrist surgery, which caused him to miss last

"I don't think anybody else would have come back from that kind of injury," teammate Tom Schlesinger said. "Mike is really a tough guy and he's back."

Epperson, a junior from Bartlesville, Okla., said he learned two things during 1987: how to deal with pain and how to comeback from

a serious injury. For 15 months, he wore a cast after surgery in May

When he finally returned to the gym in September 1987, Epperson said he was confronted with the pain of working out.

"Since September, more than once I've thought to myself, 'Is going through all the pain really worth it?"
Epperson said. "There have been mornings when I would wake up and my wrist would hurt so bad that I dreaded coming to the gym.

"The only thing that has kept me going is knowing that someday, I'm going to wake up and my wrist isn't going to hurt anymore," he said.

Nebraska men's gymnastics coach Francis Allen said he knows a broken wrist is painful.

"I had a gymnast here in 1979 that I thought was going to be the next NCAA all-around champion," Allen said. "He broke his wrist and after he had the surgery, he couldn't compete anymore because of the pain.'

Allen said the wrist is one of the most important parts on a gymnast's body. If the gymnast injures it, he

said, his career is over - unless he has a high tolerance for pain.

When Epperson told him about his wrist injury in December 1986, Allen said, he thought Epperson's career was over.

But after surgery, he said, Epperson told him he wanted to come back.

"Mike is a very dedicated gym-nast," Allen said. "When he told me he was going to try and come back, I told him it was going to be a long and painful process.

"Mike was at an all-time low, but I knew he was a tough kid and that he would stick with it as long as he could," Allen said. "Now, he's finally in shape and is definitely going to help us this year at the NCAA Championships.

Epperson's freshman year at Nebraska was his most successful, Allen said. At the 1985 Big Eight Championships, he earned all-Big Eight in five of six events. That same season, he finished fifth on the parallel bars at the NCAA Championships with a 9.6, which earned him All-America status.

Allen said that before Epperson

hurt his wrist he was better than teammates Schlesinger and Kevin Davis, who finished first and second in the all-around at the 1987 NCAA Cham-

The team would have won if Epperson had competed, Allen said. Nebraska finished second to UCLA at the 1987 NCAA Championships by half a point.

Epperson said that when he found out about his wrist, he was told he would have to wear a cast for just three months.

But what doctors thought was a bone spur turned out to be a lot worse.

Dr. Pat Clare, the Nebraska gymnastics orthopedic surgeon, said Epperson's injury resulted from an old fracture of a small wrist bone that went unnoticed for some time until the pain increased. He said the bone Epperson injured is "notorious" for not healing well because it receives a poor blood supply. About one-third of such injuries do not heal, he said.

Clare performed a bone graft on the wrist by using a small amount of

See EPPERSON on 11

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### Dropped baton wins relay for Huskers

**CONTROVERSY** from Page 9

of the 1,600-meter relay.

The drop caused Oklahoma to

finish last in the 1,600-meter competition. Nebraska's team of Dale Burrage, Kenny Dixon, Bob Jelks and Anthony Small helped the Husker men capture the Big Eight Champi-

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onship by finishing second to Iowa State.

Lambeth said he was upset with Small because the Husker junior bumped him as the two runners jockeyed for the inside position. He said the bump caused him to drop his

"He just knocked it out of my hand just right out," Lambeth said. "I don't even want to talk about it. It's just too bad they had to cheat to win.'

But Nebraska track coach Gary Pepin said he doubts Small forced Lambeth to drop his baton.

"I didn't see any infraction," Pepin said. "The OU runner was holding the baton in his left hand, the hand away from Small. I doubt that Small even made contact with the baton.'

Small said Lambeth dropped his baton because he was pushing.

'I wanted to get to the inside, but he wouldn't let me," Small said. "He was kind of pushing me out."

Jelks said he couldn't understand why there was so much controversy surrounding the incident.

"I really don't know what all the fuss was about," he said. "We didn't even need to finish the race to win it all and OU wouldn't have caught ISU if they would have won anyway."

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