

Home runs power Huskers past Antelopes

By Steve Sipple
Senior Reporter

For Nebraska's Marcel Johnson and Joe Federico, it didn't matter who their home runs came against, just that they came.

Johnson nailed a grand slam and Federico hit both a three-run home run and a solo shot to lead Nebraska to a 17-4 victory against Kearney State Tuesday before 342 fans at Buck Beltzer Field.

The win was Nebraska's 13th straight at home and raised its record to 28-8 overall. The Cornhuskers, ranked No. 17 in the Collegiate Baseball/ESPN national Top 30, are 7-1 in the Big Eight.

Kearney State, which had an 11-game winning streak snapped, fell to 14-16.

Johnson said his second grand slam of the year, which gave Nebraska a 5-0 second-inning lead, felt as good against the Antelopes as it would have against anybody. That, he said, includes Oklahoma—the Huskers' Big Eight opponent this weekend.

"They're all the same," said Johnson, a junior transfer from Vallejo, Calif. "It's the same baseball, just a different hand. We're just polishing things up for the Big Eight."

Johnson's home run, an opposite-field shot over the 375-foot sign in right-center field, was his third of the season.

Federico's three-run home run capped a seven-run third inning and gave Nebraska a 12-0 lead. His second blast came in the seventh inning and increased the Huskers' lead to 15-4.

Nebraska also beat the Antelopes 15-0 on March 15. That loss was Kearney State's 12th in a row. Federico, a senior from Temple City, Calif., said he wasn't aware the Antelopes had won 14 their last 17 games since the defeat.

"We try to play hard against everybody, know matter who it is," Federico said. "All we want to do is play well and get ready for the Big Eight."

Before traveling to Oklahoma this weekend, the Huskers will play a doubleheader today against Missouri Western at Buck Beltzer Field. The teams will play a nine-inning game starting at 1:30 and follow with a seven-inning contest.

Johnson said he has no trouble getting ready for midweek games against non-conference opponents.

"I'd like to think every team we play is No. 1 and our job is to knock them off," Johnson said. "You don't play well if you don't do that."

Nebraska settled matters early against the Antelopes. They jumped to a 13-0 lead before the Antelopes' scored four runs in the fourth inning. Kearney State center fielder Scott Broadby's two-run single off relief pitcher Phil Goguen was the key blow.

Goguen entered the game in the fifth inning after Husker starter Mike Zajeski held the Antelopes scoreless through four.

Zajeski allowed only one hit and walked three in raising his record to 2-1.

Zajeski, a freshman right-hander from Orland Park, Ill., was aided by a

Nebraska defense which made double plays in each of the first three innings. The Huskers have 39 double plays this year.

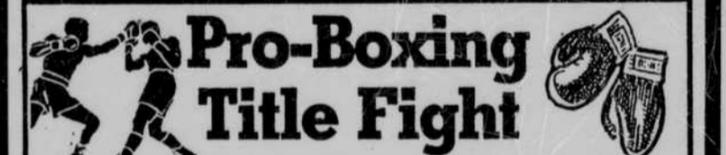
Tom Heser, a left-hander from Omaha, picked up the loss. Heser, now 1-2, relieved starter Kyle Fairbairn with two out in the first inning.

Heser entered after Fairbairn walked Bobby Benjamin and Johnson with two out. After a balk moved the

runners to second and third, Heser walked Eric Helfand. Federico grounded out to third to end the threat.

In the second, the Huskers scored with two outs when Terrance Batiste was hit by a pitch, was balked to second, and stole third. Ken Ramos and Mate Borgogno then drew walks to load the bases.

After Benjamin drew another walk to force in the first run, Johnson hit his grand slam to make it 5-0.



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NU tennis team learns from loss

By Nick Hodge
Staff Reporter

Nebraska tennis coach Kerry McDermott said he hopes the Cornhusker men will learn from their 5-4 loss to Wichita State Friday at the East Campus Courts.

McDermott said the Shockers benefited throughout the match from gusty winds.

"They played really well," McDermott said. "The windy conditions evened things out a lot."

"Some of our guys overhit balls and made errors. Hopefully, we can learn from it. We'll have a couple more matches outdoors when we'll have to face the (weather) elements, too," he said.

McDermott said high winds force players to play a different style of tennis.

"The wind was definitely a major factor," McDermott said. "It forces players to make big adjustments. The guys were frustrated with the elements."

"The ball moves around a lot in the wind. You can't take big swings or play a power game in the wind like our guys were doing. You need to play more crafty."

The Husker men, 11-5 overall and 2-0 in the Big Eight, bounced back Saturday at the Lincoln Racquet Club by defeating Colorado 8-1. The Nebraska women, 3-7 and 1-1, lost to the Buffaloes 6-3.

McDermott said he was pleased by the teams' efforts on Saturday.

"Our men seem to bounce back every time they lose to win a big match," McDermott said. "We were hungry to win. The guys played well and seemed to concentrate better."

McDermott said the Nebraska men were thinking more about the match with Colorado than they were about Wichita State.

"The big thing with Colorado is that in the back of their minds our guys knew Colorado was in the Big Eight, so they might have been looking ahead to them," McDermott said. "We got our confidence back."

Despite losing 6-3 to Colorado, which is favored to win the Big Eight, the Nebraska women's team played well, McDermott said.

"The women really surprised me," McDermott said. "They really played well. I felt they played a good match."

The Husker women beat Iowa State 6-3 on April 1 to open Big Eight play. The women's efforts thus far in the season should give them some confidence, McDermott said.

"The women realize they can play with teams in the Big Eight," McDermott said.



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