

Wolforth, Osborne share woes as NU softball team plays poorly

By Mike Kluck
Staff Reporter

Nebraska softball coach Ron Wolforth says he's having the same problem Cornhusker football coach Tom Osborne — his team isn't playing up to par.

Last Friday, the Huskers, 7-1, turned in a sub-par performance in their 7-2 and 4-2 victories against the University of Nebraska-Omaha, Wolforth said. Osborne was similarly dissatisfied with Nebraska's 48-6 victory against Nevada-Las Vegas on Saturday.

Wolforth is looking for better execution from the Huskers when they play in the Creighton Fall Invitational Saturday and Sunday.

The Huskers will face UNO Saturday at 11:30 a.m. and Kansas at 4:30 p.m. On Sunday, Nebraska plays Southwest Missouri State at 11:15 a.m. and Creighton at 2:45 p.m.

"We have the potential to be an outstanding softball team, but if we accept a sub-par performance as we had last week, it will come back to haunt us," Wolforth said. "Those are some war zone games in Division I we will be playing in this spring and if we're not ready to go, we are going to get beat."

Wolforth said the Huskers need to work on their defense. He said he was disappointed with the play against UNO because the Huskers committed four errors in each game.

"I'm really looking for our team to play consistent defensively," Wolforth said. "I think the offense will come around, but I'm looking to play consistent defense. I think we played very well defensively against Creighton and against Iowa State in the first weekend, but since then I haven't seen a really quality defense that I would like."

Nebraska defeated Creighton 3-2

and Iowa State 3-1 in the Husker Invitational earlier this season.

Creighton coach Mary Higgins said she thought the Bluejays' first contest against Nebraska was a "great" ballgame, but said Sunday's rematch could be different.

Higgins said the Bluejays won't be at full speed for the tournament because starting pitcher Cheryl Cameron and outfielder Beth Herod will be held out because of injuries. In addition, Creighton's top hitter, Jody Reem, might sit out because of a sore arm.

Higgins said the Bluejays still have the potential for success against Nebraska.

freshman pitcher Marie Bowie. Bowie, 6-1, pitched Nebraska's first victory against Creighton.

The Huskers will have to be mentally prepared for each game this weekend, Wolforth said. He said that although the fall record doesn't count toward a Big Eight championship or a national ranking, it's still important for Nebraska to win.

"It's really important to win these ballgames because if you start to drop games consistently to people, that is always something to draw from in the future," Wolforth said. "If you get swept by them than that is always something that is in the back of your mind when you go play them, so it is

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—Wolforth

"Our pitchers have to hit the spot and defensively we have to take care of the ball," Higgins said. "We need to be real aggressive."

Creighton won't be the only team in the tournament at less than full speed. Wolforth said the Huskers will be without starting left fielder Janelle Frese, who injured her knee earlier this week playing intramural flag football.

"It is going to hurt us immediately because Janelle was just about as hot as anybody last week," Wolforth said. "To me, any injury to any of my seniors is going to be devastating."

Higgins said the Bluejays need to be smart at the plate against Nebraska

important to do well in these games." Kansas coach Kalum Haack said the Jayhawks, 7-2, will have only one goal when playing Nebraska.

"We want to beat them," Haack said. The Jayhawks' losses this season are to Creighton and Kearney State — teams Nebraska has defeated.

Haack wants the Jayhawks to play consistently and for their pitchers to stay ahead of the hitters in the count. He said he hasn't seen Bowie pitch, but thinks she is similar to his freshman pitchers.

"Every now and then I expect her to make a freshman mistake and I hope we capitalize on it," Haack said.

Oakland leads 2-0 in playoffs

BOSTON (AP) - Rookie Walt Weiss, the ninth-place hitter in a lineup of sluggers, singled home the tie-breaking run in the ninth inning Thursday night and the Oakland Athletics beat the Boston Red Sox 4-3 for a commanding 2-0 lead in the

American League playoffs. The Athletics headed home, where they swept all six games from Boston this season and have won 14 of the last 15. Game 3 is Friday night with Oakland's Bob Welch facing Mike Boddicker.

Jose Canseco, who led the majors with 42 home runs and 124 RBI, homered for the second straight game and Mark McGwire hit an RBI single in the seventh for a 3-2 lead before Rich Gedman's home run in the bottom half of the inning tied it.

But while Oakland's Bash Brothers brought the Athletics back against Roger Clemens, it was the bottom part of the order that won it. Ron Hassey singled with one out against Red Sox relief ace Lee Smith and took third on Tony Phillips' two-out single. That brought up Weiss, a .389 hitter against Boston this year, and he escaped an 0-2 hole against the fast-balling Smith and lined a single just in front of diving center fielder Ellis Burks.

Dennis Eckersley, who led the majors with 45 saves, got his second save of the series.

Mason 'drools' over NU's line

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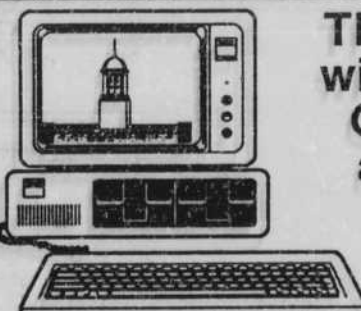
son said. But the Jayhawks' offense could be altered somewhat because of a knee injury sustained by wide receiver Willie Vaughn in the New Mexico State game. Vaughn, a 6-foot senior from Kansas City, Kan., has caught 10 passes for 275 yards and four touchdowns, but he might not play against the Huskers.

"He's supplied us with the big-play threat," Mason said.

Mason said Kansas' defense must slow down the Huskers' offense if the Jayhawks hope to win. Kansas has given up 293 yards rushing and 540 yards of total offense a game so far this season.

Nebraska is averaging 454.2 yards of total offense per game, including 353.4 yards per game rushing.

"As always, when you look at Nebraska's offensive line as a coach, you drool," Mason said. "Taylor is a great athlete who has the ability to turn a nothing play into something big."



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in brief

SPORTS

UNL rugby team to play Saturday

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Rugby Club will play the University of South Dakota Saturday at 1:30 p.m. at the East Campus softball fields. Saturday's game will be the 1-3 Cornhuskers' final home game of the season.

A victory Saturday would guarantee the Huskers a spot in the finals of the Great Plains Regional Tournament, which will be held this spring. If Nebraska defeats South Dakota, it will play the winner of a game between Creighton and South Dakota.

Nebraska basketball tickets still available

Nebraska basketball season student-ticket applications are still being accepted at the South Stadium ticket office. Floor bleacher seats are available. Student tickets cost \$37.50 and the ticket office is open from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

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