

# Husker pitcher's nearly perfect game leads softball team to shutout of Mavs

By Darran Fowler  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska pitcher Stephanie Skegas missed throwing a perfect game Wednesday night by the tip of a glove, but the junior hurler said she still can do better.

Skegas' near-perfection led Nebraska in its 10-0 triumph over the University of Nebraska at Omaha in the second game of a doubleheader at the NU softball complex. Nebraska, which now is 3-1, won the first game 7-2 with sophomore Marie Bowie getting her first win of the season.

The only hit off Skegas came in the third inning when UNO's Amy Phalen blooped a single to shallow center. Nebraska center fielder Jill Rishel made a running dive for the ball and appeared to make the catch, but the umpire ruled the ball hit the ground first.

Skegas, who upped her record to 2-0, struck out one batter in each of the five innings played.

"It was pretty good, but I still have a lot of work to do," Skegas said. "I feel I need to improve a lot and gain more confidence."

Skegas said her main concern is the movement of her pitches. She said she had good movement against UNO, but "it could be better."

Nebraska's defense kept pressure off Skegas by playing error-free ball. The offense also contributed by scattering 10 hits.

"The team helped me out a lot today," Skegas said. "It helps my confidence when we're playing confident as a team."

Bowie gave up five hits, walked two and struck out four. UNO took advantage of two errors to score both its runs in the third inning.

Nebraska coach Ron Wolforth said Bowie is a slow starter and is not in top form. Bowie pitched a 5-1 loss in the Huskers season opener with Kearney State Friday.

He said he hopes she puts it all together in this weekend's Husker Fall Classic.

"Hopefully we'll see it this weekend," Wolforth said. "I think she's getting closer."

Wolforth said Skegas' performance was pleasing to see. He said when highly recruited freshman pitcher Tracy Smith recovers from a back injury that Nebraska's pitching staff will be strong.

In the first game, sophomore Misti Guenther led Nebraska's six-hit performance by going 2-for-3 and driving in three runs. Guenther ripped a two-run triple in Nebraska's five-run first inning.

Guenther also singled and scored a run in the second inning.

In the second game, Guenther one-hopped a ground-rule double over left center in the fourth inning. Lori Cook went 3-for-3, and freshman Kris Vucurevic and sophomore Joy Rishel each went 2-for-2 in that game.

Guenther said it was just a matter of relaxing.

"(Against Kearney State) I was incredibly tense," she said. "Tonight I just tried to cut back on my tenseness. I was a lot looser. The team also had more confidence and that helped. The first-game jitters are over for all of us."

Wolforth said Guenther slowly is reaching her potential.

"I think she was a lot more in tune with herself," he said.

Senior Jill Rishel, who also had a triple in the first game, stole the 36th base of her career in the second game to tie former Husker Wendy Turner for fifth on the all-time list.

Wolforth said he was pleased with Nebraska's hitting, but the Huskers still need work.

"Our struggling days offensively are not over because we're still learning," he said. "Whenever you're learning you're not real comfortable."

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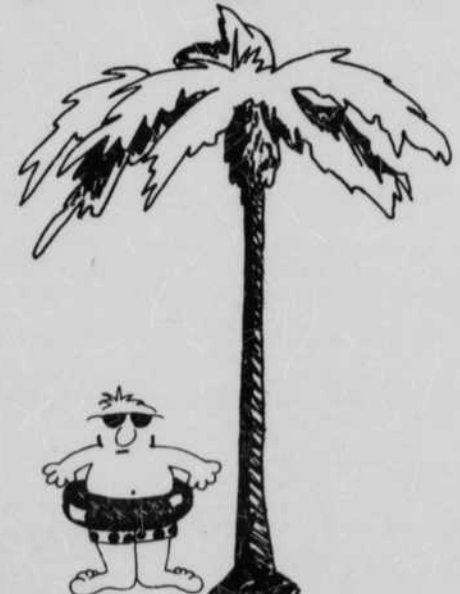
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