

David Hansen/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's LeeAnna Hiestand drives for a bucket against Georgia.

Nebraska wants to force Iowa into inside game

By Paul Domeier
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's basketball team will face its second top-10 opponent in five days when it squares off against Iowa tonight at 7 p.m. at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The Cornhuskers lost to No. 4 Georgia Saturday, 74-59, in the finals of the Wimmer's Invitational. The Hawkeyes are ranked No. 10. Husker Coach Angela Beck said Iowa, like Georgia, will play up-tempo. But other than that, she said, the two opponents are complete opposites.

Georgia's strength was brute force inside, led by All-America candidate Tammy Jenkins. Nebraska countered Jenkins' presence by forcing the Bulldogs to shoot from the outside to win.

Beck said the Huskers will make Iowa try to win from the inside. Iowa's top players, she said, are perimeter players Franthea Price, Stephanie Schueler and Jollette Law. Beck said Katie Abrahamson, Iowa's top inside threat, is good but doesn't like contact.

"I think our inside game is far superior to theirs," she said. "That's why I'm happy our posts learned from that game (against Georgia); maybe we can control the inside

game."

Ann Halsne and Karen Jennings, the Huskers' starting post players, are from Iowa, and Beck said they are looking forward to the contest. The freshman Jennings, Beck said, picked Nebraska over Iowa.

"(The Hawkeyes) are not as deep, but we're not as talented," Beck said. "So I think there's a happy medium there."

Last year the Hawkeyes defeated the Huskers, 84-67. This year's game, which telecast live by the Nebraska ETV Network (channel 12), has been the focus of a promotional push to fill the arena.

Beck said the team enjoys the television spotlight and should benefit from a big crowd.

"Iowa's used to playing before a lot of fans, but if they're in our favor it could give us a little extra adrenaline," she said.

Nebraska has had only a few days to prepare, but Beck said Iowa has the same problem. The Hawkeyes played in a tournament Saturday and Sunday, defeating Connecticut in the finals, 81-49.

Beck named three keys for the Huskers. She said the team needs to limit turnovers, get good shots and shoot better, specifically at the free throw line. She said the guards' ability to control the ball is most important.

Kruse helps in leading NU team, fans have fun with fitting surname

By Darran Fowler
Senior Reporter

"Kr-u-u-u-s-e."

Following the lead of NU Coliseum announcer Steve Johnson, Nebraska volleyball fans have a good time with the surname of Cornhusker outside hitter Janet Kruse.

Whenever Kruse is introduced or smashes a kill into an open area, one can be sure the Coliseum will be filled with the reverberating sounds of "Kr-u-u-u-s-e."

Saturday, fans will have another opportunity to voice the extended pronunciation when Nebraska plays Illinois State in a first-round regional match at 2 p.m. at the Coliseum.

Kruse said she enjoys her surname. "It's kind of an easy name to take advantage of," the sophomore from Fort Calhoun said. "Sometimes, after a big play, I hear it and it gets me a little pumped up, but usually I don't pay a lot of attention to it."

A Kruse who does pay attention is her grandfather and No. 1 fan, Waldo, who seldom misses a home match.

"My grandpa says if they only knew it's pronounced: 'Kruce,'" she said.

Mispronounced or not, Kruse is having the kind of year worth shouting about.

The 6-foot-1 hitter leads the team in digs with 258 and is second to freshman Eileen Shannon in kills with 409. She is averaging 3.97 kills per game while compiling a hitting percentage of .348. Shannon's kill production is 416, with an average of 4.29 a game and

hitting percentage of .286.

Kruse has led the Huskers in kills 10 times this season. She was named the First Tier Invitational's Most Valuable Player, and also was selected to the Runza Invitational and Big Eight's All-tournament teams.

In addition, Kruse was one of four Huskers named All-Conference and twice was named the Big Eight Player of the Week.

Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said he is pleased with the progress Kruse made in just her second year.

"Last year she hit under .200 and this year's she's above .340," he said. "She probably has twice as many kills a match as last year."

"She's also one of our primary passers and usually sets the first block because she's on our right side player in the front row."

Last season, Kruse tallied 57 digs and 144 kills while averaging 1.55 per game and hitting .166.

Kruse said she benefits from the balanced attack that the Huskers possess this season.

"One of the advantages is that we have so many options which makes it really tough on a team to play strong defense against us," she said.

But, Kruse is still a dominant player, Pettit said.

"If we're successful it's because we got it to her in certain situations," he said. "In a lot of matches -- like against Kentucky, Houston and Hawaii -- one reason we were successful is because we got her the ball and she terminated the play."

Coach has far-fetched dream

Nebraska women's basketball coach Angela Beck has a dream.

Beck has spent the last week plugging her team's game against Iowa tonight. She comes on to her radio promotion, introduces herself and states that she has a dream.

are being given away at all Lincoln Domino's Pizza locations.

But there will be a threat for an upset. Iowa has its usual arsenal of talented perimeter players, but the Hawkeyes post game is soft. So soft, in fact, that the Hawkeyes placed an ad in the Daily Iowan, the student newspaper at the University of Iowa, calling for any and all potential post players to try out for the team.

Several did, but none of them made it. If that weakness isn't enough, Nebraska should use its last two meetings against Iowa to its advantage.

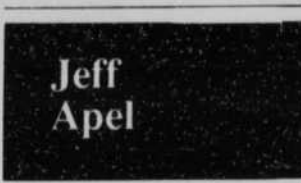
Last season, Iowa handed Nebraska a lopsided 84-67 setback. That loss occurred two years after the Huskers beat the Hawkeyes 85-74 during Coach Angela Beck's first year at Nebraska.

The win against Iowa was sweet, especially when the Hawkeye coaching staff angrily criticized the officiating. It seems like every time Iowa loses to Nebraska in anything, Hawkeye backers always have excuses.

"You hired terrible officials."
"You made fun of our turkey trot."
"You illegally obtained a film and spent all summer studying it."

Dream on, Hawkeyes. If Nebraska wins tonight, it's because it is the better team. Not because of your lame-brain excuses.

Apel is a senior news-editorial major and is the Daily Nebraskan sports editor.



Jeff Apel

Beck's dream begins just before tipoff, as a sold-out Bob Devaney Sports Center crowd joins a Nebraska ETV audience to watch the Cornhuskers face Iowa. Her dream would continue as Nebraska battles the 10th-ranked Hawkeyes evenly before pulling away in the end.

That's a far-fetched dream.

First of all, Nebraska has never drawn fans to women's athletic events. It's sad how fans will support the Husker football and men's basketball teams no matter how bad the opposition is, but will not attend a women's game against a top-10 opponent.

There will not be any threat of a sellout tonight. Empty seats will be in abundance even though Nebraska admits all students who present their student ID cards for free and tickets

in brief SPORTS

Four linemen commit to NU

Four in-state linemen have given verbal commitments to the Nebraska football team.

The four recruits are Grand Island's Jon Pedersen, Hyannis' Terry Connealy, Lincoln East's Rob Zatechka and Fremont

Bergan's Zach Wiegert. Wiegert is the younger brother of Cornhusker offensive lineman Erik Wiegert, while Zatechka's father, Doug, is the director of the housing office at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Competition tough for NU center, Nee says

By Cory Golden
Staff Reporter

Nebraska center Rich King will face his third major challenge in as many games when the Cornhuskers play Michigan State tonight in East Lansing, Mich.

Nebraska coach Danny Nee said King will be challenged because Michigan State possesses a talented center. That is nothing new this season, Nee said, as both of the Huskers' previous opponents had quality post

men.

King will face his third tough center when Nebraska squares off against Michigan State at 7:05 p.m. The 7-foot-2 Husker will be matched against 6-10 Mike Peplowski in the debut of the Jack Breslin Students Event Center.

Nee said King only can improve from facing this high level of competition.

"It'll be a real challenge for King right away," Nee said. "Hopefully,

that'll help him down the road in conference games."

King has passed his court test this season, averaging 18.5 points and 7.5 rebounds against Missouri-Kansas City's David Robinson and Miami of Ohio's Jim Paul. Both were 6-10 players.

King's third major matchup of the season will place him against the Spartans' quicker but shorter 2-3 zone defense. That defense paid big dividends for the Spartans Monday

night, when they won the Great Alaska Shootout by defeating Kansas State 73-68.

The Spartans' attack, which whipped Auburn and Texas A&M prior to defeating Kansas State, is led by junior guard Steve Smith.

Smith averaged 17.7 points and 6.9 rebounds per game last season. He began this year by being named the Great Alaska Shootout's Most Valuable Player after scoring 17 points, grabbing six rebounds and

dishing off 11 assists against Kansas State.

Other returning starters for Michigan State who helped the Spartans to a fourth-place finish in the National Invitation Tournament last season are forwards Todd Wolfe and Ken Redfield and guard Kirk Manns.

The Spartans also return forward Mike Steigenga, who averaged 8.7 points and 4.5 rebounds per game last season. Steigenga is Michigan State's first player off the bench.