

Emotional high can carry team to victory

Emotion is a funny thing. It can give a person Herculean strength or render one a helpless mass of quivering Jell-O. It also can inspire one to achieve more than his or her normal capability.

Up until this last year when the achievements of the Colorado foot-

backs took me back to my four years of playing high school football.

Back then, I never really realized why coach made us sit in the locker room without saying a word. We also weren't allowed to say anything during pregame stretching and warmups until about 10 minutes before kick-off.

I wondered why he didn't let us yell our heads off and blow off the anticipation before the game.

Now, it's obvious what his strategy was. All of the bottled-up energy which had been building since setting foot in the locker room came out during the game in the form of emotion. We weren't always the most superior team in terms of athletic ability, but we won a lot of games.

Why? Emotion.

We played the whole game on an emotional high in which defeat was something totally inconceivable. After the game we were left emotionally drained, but winning was a nice compensation.

What's the point, you ask? Why is this point being brought up?

To illustrate a point. My high school football team won a lot of games because of the emotional level my teammates played on.

It's now more obvious why Colorado and Loyola Marymount have been successful this year -- they have been playing on an emotional level far above that of their opponents.

Although the Sal Aunese story got very old, the Colorado players and fans were rallying around the memory of their fallen hero. It allowed all of the players to reach an elevated

emotional state in which they played up to and beyond their capability.

This emotion carried them to a Big Eight title and to the brink of a national championship.

Now, just three short months later, Loyola Marymount players have dedicated the NCAA basketball tournament to the memory of their dead teammate, Hank Gathers. Gathers collapsed during the first half of the Lions' West Coast conference tournament game against Portland earlier this season, and was pronounced dead a short time later.

His official cause of death was listed as a heart condition.

Loyola Marymount's emotion is very intense, as memories of Gathers were everywhere in its first two NCAA tournament wins. Because of emotion the Lions blew away defending

champion Michigan, a team with more talent and better athletes.

Although they are both extreme examples, the Gathers and Aunese tragedies are two examples of the impact that emotion can have on an athlete's performance. From high school football to big-time college basketball, coaches get the most from their players not only by getting them physically prepared for their games, but emotionally as well.

It goes to show that sporting events aren't just a matter of who is bigger, faster and stronger -- they also can be a battle of emotions.

Will emotion carry Loyola Marymount to the championship? We can only wait and see.

Hytrek is a sophomore news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan sports reporter and columnist.



Nick Hytrek

ball team and now the Loyola Marymount basketball team were witnessed, it was difficult to realize just how important emotion can be to the success of a team.

It was difficult even when flash-

Spring Break matches give duo chance to show off 21st - place national ranking

By Paul Domeier
Senior Reporter

Rachel Collins can show off a national ranking to her Southern California friends when the Nebraska women's tennis team travels to San Diego for four duals during Spring Break.

The Cornhuskers will play Washington on Friday, San Diego State on Sunday, California-San Diego on Monday and U.S. International on Wednesday.

Collins, a sophomore from Thousand Oaks, Calif., and Nancy Tyggum, Nebraska's No. 1 duo, are 21st in the latest doubles rankings. Collins said she didn't expect to be ranked that high for the first time.

"I kind of think it's generous, but on the other hand, all I have to do is

think about it and it gives me confidence," she said.

She said national recognition also motivates her and her teammates to drill and improve to give numbers to more Husker entries.

"Getting a national ranking isn't that (far) out of reality," she said.

And, yes, the ranking is something to brag about. She said that when she found out about the ranking she called a friend on the top-10 Pepperdine team. After all, Pepperdine doesn't have a doubles team ranked that high.

Thousand Oaks is north of Los Angeles, but Collins, who also plays No. 4 singles, said she hopes her parents can make the drive through Los Angeles to see her play.

The Huskers made a Spring Break trip closer to Thousand Oaks last season. Collins said she took the team home for Easter, they sat behind Kirk Cameron in church, and life was good.

Nebraska played some lesser teams, the Huskers had more time off, and

Collins was an inexperienced freshman playing No. 5 singles and No. 3 doubles.

Coach Gregg Calvin said the 1990 trip will be tougher than the 1989 trip. San Diego State is ranked 14th, he said, U.S. International is close to the top-25, California-San Diego is the defending Division III champion and Washington lost 5-4 to Weber State, a team Nebraska recently beat 5-4. This year's trip has more of a tennis emphasis, and the Huskers have one day off.

"We'll be down and back before we know it," Collins said.

And Calvin said Collins and Tyggum will have a chance to increase those bragging rights.

"This will give them a chance to play really good teams," he said.

That is all the incentive Collins needs.

"We don't have anything to lose," she said. "I want to see what we can do."

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