

NU tennis team looking to Big Eight title

By Paul Domeier
Senior Reporter

Nebraska men's tennis coach Kerry McDermott still is marveling that his team has a chance at the Big Eight title.

Oklahoma State beat the Cornhuskers, 6-3, on Saturday but Colorado upset Kansas, 5-4, the same day. Nebraska recovered to defeat Oklahoma, 6-3, on Sunday, leaving the Huskers three points behind the Jayhawks heading into the Big Eight tournament. That tournament will be held Saturday and Sunday in Oklahoma City.

"Oklahoma State was probably our bad outing, but at least it didn't kill us," McDermott said. "We don't feel like 6-3 was so bad."

Kansas leads the conference with 39 points, followed by Oklahoma State with 38, Nebraska with 36, Oklahoma with 29, Colorado with 27, Iowa State with 20 and Missouri with zero.

"We just feel fortunate enough that we can compete for the No. 1 spot," McDermott said. "If we were seven or eight points down we would have went in with our heads down."

And the Huskers have the Buffaloes, with their win over Kansas, to

thank.

"You don't get too many chances like that for someone else to do something for you," McDermott said.

Now the Huskers have to do their part -- win matches. In McDermott's computations, No. 3 singles player Steve Barley and No. 6 singles player Joseph Rahme will be top seeds. Scott Randolph at No. 4 singles and Matthias Mueller and Ken Feuer at No. 1 doubles will be second seeds, while Anthony Kotarac at No. 5 singles, Barley and Randolph at No. 2 doubles and Kotarac and Dave Moyer at No. 3 doubles will get fourth seeds.

McDermott said Barley (5-1 in the conference) and Rahme (6-0), with their first-round byes, have the best shot at individual titles. He singled out Randolph, who won No. 5 singles titles at Midland (Texas) Junior College in 1989, as one dark horse.

"Scott Randolph is 5-1, tougher than nails and probably should have upset Rafael Rangel in our Kansas dual," he said.

Randolph's lone Big Eight loss was a 7-6, 4-6, 7-5 defeat at Rangel's hands.

Missing from the seed list are Mueller and Feuer in singles. Last

NU battling for second with Sooners

By Paul Domeier
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska women's tennis team stayed three points behind Oklahoma and in third place after the first round of the Big Eight tournament Thursday.

The Cornhuskers won seven of nine first-round matches. Rain forced the singles inside to four different Oklahoma City, Okla., sites, but the players moved back outside for the first round of doubles. The second round of doubles were played late Thursday night.

Oklahoma State went undefeated in the first round and led with 106 points, clinching the team's 10th

consecutive title. The Cowgirls were followed by Oklahoma with 78 points, Nebraska with 75, Kansas with 68, Kansas State with 52, Colorado with 51, Iowa State with 28 and Missouri with 10.

The Huskers almost are assured of improving on their 1988 and 1989 fifth-place finishes. The teams will play second-round singles, final-round doubles and final-round singles today starting at 9 a.m.

Four Nebraska players will be competing for singles titles. At No. 1 singles, Ildiko Guba virtually repeated a victory from Nebraska's first conference dual, beating Kansas State's Marijke Nel in a first-set tiebreaker (7-5) and a 6-2 second

set. Nancy Tyggum, battling back spasms, beat Sara Hancock of Kansas State, 6-4, 6-4, at No. 3.

Meghan Quinn downed Iowa State's Coonie McGough at No. 5, 6-2, 6-2. At No. 6, Tina Coutretsis avenged her only Big Eight loss with a 6-0, 1-6, 6-0 victory over Oklahoma's Pam Ridgley.

Huskers Ann Flannery and Rachel Collins will be playing in the losers' bracket. Flannery lost, 6-1, 6-4, to Helen Schildknecht of Kansas State at No. 2 and Collins lost, 6-4, 6-3, to Page Goins of Kansas.

The three Husker doubles teams

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spring, the two won Big Eight titles at No. 3 and 4 singles, respectively. This year both have struggled. Mueller, ranked 58th in the country, is 3-3 at No. 1 singles and Feuer, the squad's lone senior, is 2-4 at No. 2.

But McDermott said this could help Nebraska. Each has a one-in-three chance of drawing Kansas' player

in his bracket, John Falbo at No. 1 or Jeff Gross at No. 2, in the first round. If one was to do that and defeat the second seed from Kansas, Nebraska would take a three-point swing and tie the Jayhawks.

"Ken and Matthias can beat anyone, and they're better when they're seeded highly," McDermott said.

"They don't handle the pressure well."

Looking to 1991, McDermott said he has signed Joseph Salerno to a letter of intent. Salerno, a four-time state singles champion from Omaha Central, has been playing at Tyler (Texas) Junior College.

McDermott said he expects to sign one more recruit.

Guenther's double lifts Huskers over Creighton

By Darran Fowier
Staff Reporter

Nebraska softball coach Ron Wolforth saw the brand of softball Thursday night that could win a Big Eight tournament championship.

And with the tournament a week away, it couldn't come at a better time. The title winner receives an automatic berth into NCAA regional play.

Wolforth said the 27-17 Cornhuskers displayed solid defense and pitching in a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over rival Creighton at the NU Softball Complex. Rain cancelled a second game.

Those two facets of the game are what win conference titles according to Wolforth, not the high-scoring, slugfests like the Huskers showed in the 8-5, 10-3 sweeping of Wichita State on Tuesday.

"You don't win the Big Eight Conference by scoring a lot of runs," he said. "I've been around five years, and I've never seen an 11-3 ball game. It's always been 1-0, 2-0. That sort of thing."

Creighton dumped the Huskers 7-0, 1-0 just over a week ago, but this time Nebraska won thanks to a clutch double by Misti Guenther in the sixth inning.

With two out and the score knotted at one, Guenther, hitting in place of teammate Marie Bowie, tagged a shot

to the left field fence scoring Kris Vucurevic from second base.

Guenther came into the contest hitting a shaky .192 with four doubles, two triples, a pair of homers and 14 RBI. Wolforth said Guenther is one of finest hitters he has coached in his tenure at Nebraska, but her numbers at the plate so far this season were below his expectations of 25-35 RBI and 5-7 home runs. That may have put some additional pressure on the sophomore from Omaha, he said.

Guenther admitted she was nervous the entire time at the plate. She said she tried to calm herself by just concentrating on scoring the run.

"I had trouble with (Creighton pitcher Kelly) Brookhart when we played in Omaha," she said. "Creighton's a really big rivalry, and I wanted to get a hit. I just wanted to get the job done."

Could scoring the winning run be what gets her over the hump?

"It's a stepping stone," she said. "It helps me out. It makes me think I'm not on the bottom, I'm still up there. I just need to keep working, keep building and getting better."

Creighton owned the first four innings, jumping in the lead in the second inning on a solo homer by freshman Teir Wilbur against Husker pitcher Stephanie Skegas.

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Butch Ireland/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Kris Vucurevic, facing, is congratulated by teammates after scoring the winning run against Creighton last night. Nebraska won the game 2-1. A second game was rained out.

Barring injury, Lakers predicted to continue '80 dynasty

This time of year is very exciting for sports nuts all over the country.

The baseball season is underway, the National Hockey League playoffs are in the second round, and, most

importantly, the National Basketball Association playoffs begin this week. When choosing which sporting event to watch this weekend, it is a very easy choice. Take the NBA over baseball and hockey.



Nick Hytrek

This has been a very interesting season in the NBA, as the Western

Conference has become powerful. The Los Angeles Lakers still are the dominant team, but now there are four other teams that have a legitimate shot at making it to the NBA Finals.

The Utah Jazz and the Phoenix Suns weren't surprises; they were supposed to have good teams. But who expected the Portland Trailblazers and the San Antonio Spurs to have the kind of years they did?

San Antonio set the record for the biggest turnaround by a team in one season. Portland pushed the Lakers all season and the Pacific Division wasn't secured by Los Angeles until only a few games were left in the season.

The Eastern Conference was, as usual, ugly. It mostly resembled football in shorts.

The Detroit Pistons strengthened

their reputation for being a bunch of trash-talking goons. The Pistons consider a victory as a game in which they pile up more fines for fighting than the other team.

Not to be outdone, the Philadelphia '76ers clouded an otherwise successful season by sinking to the same level as Detroit. Philadelphia won its first division title in years, but established itself as another team that will either beat you or beat you up.

The whole season came to a climax when Detroit and Philadelphia met in the final week to establish just who the baddest team was. Philadelphia won the game but the brawl that occurred was more of a draw. Unfortunately, the fight was stopped before both teams killed each other.

Michael Jordan continued to amaze fans, and the Chicago Bulls improved to the point where they had the sec-

ond-best record in the conference. The Indiana Pacers and New York Knicks began the season hot, but cooled off and are now just average heading into the playoffs.

Larry Bird returned to make the Boston Celtics respectable again this year, proving that the Celtics depend on him to win ball games.

This year's playoffs should only hold one surprise: Chicago will beat Detroit in the Eastern Conference finals to make its first trip to the finals in team history.

Why? The Bulls have figured out what it takes to win the big game, and Jordan is no longer the only threat on the team.

The Western Conference will be much more exciting, as most of the series will last seven games. Either Utah or Phoenix will be gone after the first round since they play each other.

Portland and San Antonio will have the most exciting series when they meet in the second round, and it's a tossup who will win there.

One thing's for certain: The Lakers will beat whoever gets in their way. After last year's loss in the finals, they have that hungry look back and want to prove that they can win it all without Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

It all narrows down to L.A. and Chicago in the finals, and it appears to be a foregone conclusion as to who is going to win -- the Lakers are far too deep and talented for anyone to beat them.

Barring injury, Los Angeles will add another championship banner to its rafters and continue the dynasty of the '80s into a new decade.

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