

Beck: Shot at second place will keep Huskers fighting

By Chris Hopfensperger
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska women's basketball team may have two games left, but its season is over.

Oklahoma State clinched the Big Eight regular-season title last week. The Cornhuskers can finish second at best.

But the Huskers, who will play Missouri tonight, have not quit, Coach Angela Beck said.

"Second place is consolation, but it is better than seventh," she said. "We're comfortable with the position we're in, and we have something to prove."

Nebraska still has something to gain in the 7:30 p.m. game at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The Huskers, 16-9 and 7-5, could

secure a better seed in the Big Eight tournament with wins in their last two games. Seedings are taken from the final conference rankings.

They are also on the bubble for a possible at-large berth in the 48-team NCAA tournament, Beck said.

"Each win puts us closer to a lot of things," she said.

Nebraska stayed close with a win Saturday. The Huskers avenged the home loss in their Big Eight opener by beating Kansas State 79-69 in Manhattan, Kan.

Beck said winning the game gave the team an emotional boost as it heads into the final games.

"Spirits are a lot higher," she said. "It gives us a little momentum."

The Huskers had been dragging



Basketball standings:

Oklahoma State	10-2	21-4
Nebraska	7-5	16-9
Colorado	7-5	16-9
Kansas State	7-5	14-9
Kansas	6-6	15-9
Iowa State	6-6	11-13
Oklahoma	3-9	9-17
Missouri	2-10	9-16

See BECK on 8

Wrestlers lack focus for duel, coach says

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Although Nebraska's wrestling team is competing in its last dual of the season tonight, Cornhusker coach Tim Neumann knows the real season has just begun.

The Huskers, 10-6 and ranked seventh in the country, will take on Drake at the Bob Devaney Sports Center at 7:30 p.m. in their final tuneup before the Big Eight championships March 3 in Columbia, Mo.

Neumann said he, the other coaches and the team would just as soon forget about tonight's dual.

"We're not really focused on this dual," he said. "But I'm not too worried. In the past, we've always wrestled Drake in the last dual of the season, on a Wednesday two

weeks before Big Eights. The older guys on the team know what they have to do, and how to do it.

"Plus, they don't want to have a bad performance in their last home appearance of the year."

Neumann said that for the first time this season, he and his staff aren't having trouble motivating the wrestlers.

"There have been so many injuries that it's made it tough," Neumann said, "and there are so many seniors on the team, which also makes it harder, because they know that the only part of the season that really matters is right now."

"But at this point, everyone knows what they need to do."

What the Huskers need to do

See DRAKE on 8

Card show features Chiefs star

By David Moyer
Staff Reporter

Christian Okoye, punishing running back for the Kansas City Chiefs, said he would have continued his efforts in the non-contact world of track and field if he hadn't decided to play football.

"If I wasn't playing today, I would probably be coaching somewhere," he said. "Or I would be in the Olympics. That was my dream before I started football."

That choice led the "Nigerian Nightmare" to signing autographs and talking with fans at the Sports Card Show V in the Nebraska Union on Saturday.

"I enjoy doing it, especially because I get paid for it," he said, laughing. "No, actually it gives me the opportunity to meet a lot of people and talk to them."

Okoye became a popular drawing card in 1989 when he led the NFL in yards rushing. He said he spends most of his off-season time speaking to Fellowship of Christian Athletes and church groups — so many engagements that they are impossible to count.

He has kept this busy schedule even though he spent most of the 1990 season splitting time with Barry Word, and some time injured.

"Things are still about the same," Okoye said. "The only difference is I didn't win some of the awards like I did before."

But he said he'll be back in 1991.

"It's always a vision of a running back to win a rushing title every year."

Despite Okoye's successful career, he didn't play football until college.

Born and raised in Nigeria, Okoye came to the United States on a track scholarship at Azusa Pacific University in California. It was there that he discovered the game of football and decided he could play, too.

"Nobody really introduced me to football, I just kind of decided to try it out," he said.

After a college career without much notoriety, the Chiefs decided to take a chance on his size and drafted him. His run-

See OKOYE on 8

Huskers to challenge a tougher Tiger team

By David Moyer
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska men's basketball team will face a tougher Missouri team tonight with the return of Tiger guard Anthony Peeler.

The Tigers, 13-9 overall and 5-5 in the Big Eight, are 10-3 with Peeler, 3-6 without him.

In a Jan. 30 meeting in Lincoln, Peeler was out with a knee injury as the Cornhuskers, 22-4 and 7-3 and ranked 14th, defeated the Tigers, 89-75.

Peeler is averaging 18.9 points and 6.3 rebounds per game, and Nebraska coach Danny Nee said he thinks he makes a difference.

"With Peeler in the lineup, he is a very important part of their game plan — offensively and defensively," he said. "We don't have anyone who can match up with him."

Nee referred to the fact Peeler can play so many different positions.

"If he plays small forward, he has the quickness and explosiveness, and if he plays guard, he has the power at the guard spot," Nee said. "He is a very fine player."

Missouri also played what Nee said was an uncharacteristic zone defense in their last meeting, sagging on the Huskers' inside people the entire game. The defense allowed Eric Piatkowski to score 22 points with six three-point goals while holding center Rich King, who scored 40 points against Northern Illinois on Monday, to one point.

Nee said that just shows how Nebraska can win several different ways. The Huskers showed they could come back to win against Northern Illinois, rallying from as many as 10 points down to win 82-73.

Nee said with Peeler back, tonight's game will be more wide open and higher scoring than the previous Husker-Tiger clash, although he said he couldn't predict how the game would be decided.

"How the game unravels you don't have control over," Nee said. "These spurts happen and how they happen. . . It could be a turnover, it could be defense, it could be an outside shot — boom, boom, boom, it just happens that way."

Nee said playing on the road wouldn't be too much of a factor, although the Huskers are going into what he calls one of the three toughest Big Eight areas in which to play.

But he said the Huskers are going in with the attitude that they can win and that finishing the season well is important.

Nebraska will play Kansas State, Oklahoma State and Kansas to end the regular season.

"The next two weeks are critical to keep our winning ways," Nee said.

Nebraska will play Missouri 7 p.m. tonight at the Harnes Center in Columbia, Mo.



Michelle Paulman/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Tony Farmer almost lets the ball get away in the game that almost got away, Nebraska's 82-73 comeback victory over Northern Illinois on Monday.