

Men's tennis team wins one, loses one during weekend play

By Jeff Singer
Staff Reporter

After pounding one Missouri Valley Conference opponent on Friday, the Nebraska men's tennis team got a taste of its own medicine on Saturday from another MVC foe as the Cornhuskers split their weekend matches.

Nebraska opened the weekend with a 7-2 beating of Southwest Missouri State Friday at Kansas City, Mo., but the tables were turned on the Huskers Saturday when they were beaten 9-0 by Drake in Des Moines, Iowa.

In Friday's matches, Nebraska earned straight-set wins at four singles spots to earn the victory.

No. 1 player Joseph Rahme won 6-4, 3-3; as did No. 2 Karl Falkland 7-6, 2-0; No. 4 Andy Davis 6-2, 6-2; and No. 5 Troy Bray 6-3, 6-1.

Bray said he thought the Huskers' margin of victory over the Southwest Missouri State Bearcats was the most surprising.

"I thought we played well," Bray said. "I didn't expect for us to beat them that badly, but everybody was pumped up and everything was just clicking."

Rahme was beating his opponent in the second set when his Bearcat counterpart retired from the match

because of a hip injury. Rahme said his opponent's injury was more mental than physical.

"I beat him in the Husker Invite and he wasn't even coming close to breaking my serve," Rahme said. "I

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NU Tennis coach

think he knew I was dominating the match and that he didn't have a chance, so he thought he'd better pack it in."

Other Nebraska wins on Friday came from No. 6 singles player Jay Seagrist 1-6, 7-6, 6-4 and at two of the three doubles positions. The Huskers' No. 1 doubles pair of Rahme and Falkland won 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 as did the No. 2 tandem of Davis and Mike Garcia by scores of 6-3, 6-3.

As for Saturday's matches, the highlights were minimal for the Hus-

ers as they were dominated by the Bulldogs.

Bray said it was easy to tell why the Huskers had troubles against Drake.

"Drake was just another level above us," Bray said. "(Drake) had more experienced players and we were a lot younger than them; I'm not ashamed in saying they're better tennis players than we are."

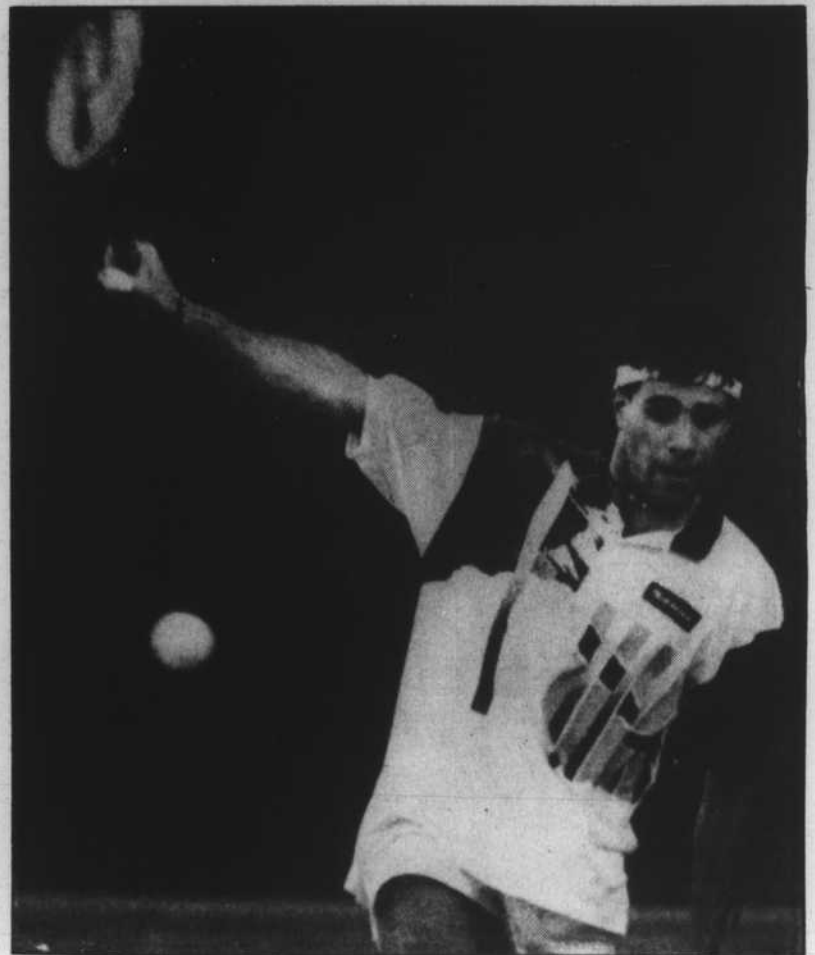
Nebraska Coach Kerry McDermott said the weekend had its positives and negatives.

"We played well against Southwest Missouri and beat them by more than I thought we would," McDermott said. "Drake was just a better team than us and it was a big disappointment to not get any points."

The Huskers must play more like they did against the Bearcats than they did against Drake if Nebraska is to be successful in Big Eight play, McDermott said.

"If we play against Kansas, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and Colorado like we did against Drake, we're going to get shelled," McDermott said.

The Huskers will try to improve on their 2-1 record this weekend when they travel to San Diego to compete against southern California schools.



Nebraska's Joseph Rahme concentrates on the ball as he returns it to Creighton's Tom Lilly in a match earlier this season. The Cornhusker men's tennis team beat Southwest Missouri State 7-2, but fell to Drake 9-0.

Staci McKee/DN



'Time keeps on slippin'

Shawn Collains, Sue Hesch and Meggan Yedsena await the final seconds during the semifinal game Sunday against Colorado in the women's Big Eight Tournament. Nebraska lost the game 74-66.

Staci McKee/DN

NU softball coach upbeat despite loss

By Jason Bruhn
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's softball team returned Monday from the Texas A&M Aggie Invitational with a 2-7 record, yet Coach Ron Wolforth remained positive.

"It's going to sound strange to be 2-7 and still be optimistic, but I'm very optimistic about our season," Wolforth said. "I was disappointed about the way we competed early in the tournament; everything that could go wrong did go wrong."

The Cornhuskers began the tournament with a 0-5 start, but rebounded to win two of their last three games.

"We were seriously in every single game right up to the end. With some breaks we could have come back 9-0," he said. "We're capable of beating some really good teams."

The Huskers' play was not consistent throughout the tournament, Wolforth said.

"Early in the tournament we hit well but pitched and played defense very poorly. But those are things that can be fixed," Wolforth said. "I thought that we were a little suspect on defense and that bore out to be true."

"It brought out some weaknesses," he said.

Wolforth said the Huskers had lacked intensity in practice at times, and he said he hoped their experience at the Aggie Invitational would change that.

"These kids have a kind of casual attitude sometimes," he said. "There's nothing like a 2-7 weekend to take the casual right out of you."

"If it takes a 2-7 to really bring it to the forefront, then this 2-7 may very well be the best thing that could have happened," he said. "My attitude has been, 'Don't tell me, show me.'"

The record would not hurt the team unless it became a habit, Wolforth said.

"Bob Devaney told me once that you can learn from wins and losses, so you might as well win," he said.

The Huskers have several big games coming up, including a series in Omaha against Creighton.

Changes not always so obvious in Big Eight

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

A phrase most of us have undoubtedly heard many times before, but really never associated it with anything but Nebraska football.

In fact most things in Nebraska seldom change.

It's cold in the winter, hot in the summer and it snows every March after a week of spring-like weather.

The only thing that has changed around here is that the above saying can now be applied to Big Eight basketball.

Recently, the Big Eight moved into national prominence as one of the tougher basketball conferences in



Nick Hytrek

the country. A big change for those of us who grew up in the Midwest and had to suffer through season after season of watching those quick teams

from the East run circles around the big, slow teams of the Big Eight.

That gradually began to change within the past three years and the conference began getting the national attention it deserves. That attention has continued through this year, but the only thing that has changed is the year at the top of the calendar.

Upon close observation, there are a lot of similarities between this year and last year. Here are some of the more glaring ones. Don't look for a lot of them to change by next year.

— Nebraska still doesn't get the

respect it deserves.

Last year, the Cornhuskers were picked to finish last in the Big Eight — a gross oversight on the part of those who make the preseason predictions. Nebraska responded with its best season in school history and its second-ever trip to the NCAA Tournament.

— Nebraska will play Oklahoma Friday in the first round of the Big Eight Tournament.

This will be the third year in a row

See HYTREK on 8

See SOFTBALL on 8