

Two men verbally commit to play for NU

By Susie Arth
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska men's basketball program is bringing its focus back to the future.

Gary Barga, assistant basketball coach at NU, said there were talented players available who could step in and contribute to the program.

Center Derrick Chandler was the only senior on this year's team.

Barga said the Cornhuskers were especially interested in recruiting big players.

Two athletes who have said they will sign with Nebraska on April 14 fit that description.

Both Clinton "Mikki" Moore of South Carolina and Herb Baker of Paris (Texas) Junior College have verbally committed to come to Ne-

braska.

The most recent commitment came from Moore, a center from Blacksburg High School.

Jim Touchberry, coach at Blacksburg High, said Moore would bring great skills to the Cornhusker team.

"He will be an asset to any program because I know he's going to improve," Touchberry said.

Moore has been playing basketball for only three years, Touchberry said.

Moore, a 6-foot-10, 200-pound center, will bring strong defensive play to Nebraska, Touchberry said. His leaping ability and agility make him an excellent shot blocker, he said.

"I'd say he's the biggest and the most dominant shot blocker I've seen," Touchberry said. "Defensively, he made a lot of things happen for us."

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—Cox
Paris (Texas) JC
assistant coach

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Touchberry said he thought Moore would need to hit the weights at Nebraska so he could use his height to his advantage and develop more offensive skills.

"He needs to get on a strength program," Touchberry said.

Moore averaged 14 points, 12.8

rebounds and five blocked shots a game for Blacksburg.

But Touchberry said he was certain Moore's offense would come around.

"He's still young. He's still developing, and one of the last things to develop as a player is offensive skills."

Moore chose Nebraska over San Diego and Virginia Tech.

Baker, who gave Nebraska his verbal commitment after attending the Feb. 27 Husker game against Iowa State, averaged 13 points and seven rebounds a game for Paris Junior College.

Jeremy Cox, an assistant basketball coach at Paris Junior College, said Baker was looking forward to attending Nebraska.

"Herb is very enthused about coming to the University of Nebraska,"

Cox said. "He wanted to play in the Big Eight."

Baker, a 6-8, 260-pound center, played at Baylor for one year before transferring to Paris JC.

He chose Nebraska over New Mexico State and Murray State.

Cox said Baker needs to learn how to use his strength better.

"He's very strong, he's got a big old body, and he's a real good athlete," Cox said. "He needs to learn to use his strength offensively and on the boards."

And Cox said he was certain Nebraska fans would take a liking to Baker.

"He's a good kid," he said. "Herb Baker always has a big smile on his face."

"He's got the biggest smile in the nation."

NU to start eight-game week with Creighton

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska softball team is hoping a rain-soaked surface won't prevent its two games with Creighton tonight in Omaha.

"They have Astroturf, so hopefully we will play, but if it was to be played here, there would be no chance of playing," Cornhusker coach Rhonda Revelle said.

Although bad feelings between Creighton and Nebraska have arisen in baseball, Revelle said the rivalry had been much tamer in softball.

"It has become a much more friendly rivalry than it was in the past," Revelle said. "I wouldn't say they are our biggest rival, just because they're not in our conference, but they are definitely right up there."

The 7-7 Cornhuskers placed fifth at the National Invitational Tournament last weekend in Sunnyvale, Calif. Nebraska's doubleheader with Creighton tonight begins an eight-game week for the Huskers.

"It is always a good battle when we play. It is a real fun rivalry to have with us both in the state," Revelle said. "We're both really struggling with injuries."

The injuries have hit the Huskers hard. Pitcher Deanna Hudson, infielder Karla Knicely and outfielder Lila Kephart are all out for the season with knee injuries.

Revelle, who is a former Nebraska player and in her first year as the Huskers' coach, said she wanted her team to improve on the mental aspects of the game.

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Travis Heying/DN

Nebraska's Doug Garland swims in the 200-yard freestyle in a meet earlier this season. The Cornhusker men ended their season with a No. 20 finish at the NCAA meet in Minneapolis.

NCAA showings please NU coach

By Tony West
Staff Reporter

Performances by Nebraska's swimmers and divers at the NCAA Championships in Minneapolis left Cornhusker coach Cal Bentz excited for the future.

The men's and women's squads both finished No. 20 in the championship meet, the first time in history both squads finished in the top 20 at the NCAA meet in the same

season.

"I was pleased that both teams finished in the top 20," Bentz said.

Although a disqualification in the 400-yard freestyle relay hampered the men's hopes for a higher finish in the meet, Bentz said he still was pleased with the outcome.

"We had hoped to be in the top 15 for the men," he said. "But we were pleased to be in the top 20."

Several Huskers earned personal bests to highlight the meet.

Sophomore Allan Kelsey topped the Husker performances with his seventh-place finish in the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 43.94 seconds. That mark moved Kelsey to second on Nebraska's all-time best chart.

Justin Finney and Kevin McMahon also established new career bests at NU in the 100-yard freestyle and the three-meter diving competition, respectively.

McMahon placed third in three-

meter diving and was Nebraska's highest individual finisher.

"The men performed well," Bentz said. "I was pleased with the performances."

Bentz said having both teams emerge with top-20 finishes provided a good building block for the future.

"We have talented athletes coming back," he said. "We have at least as good or better athletes coming back next year."

Byrne's frankness jeopardizes Creighton, NU programs

When Bill Byrne went public with the news that Nebraska's athletic department has asked the NCAA to investigate possible rules violations by Creighton's baseball program, he cost Nebraska any chance of winning three of this weekend's baseball games.

But he could have cost the athletic department much more than that.

Put simply, he risked the Nebraska athletic department's reputation.

Byrne clearly damaged Creighton's reputation by simply answering an Omaha World-Herald reporter's question Friday.

Byrne told the World-Herald that Nebraska had reported possible rules violations by Creighton's baseball program to the NCAA.

"We have sufficient reason to believe," he told the World-Herald, "that there were enough allegations concerning the Creighton University baseball program that we asked the NCAA

to make inquiry of that sometime after the first of the calendar year."

That statement alone is enough to damage Creighton's reputation. Byrne would have done best by just keeping the allegations private — between Nebraska, the NCAA and Creighton.

Simply because the allegations are public — whether they are true or not — they'll no doubt hurt Creighton's recruiting this year.

And maybe it deserves to be hurt.

If Creighton did blatantly violate NCAA rules and gain a substantial advantage over other programs, including Nebraska's, then Byrne had an obligation to report it to the NCAA.

He didn't have a right to report it to the world.

By making the statement that Nebraska has "sufficient reason to believe" that Creighton did commit these violations, he hung Creighton's program before it could be tried.



Todd
Cooper

Byrne would have been wise to have responded to the questions with a "no comment," then let the NCAA do its dirty work.

As Byrne told the World-Herald, "It's best that this be examined by the NCAA as an impartial third party."

Exactly, Mr. Byrne. And until the NCAA has a chance to make its findings public, the investigation should be between Creighton and the NCAA. Privately. That way, Creighton's reputation remains intact if the NCAA finds out that the allegations were false or frivolous.

As Kevin Sarver, Creighton's

sports information director, said Tuesday:

"It is unfortunate that this issue has become public. The NCAA enforcement process is designed to protect schools' reputations from unproven allegations."

Byrne set a dangerous precedent by letting the news slip to the media before the NCAA could investigate.

Now, based on Byrne's actions, any athletic director can mar another program if he has "sufficient reason to believe" another program has cheated.

So, Creighton basketball coach Rick Johnson, if you think Danny Nee has cheated, shout it out. Whether he has or not doesn't matter. It's the accusation that counts. And, no matter whether your accusations are true or not, they'll hurt his program.

Just like Byrne's words hurt Creighton.

Obviously, Byrne isn't going to

report rumors. He probably spent a long time talking to Nebraska baseball coaches John Sanders and Tim Seaton about the allegations before he made the decision to forward the report to the NCAA.

That alone is scary.

Instead of worrying about other programs, Byrne should spend his time making sure every one of Nebraska's programs is squeaky clean.

Because if they aren't, he has just risked making Nebraska look like a huge hypocrite. And, worse yet, he has opened the whole program up to damage, should anyone have "sufficient reason to believe" one of Nebraska's programs is crooked.

A simple "no comment" from Byrne when asked about the allegations would have precluded a lot of controversy this past weekend. It

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