

Nebraska one point shy of taking nationals

Loss to Stanford familiar to NU

By Susie Arth
Senior Reporter

It must have felt like déjà vu for the Nebraska men's gymnastics team Saturday.

For the second season in a row, the Cornhuskers lost to the Stanford Cardinal in the finals of the NCAA Championships in Albuquerque, N.M.

This year, the Huskers fell one point short, losing 276.5 - 275.5.

The Huskers posted a season-high 286.525 qualifying score Friday night, and Stanford barely squeaked into the finals with a 283.100.

Nebraska assistant coach Jim Howard said the nearly perfect performance Friday could have put additional pressure on the Huskers during Saturday's competition.

"Maybe they were trying to perform better than they did the night before," he said. "I think they just

were trying a little too hard." Nebraska could hold its momentum only through the first event, the floor exercise, where the Huskers scored a 46.10. Richard Grace led the Huskers with a 9.5.

But then the tide shifted. The Huskers scored only 45.50 on the second event, the pommel horse. Both Dennis Harrison and Sumner Darling fell off the horse and received scores of only 8.65.

Howard said the Huskers' performance on the pommel horse was the turning point of the meet.

"The pommel horse is usually a strong event for us," Howard said. "We could have put the pressure on them, instead we went into the third event down by 1.3 points."

And Stanford never gave up the lead.

After three rotations, the Cardinal found themselves leading 139.35 - 137.7.

But Howard said he hadn't counted the Huskers out yet.

"We had an opportunity to win the meet going into the last two rounds,"

See NCAA on 9

Cornhusker wins floor exercise

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

For Richard Grace, winning the national championship in the individual floor exercise was a bitter-sweet end to a nearly perfect season.

Grace, a junior, scored a 9.4 Saturday at the NCAA Gymnastics Championships in Albuquerque, N.M., and became the first Cornhusker to win a national title in the floor exercise since Wes Suter in 1985.

He said winning the event would have been more special if Nebraska hadn't finished second to Stanford in the team competition for the second straight year.

"I'm really happy to be a national champion, but that can never replace us not winning it as a team," Grace said. "The year turned out pretty good

for me with being an All-American and national champion, but to not win it as a team really does stink."

Grace said a change in momentum was the main reason for the Husker's slide down from Friday night to Saturday. Nebraska was the top qualifier in Friday night's preliminary competition.

"Our big turnaround was that we lost our momentum. We were not as enthusiastic as we were Friday," Grace said. "That day before, we were up and yelling and then (Saturday) Stanford was the one up and yelling."

"It seemed like we got really tired."

Teammate Che Bowers agreed, saying fatigue played a major role in Stanford's win.

"Friday night we were just great, but I think we did too much and didn't have enough left for Saturday," he said. "Also, the time span of the meet was much different and didn't give us as much time to rest."

Stanford won with a score of 276.5,

and Nebraska posted a 275.5. Ohio State came in third with 274.05.

"I didn't think they would be that tough. It was a big upset," Bowers said. "We were rated No. 1 pretty much the whole year."

Grace said the Huskers were aware of what Stanford was capable of doing; but once the momentum switched, it was too much for Nebraska to overcome.

"Going in, we knew we had a good chance, but we had a feeling Stanford would be tough," Grace said. "We started off just great, but then we lost our momentum, and that was it."

Nebraska was trying to repeat its Friday performance on Saturday, Bowers said. In Friday's competition, the Huskers posted a season-high score of 286.525, while Stanford had a 283.100.

"I think we did a pretty good job of saying and trying to do exactly what we did in prelims, but I guess it just wasn't there," Bowers said.

Huskers even up record with win

By Tony West
Staff Reporter

After losing 12 of 16 games in the middle of the season, the Nebraska baseball team has gotten back on track.

The Cornhuskers beat Missouri 7-4 Sunday to improve to 16-16 on the season, moving within a half game of the Tigers in the league standings.

Nebraska right fielder Marc Sagmoen said although the Huskers went through a rocky stretch, the season seemed to be smoothing out now.

"We are a lot more loose," he said. "I think we're on the right track again."

A large portion of the Husker's recent success has been due to offensive production from the outfield. The trio of Sagmoen, Jed Dalton and freshman Darin Erstad has been trying to live up to Coach John Sanders' pre-season proclamation that he had "the best outfield in the nation."

Sagmoen leads the trio with a .439 batting average. Dalton is at .342, and Erstad is at .320. In addition, the outfield has accounted for almost half of the team's runs, hits and RBIs this season.

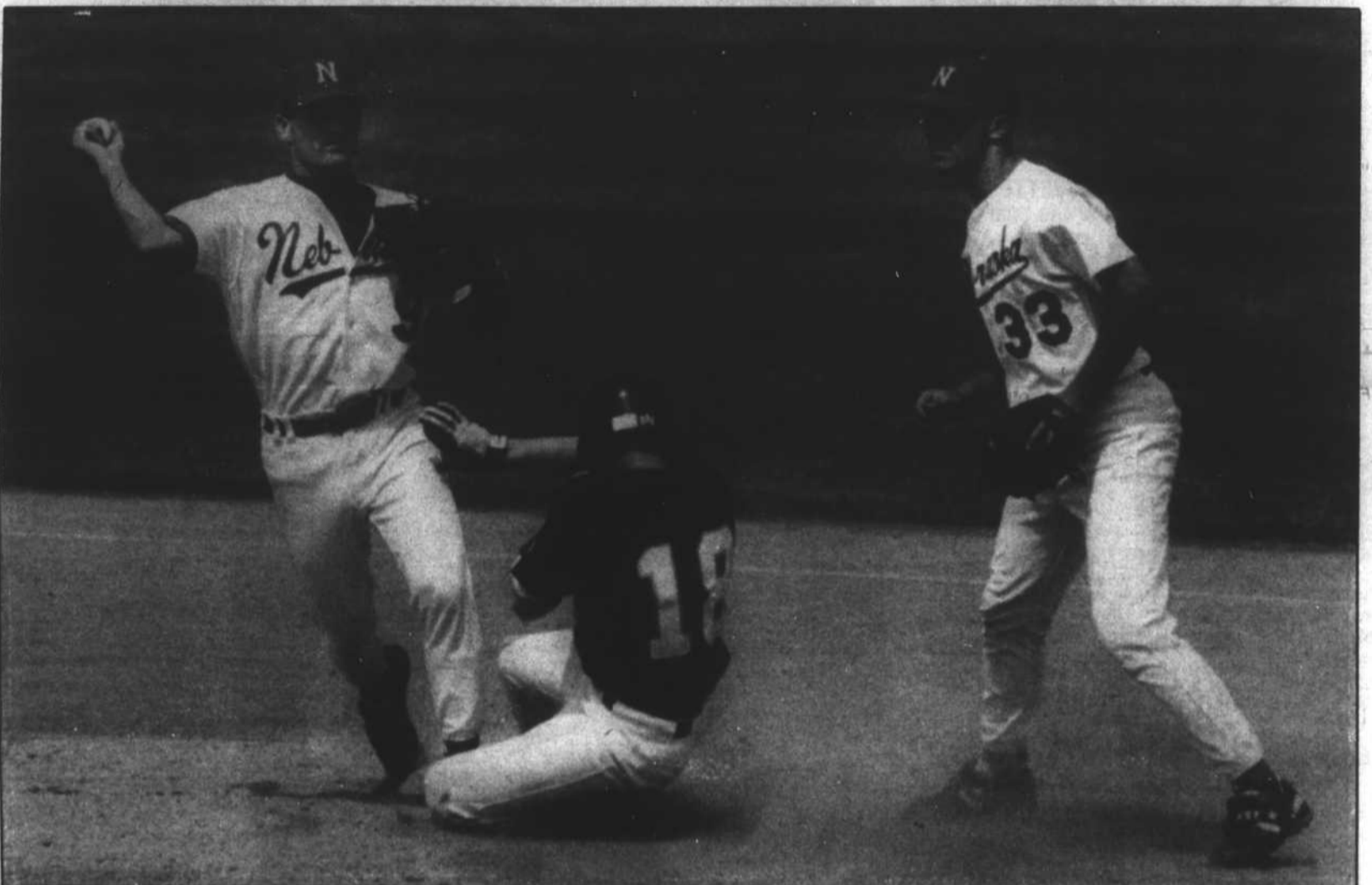
Erstad said the trio had tried to live up to expectations.

"It makes me feel good (to be called the best)," he said. "But we have to put numbers up to prove it. For the most part, we have."

On Sunday, Dalton collected three hits; Sagmoen, two; Erstad, one. Sagmoen's triple in the bottom of the seventh scored the go-ahead runs for the Huskers.

Dalton said if the team was to continue to improve and make a move in the Big Eight, keeping good team chemistry was important.

"We have a real close bond," Dalton said. "We have a really good chemistry going. We are good friends, and we pick each other up when we need it."



Nebraska's Robert Perry throws to first after forcing Missouri runner Chopper Littrell at second while teammate Darin Petersen looks on. The Huskers won the game 7-4. Kiley Timperley/DN

Husker hitting conquers Missouri

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

When Nebraska pitcher Troy Brohawn takes the mound, he usually gets the job done with his pitching.

But on Sunday, in front of a season-high crowd of 2,139 fans at Buck Beltzer Field, Brohawn's hitting, along with the rest of the Cornhusker offense, propelled the Huskers to a 7-4 win over Missouri.

The Cornhusker bats continued to shine in the three-game series against the Tigers. Nebraska pulled out a 9-3 win to win the first game, but they lost 7-6 in 11 innings on Saturday.

Brohawn, who went 2 for 5 on the day with two runs scored, hurled his fourth complete game and improved his record to 6-0.

"I was wild today. The team picked me up when I gave up three in the seventh," Brohawn said. "When I'm pitching I take that same mentality up to the plate."

The Huskers broke a 4-4 tie in the seventh inning by scoring three runs on five hits, including right fielder Marc Sagmoen's two-run triple down

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—McKay
NU first baseman

the right field line off Tiger reliever Mike Haverty.

Nebraska collected 15 hits, which pleased Coach John Sanders, but was only able to put seven runs on the scoreboard.

"We had 15 hits. This game was a real positive step," Sanders said. "I think we're coming on. Our pitching is starting to stabilize."

The Huskers jumped out to an early 1-0 lead in the first inning. Center fielder Jed Dalton doubled to the wall to knock in Brohawn, who had doubled to center.

In the second, after the Tigers scored a run in their half of the inning, junior Matt McKay homered over the scoreboard in left field to give the Huskers a 2-1 advantage.

McKay, who came into the game hitting .180, went 3-for-4 on the day with two RBI.

Sanders said that it was nice to see McKay starting to hit the ball well again.

"Matt McKay jumps out when I look at the statistics," Sanders said. "It's a good sign to see him hitting well."

McKay said he changed his stance before the game to try and improve his hitting.

"I have been slumping since the spring trip," McKay said. "I came out an hour earlier today and Coach Sanders pitched to me. This was definitely my best game."

After a shaky first two innings, Brohawn settled down on the mound,

allowing only one hit through the next four innings.

The Huskers entered the seventh with a 4-1 lead, but then trouble struck.

The Tigers scored three runs to tie the score and might have scored more had left fielder Darin Erstad not made a diving catch of the Tigers' John Hays' line drive with two men on base.

Sanders said he didn't think about pulling Brohawn in the seventh in his visit to the mound.

"Troy's pitch count was OK. The balls that were hit in the seventh weren't hit well," Sanders said. "He was making good pitches."

Brohawn, who struck out 11, said he was doing well until the seventh inning.

"I started off the game terrible, but then I got into a groove and got my momentum going," Brohawn said. "I told coach when he came out to the mound that I could finish the game. I just wanted to finish the game."

The Huskers rebounded with three runs of their own in their half of the seventh to take the lead for good.