

## Fish tip helping Husker heat up

By Tony West  
Staff Reporter

Nebraska shortstop Robert Perry put a little stink into Tuesday night's game against Kansas.

Although the Huskers lost 17-9 at Buck Beltzer Field, Perry produced nearly a third of the Huskers' 13 hits in the game with the help of a sardine odor.

Perry said he realized he wasn't hitting as well as he hoped entering the game, and resorted to superstition in an effort to recharge himself.

"I'm not hitting the ball well lately," he said. "So, I got a tip from Jody (Splichal) from the softball team. She said to put sardines in my back pocket and rub it for luck."

Perry entered Tuesday night's game batting .219 on the season and raised his average 31 points to .250 with a 4-for-4 performance at the plate.

Nonetheless, the Huskers fell to 6-8 in the Big Eight and 16-17 overall. Kansas, the Big Eight leader, improved to 30-8 overall and 11-4 overall. The two teams will complete the two-game series Wednesday.

Perry did his part, hitting two doubles, doubling his extra-base hit total for the season and scoring two runs.

Although the superstition paid off, Perry said it was not a big factor in his game.

"I don't use superstition consciously," he said. "But if I'm doing something different and we're winning, I'll stick with it."

The superstition was all part of the mental game involved with hitting, according to Perry.

"It was just for good luck," Perry said. "Hitting is mostly confidence."

With the gimmicks or without, Perry said he has gained a little more confidence at the plate. Now, he said he is hoping his hitting performance Tuesday night will result into a good hitting habit.

"You just have to keep getting good hacks, good hacks instead of bad hacks, bad hacks," Perry said. "Eventually, it will become habit."



Marc Sagmoen gets tagged out at second base by Kansas shortstop Dan Rude to end the sixth inning during the Cornhusker's 17-9 loss to Kansas Tuesday.

Robin Trimarchi/DN

## Jayhawks blast NU pitchers, keep hold on Big Eight lead

By Jeff Griesch  
Staff Reporter

Poor pitching spelled the beginning of the end for the Nebraska baseball team against Kansas on Tuesday night at Buck Beltzer Field.

The Jayhawks, 30-8 for the regular season, 11-4 in the Big Eight, beat the Huskers 17-9 as four Nebraska pitchers walked nine Kansas batters and hit five more. Nebraska dropped to 16-17 and 6-8.

Along with taking the free passes

from Husker pitchers, Kansas hitters also pounded Nebraska pitchers for 15 hits.

Catcher Jeff Niemeier led the Kansas attack with three hits and three RBIs, including a solo home run that drove a hole in the scoreboard in left field.

Tom Bergan took the loss for the Huskers, falling to 2-6 on the season. Bergan allowed nine runs on six hits in 3 2/3 innings.

Bergan cruised through the first inning, but could not find the strike

zone in the second inning, walking three straight Kansas batters on 12 pitches after giving up a leadoff single. All four runners scored to give Kansas a 4-2 lead.

"There is no defense for the walk or the hit batsmen," Nebraska coach John Sanders said. "Something like 50 percent of the people you walk in college baseball are going to score."

Nebraska had jumped out to a

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## Recruit backs out on Husker basketball

By Susie Arth  
Senior Reporter

A recruit has been snatched away from the Nebraska men's basketball team.

Herb Baker, who signed his letter of intent to play for the Cornhuskers next fall, changed his mind and is now headed to the University of Alabama-Birmingham, his junior college coach said Tuesday.

Scott Schumacher, Baker's coach at Paris Junior College in Texas, said he was shocked when he heard the news.

Schumacher said Baker had seemed excited about attending Nebraska and playing in the Big Eight Conference.

"I didn't even find out about it from Herb," he said. "I haven't seen him since he signed for UAB."

"I heard the news from his mother," Schumacher said the last time he saw Baker was last Wednesday, when he signed the forms to send off to Nebraska.

"I saw Herb sign the papers. I sat there and I pointed my finger and showed him the line he had to sign on," he said. "Then I took them to mail them off."

Schumacher said he sent the forms to Baker's parents in Houston, but that Baker apparently had changed his mind before his parents received them.

Schumacher said he had no idea what caused Baker to change his mind.

Baker, a 6-foot-8, 245-pound center who attended Baylor University for two years before transferring to Paris, averaged 13 points and 7 rebounds last season for Paris.

He visited Nebraska Feb. 27 and watched the Huskers' 91-87 victory over Iowa State. He gave his oral commitment to Nebraska last month.

With Baker's withdrawal, only Clinton "Mikki" Moore of Blacksburg High School in South Carolina has accepted a scholarship from Nebraska.

Nebraska assistant coach Gary Barga said late last week that he expected the Huskers to give four scholarships.

Nebraska coaches could not be reached Tuesday for comment.

## Defeat lingers with gymnasts; coach assures survival

On Monday, Cornhusker coach Francis Allen was strolling the streets of Santa Fe, N.M., trying to get away.

Far away. Far away from the disaster — Nebraska's NCAA final loss to Stanford on Saturday.

Far away from The Pit, the Albuquerque arena where Nebraska gave the national championship away.

Far away from anything remotely related to gymnastics.

Just when he felt he had left the pits in The Pit, an elderly lady approached him:

"Hey, I know you. You're the gymnastics coach at Nebraska. How'd you guys do?"

"I just wanted to say, 'Yeah, hi lady, just keep on moving,'" Allen said.

You can be sure Allen is trying to move on now.

Yet the disappointment will follow Allen and his Cornhuskers until next year.

Richard Grace said the loss almost followed him right into the individual

finals Saturday night.

"After we lost the team finals, I just wanted to go back to the hotel and beat the (crap) out of someone," said Grace, who won the national championship in the floor exercise.

"I just sat there in a daze. Then I decided I was going to win the floor exercise for the team."

Grace said it was little consolation for the team's disappointment.

One day after scoring a season-best 286.525 on Friday night, Nebraska scored just 275.5 points.

"To tell you the truth, I don't know what happened. I have no idea what it was," Allen said.

"Stanford fell all over themselves Friday. I didn't think they had a rat's ass chance of winning. Going into the finals, I thought we had it won. I thought it was going to be ho-hum."

Grace said the ho-hums might have hit the Huskers instead.

"We were really tired after Friday," he said. "We weren't as enthusiastic on Saturday as we were on



Todd Cooper

Friday.

"Stanford was always up. And we weren't."

Why not?

"There's an outside chance we were too cocky," Allen said. "But how in the hell would you not be confident after dominating the way we did all season?"

Indeed, the Huskers dominated. They went undefeated and untouched throughout the season. They slipped from the No. 1 ranking in the nation just once.

And they throttled Stanford twice during this season.

"The Stanford coach says they train

for one meet all year," Allen said. "He said that Nebraska worries too much about scoring consistently all season long. That's bull—"

"Our system works. I have seven (national) trophies and he has two."

Yet Nebraska's heralded Fab Four recruiting class of 1990 — Che Bowers, Dennis Harrison, Sumner Darling and Burkett Powell — have none.

And so the comparisons continue. Just like Michigan in basketball, despite all of their success, the Fab Four hasn't won a national championship.

"I said that class would have to produce," Allen said. "And I was disappointed we got second. But they produced. It would be unrealistic to think they're going to win every meet."

"And that's only four guys. That's only half the team. It is the nucleus of the team, but they're not underachievers. A team that went undefeated all year long — there's no way they could be underachievers."

Nevertheless, Grace said the

Cornhuskers feel like they have something huge left to prove.

"Losing just gives us that much more of a drive to beat the crap out of teams next year," he said. "We have a personal debt we have to pay back."

Allen said that will be paid in full next year.

"I'll win next year," Allen said. "I can't wait for it to get here."

But until it comes, the loss — and the disappointment — will linger.

"We'll remember the last two years for the rest of our lives," Grace said. "It felt worse this year than last year. This just hurts more."

How long will Allen hurt?

"I quit thinking about it yesterday," he said. "It's a sport. I'm a coach. I'm not going to die."

"These guys competed. Sure, they're disappointed. But they're 21 years old. They're not going to die."

"We'll just win it next year."

Cooper is a junior news-editorial major, the Daily Nebraskan wire editor and a sports columnist.