

# Texas knocks out NU in closing seconds

By Jeff Griesch  
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska and Texas basketball teams exchanged baskets Sunday night like heavy-weight boxers' trade blows, but it was the Longhorns who delivered the knockout punch with a 78-75 win in front of 12,378 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The loss, which ended Nebraska's 30-game homecourt winning streak against non-conference opponents, dropped the Cornhuskers to 1-1, while Texas improved to 1-1.

Texas guard Terrance Rencher, who had 35 points, did most of the damage for the Longhorns.

Rencher also dealt Nebraska's biggest blows in the closing seconds by hitting two free throws with 16.3 seconds remaining to give the Longhorns a 76-75 lead.

Then, with 3.6 seconds remaining, Rencher delivered the final shot with a break-away dunk off a pass from Roderick Anderson.

"Tonight was his night," Nebraska guard Erick Strickland said. "It seemed like everything he threw up went in."

Rencher, a junior from the Bronx, N.Y., was 13-for-22 from the floor, including 3-of-5 from three-point range, and hit 6-of-9 free throws.

Eric Piatkowski answered Rencher point-for-point, scoring a career-high 35 points and adding 10 rebounds, but was unable to come up with one final answer.

Piatkowski's 22-footer from the left wing, which would have sent the game into overtime, hit the back of the iron as time expired.

"The thing that hurts is that we played so well," Piatkowski said. "I guess this is why you play college basketball is to get a game like this."

Along with Rencher's hot hand for the Longhorns, turnovers hurt the Cornhuskers in the final seconds.

Nebraska turned the ball over twice in the last 20 seconds after taking a 75-74 on two free throws by forward Melvin Brooks with 1:02 left in the game.

With 20 seconds left, Jamar Johnson inbounded the ball in the corner to Jaron Boone, who was trapped and tried to get the ball back to Johnson.

Rencher stole the pass and was fouled by Johnson, who fouled out on the play. Johnson finished with four points.

After Rencher hit both free throws, Strickland broke through the Longhorn pressure and drove to the lane.

Strickland tried to pass to Brooks, who was filling the right lane, but the pass was stolen by Roderick Anderson. "It was a great basketball game," said Nebraska coach Danny Nee. "The last 25 seconds we just didn't do the things we needed to do to win. We didn't execute properly."

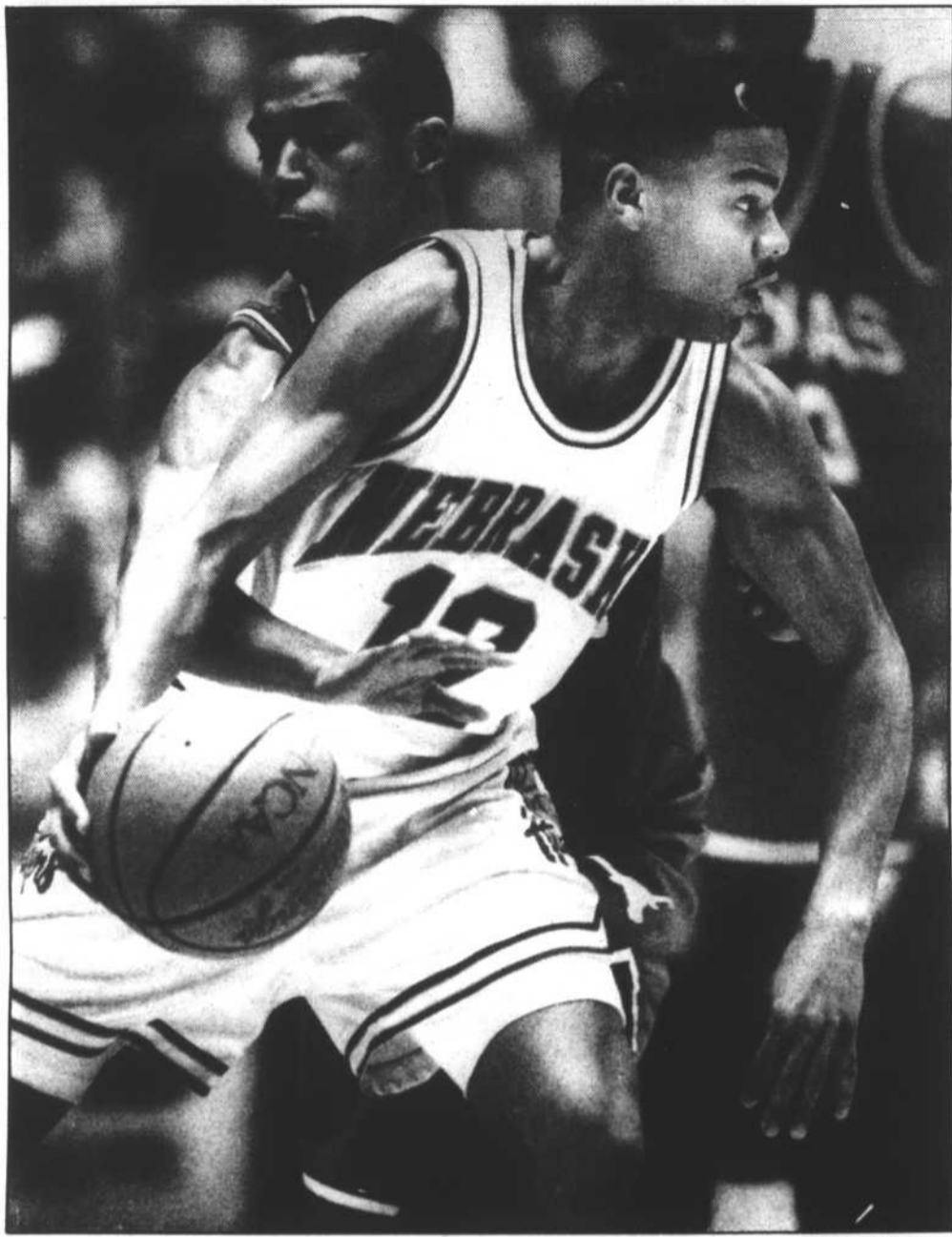
Piatkowski said the Huskers let the game slip away.

"We had the game won and then we basically gave it away," Piatkowski said. "It was a great game and we'll have to get used to it because I think we're going to have a lot of games like that this season."

Texas.....	36	42	78
at Nebraska....	35	40	75

Texas — Rencher 13-22 6-9 35, Anderson 5-10 3-6 15, Burditt 4-5 2-4 10, Watson 3-9 0-0 9, Quarles 1-1 1-2 3, Houston 1-2 0-0 2, Hill 1-4 0-0 2, McIver 1-1 0-0 2, Penders 0-1 0-1 0, Wingfield 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 29-57 12-22 78.

Nebraska — Piatkowski 11-19 8-11 35, Badgett 5-7 1-1 11, Chubick 2-4 5-7 9, Boone 3-9 0-0 6, Brooks 2-4 2-6, Best 1-7 2-2 4, Johnson 2-5 0-0 4, Strickland 0-4 0-1 0, Glock 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 26-59 18-24 75.



William Lauer/Dt'

Nebraska guard Jamar Johnson evades a steal attempt against Texas Sunday night at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

# Huskers eye NCAA tournament after loss to CU

## Bufs get revenge with 2nd-straight tournament title

By Tim Pearson  
Senior Reporter

OMAHA — Nebraska's Nikki Stricker and Colorado's Nicole Vranesh met at the net before the fifth game of their match Saturday night at the Big Eight Volleyball tournament, knowing that the game would decide the Big Eight title.

The two All-Big Eight setters had gone against each other 12 previous times, with the Cornhuskers winning 10 of the 12.

But it was Vranesh who emerged in smiles and Stricker who fought off tears after the Buffaloes defeated the Huskers 7-15, 15-10, 9-15, 15-13, 15-11 to win their second-straight Big Eight tournament title.

Stricker, who was named the Big Eight's Player of the Year last Tuesday, said the loss was tough to take. After a close fourth game, Colorado dominated the fifth game.

"I take a lot of the credit for some of the decisions that were made," Stricker said. "When I broke down, they all went with me. There were times when I made some decisions and I can't figure out why I made them."

"That's frustrating for me. Here's my chance to go after them and I make some poor decisions."

For Vranesh, who was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player, and her coach, Brad Saindon, the tournament was a chance for vindication and respect for the Colorado program.



Staci McKee/DN

Nebraska's Allison Weston follows through on a successful spike against Colorado's Leah Williams, left, and Nicole Vranesh during the Buffaloes' Big Eight tournament win Saturday night in Omaha.

Vranesh said winning the tournament and being named MVP was like two wins for her over Stricker.

"It's kind of natural to compete with somebody in your position on the other team," she said.

Vranesh said not being named Player of the Year "felt like a loss for me to Nikki Stricker."

"It's great to be named MVP," she said. "Either way I thought it would go to the setter

who won."

Saindon said he believed his setter was the best in the conference.

"I was extremely disappointed when Nicole didn't get named Player of the Year," Saindon said.

"I got the feeling that people didn't really believe we deserved to win the championship. My setter didn't even get to be Player of the Year. That's how much respect we've gotten."

## Nebraska to face Cornell in opener of NCAA tourney

By Tim Pearson  
Senior Reporter

After a two-year absence, Nebraska's volleyball team has its sights set on getting back to the Final Four.

The NCAA announced Sunday night that the Cornhuskers will play host to Cornell, the Ivy League champions with a 17-9 record, in the first round of the NCAA Volleyball Tournament. The match will be at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the NU Coliseum.

If the Huskers defeat Cornell, they'll face Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., in the second round. The Fighting Irish defeated the Huskers, Sept. 25, in the finals of the Golden Dome Classic.

With a win over the Irish, Nebraska would come back to Lincoln for the Midwest Regional Dec. 9-12. The winner of the regional advances to the Final Four, which will take place in Madison, Wis., Dec. 16 and 18.

Nebraska coach Terry Pettit said he was pleased with his team's placement in the tournament.

"I feel pretty good about it," he said. "We have the opportunity, if we play great volleyball, to return to the Final Four again."

**NOTE:**  
●Tickets for the first-round match will be on sale Monday through Wednesday at the South Stadium Ticket Office. Tickets will be \$3 for students. Reserved seating costs \$7 and general admission tickets cost \$5.

# Husker women's defense wins Cablevision Classic

By Derek Samson  
Staff Reporter

If strong defense wins championships, then Nebraska women's basketball coach Angela Beck has her team off to a good start.

Nebraska won the Cablevision Classic championship Saturday using another solid defensive effort to get past Pepperdine, 68-50.

Beck said holding the Waves to 50 points was pivotal in the Huskers' win.

"Our defense won this championship for us," Beck said. "Our goal this season is to keep people under 55 points. This was a good team

and we kept them to 50. I really feel pleased to come out with this kind of victory."

Pepperdine kept the game close throughout the first half and eventually tied the score at 24 after Lisa Siders scored with 3:11 left in the half.

Nebraska answered by scoring the final six points to take a 30-24 advantage at intermission.

"The last three or four minutes of the first half we played real hard defensively and we started to wear them down," Beck said. "I wanted to jump on them in the first five minutes of the second half to try to get a more comfort-

able lead."

Nebraska did just that, as the team went on runs of 9-4 and 11-2 in the first 10 minutes of the second half to take a 52-37 lead.

Most of Nebraska's points during the second half scoring spurt came from Nafeesah Brown, who finished with a game-high 27 points and 12 rebounds.

"She really worked hard," Beck said. "She had a hamstring problem and she just toughed it out. It showed the team that we can depend on her."

Brown, who was selected the tournament's Most Valuable Player, scored 15 of Nebraska's

first 25 points in the second half. She set a tournament record with 53 points in the two games. Lis Brenden, who added 11 points Saturday, was also honored as an all-tournament selection.

Brown's game-high 26 points led Nebraska to a 68-51 victory over Princeton Friday night.

After scoring just 68 points in each game, Beck said the Huskers were a little bit concerned with their offensive output.

"Offensively we are a little further behind than defensively," Beck said. "I think it is a little frustrating for them right now when the defense is flowing but the offense isn't."