

Huskers hope to steal victory in Manhattan

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

For Nebraska players, now is not the time for any more moral victories. Despite a great effort, the Cornhuskers dropped a 94-87 game at Kansas Sunday, and their record fell to 2-4 in the conference and 12-6 overall.

Guard Jamar Johnson said Nebraska needed much more than just effort tonight at Kansas State — it needed a win.

"I would say it's a must-win for us," Johnson said. "We have to come out and play hard and try to steal one down in Manhattan.

"It's a must-win just to turn things around. Just to keep everything positive and upbeat. Just keeping us on track."

On paper, the teams look similar. Kansas State is in fifth place in the Big Eight, right ahead of the Huskers.

The 14-6 Wildcats are 3-5 in the conference and have lost three of their last four games. Nebraska is on a four-

game losing streak.

However, Nee said that was where the similarities stopped.

Kansas State does not share Nebraska's fast-break offense, but Nee said he was not concerned with the Wildcats' deliberate style.

"I understand how they play, but there is no way of stopping them from that," Nee said. "With the 35-second shot clock, that's a short amount of time. It's pretty hard to control the tempo of a game."

What Nebraska hopes to control is the play of Kansas State guard Anthony Beane.

"Beane's quickness and Beane's penetration is of a very high level," Nee said. "He's very smart. He controls the offense with the ball 90 percent of the time. He delivers the ball where he has to deliver it and does a great job of that."

The duty of shutting down Beane will belong to Johnson.

"Every night I play in the Big Eight, it's a challenge," Johnson said. "I'm not looking at it as Beane being the top

guard or whatever. I know I have a job to do, and my hands are going to be full dealing with him. I just have to be ready to play."

Nee said the Huskers did not have to worry about Kansas State's height and depth like they did against Kansas.

"The one thing they're not going to do is they're not going to wear you down with the numbers and size," he said. "They don't have an (Kansas center Greg) Ostertag that will beat on you for 14 rebounds.

"They're not going to have a wave of nine, 10, 11 and 12 players coming at you. So that is just a whole different sequence."

Although the Wildcats are last in the Big Eight in scoring offense, they have the top scoring defense, giving up only 65 points a game.

"They play a very physical, hand-checking defense," Nee said. "They do a great job of ball control. They take away the fast break. These are the things they are very effective at. When you do those things, it can really hurt."

Probable Starters

Nebraska vs. Kansas State

Tonight, 7:05 P.M. Bramlage Coliseum, Manhattan, Kansas

Nebraska (12-6/2-4)

Pos.	Player	Ht.	Wt.	ppg
F	Bruce Chubick	6-7	232	11.2
F	Terrance Badgett	6-6	205	8.7
G	Eric Piatkowski	6-7	215	19.9
G	Jaron Boone	6-1	191	10.8
G	Jamar Johnson	5-11	180	10.2

Kansas State (14-6/3-5)

Pos.	Player	Ht.	Wt.	ppg
F	Belvis Noland	6-4	210	7.1
F	Ron Lucas	6-7	215	5.2
C	Deryl Cunningham	6-7	210	7.1
G	Askia Jones	6-5	200	22.5
G	Anthony Beane	5-10	170	9.8

DN graphic

Painful rehab paying dividends for Huskers' Galligan

By Jeff Griesch
Senior Editor

As Kate Galligan walked onto the Bob Devaney Sports Center floor Friday night, the two pinkish-red scars on her right leg crinkled with every step.

Just a little more than a year earlier, Galligan had crumbled to the same floor with a serious knee injury, ending a promising freshman season.

After starting in 14 of Nebraska's first 17 basketball games last year, the tears of her anterior cruciate and medial collateral ligaments in her right knee also threatened to end her career.

But after an off-season of enduring the pain of rehabilitation and having doubts about the strength of her knee, Galligan made it back on the court for the start of this season.

And on Friday, she stepped on the court for the first time without her knee brace.

Galligan, a 5-foot-8-inch guard, had worn the brace to protect the leg she injured Jan. 24, 1993, in a game against Missouri.

Despite her hard work in the off-season to regain the strength in her right leg, Galligan said she was far from a complete recovery when the season began.

"At the beginning of the year I felt a lot slower, and I was playing more tentatively because I was afraid of re-injuring it," Galligan said. "But after a while I got a little more confident and started playing more aggressively."

Galligan said the progress of her recovery had seemed slow and steady but had been faster than she originally expected.

"It has been so much better than I expected coming in," Galligan said. "My first step is getting quicker, and I am feeling a little faster than I did at the start of the season."

Galligan also said she was prepared for more pain.

"The pain is so much less than I expected," Galligan said. "It still gets stiff and sore after practice and games, but that goes away

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I feel faster, but more than anything, I feel like it is more of a confidence booster just because there isn't anything inhibiting me from making the moves I want to make. I still don't know if I am really 100 percent, but my game is coming.

— Galligan

NU women's basketball guard

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after a little rest."

And with her increased quickness and aggressiveness, Galligan's game is coming back.

Last year, Galligan averaged 6.6 points, 2.2 rebounds and 2.1 assists per game, and she has already surpassed those marks this season.

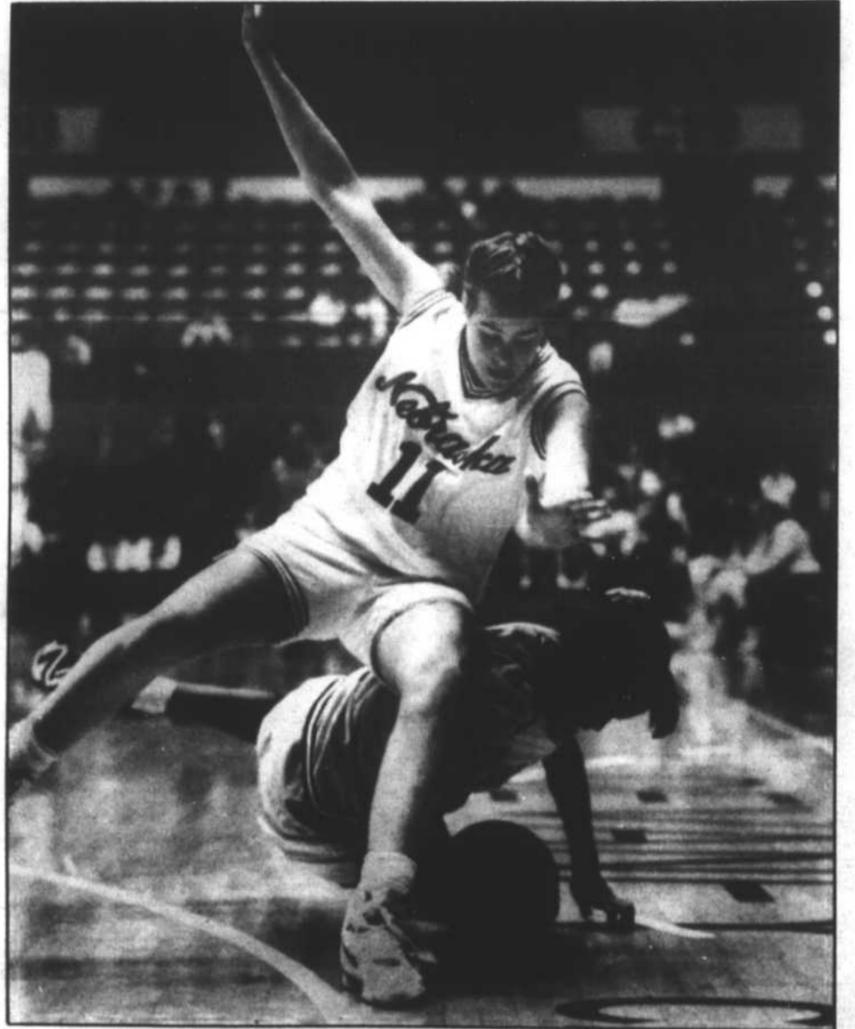
Through Nebraska's first 23 games, Galligan is averaging 9.7 points, 3.0 rebounds and 2.8 assists per game.

Despite her improved statistics and her increased quickness, Galligan said she thought her knee brace was still slowing her down.

So last Wednesday, Galligan decided to take another big step toward complete recovery by taking off the brace.

She said practicing and playing without the restrictiveness of the brace increased more than just her speed.

"I feel faster, but more than anything, I feel like it is more of a confidence booster just because there isn't anything inhibiting me from making the moves I want to make," Galligan said. "I still don't know if I am really 100 percent, but my game is coming."



DN File Photo

Sophomore Kate Galligan has recovered from a 1993 knee injury to play in every game for the Huskers this season.

Piatkowski's teammates need to feed off his high energy

It was two hours before the scheduled 3:30 p.m. practice, and the sound of a single basketball bouncing belatedly from the floor of the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Not surprisingly, it was Eric Piatkowski shooting by himself, shaking his head in disgust after missing a shot.

Above him hung four banners with the words "NCAA Tournament." Three of those were from teams to which Piatkowski contributed greatly, and now he is giving his best effort to top his college career off with a fourth.

So much emphasis has been put on Nebraska reaching the NCAA tournament the past three seasons, but not much attention has been given to the vital reason Nebraska has made those

brief appearances in March Madness.

As a redshirt freshman in the 1990-91 season, Piatkowski was a member of the Big Eight's all-freshman team, captain of UPI's all-bench team and an honorable mention All-Big Eight selection by UPI. He averaged 10.9 points and 3.7 rebounds.

If anything, he gave Nebraska fans a preview of the future of the "Polish Rifle."

The 6-foot-7-inch forward from Rapid City, S.D., went on to average 14.3 points as a sophomore and 16.7 last season.

He hasn't lost a beat this season, averaging 19.9 points and 6.3 rebounds.

But this season may be much different for Piatkowski if the Huskers don't finish strong and earn a fourth



Derek Samson

consecutive NCAA tournament appearance.

While the rest of the Huskers' players and coaches concern themselves with excuses and bickering during the current four-game losing streak, Piatkowski keeps firing away.

In Sunday's near-upset of Kansas, Piatkowski scored 26 points and grabbed nine rebounds. In the previous loss to Oklahoma, he scored 24 points and pulled down 11 rebounds. In fact, the only game in which

Piatkowski failed to score in double figures was Nebraska's most lopsided defeat, an 89-73 loss to Missouri.

Jamar Johnson, one of three seniors — Piatkowski and Bruce Chubick are the others — nailed it on the head when he said Nebraska needed less talkers and more doers on the court.

"I think the thing that Pike does with his leadership is that he leads by example," Johnson said. "When Pike comes out and he's moving the ball and he's pushing it up or rebounding, everybody kind of feeds off him."

It's just too bad more Huskers aren't hungry enough to feed off Piatkowski a little more, especially in the losses.

In Nebraska's first loss of the season, a 78-75 defeat to Texas, Piatkowski scored 35 points.

Piatkowski shouldn't have to score almost half of Nebraska's points for the Huskers to win.

As Nebraska heads down the final stretch of the season, Piatkowski will finish up one of the best careers in Nebraska's history. A fourth banner would top it all off.

For Nebraska fans, watching Piatkowski end his career could mean the end of the NCAA Tournament banners for awhile.

Without Piatkowski, Nebraska may be hanging more of those meaningless National Invitation Tournament banners to make the Devaney Center look decorated.

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