

St. Patrick's Day massacre ends NU's run

By Rachel Cytron
Special to the Daily Nebraskan

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — An unpredictable season ended in the usual fashion for the Nebraska men's basketball team Thursday night as the sixth-seeded Cornhuskers fell to the No. 11 seed Pennsylvania Quakers 90-80 in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

It was a typical ending for the Huskers, who lost a first-round game for the fourth-straight year.

But it certainly wasn't a normal outing.

Nebraska, which finished the season 20-10, never led and shot an uncharacteristic 15 percent — 3 for 20 — from 3-point land.

Senior forward Eric Piatkowski had 23 points, but shot just 10 of 28 from the field, including 0-for-6 from 3-point land.

"When it comes right down to it, we just couldn't knock down our outside shots," Piatkowski said. "They just did a phenomenal job. They hit a lot of threes. They found the open man and hit him. It took us until probably a couple of minutes left in the game before we could knock one down."

Nebraska didn't hit its first 3-pointer until the 14:46 mark of the second half, when guard Jamar Johnson nailed one from the wing.

Penn, on the other hand, was red hot from behind the arc, hitting 11 of 27 shots.

The Quakers opened the game with a 15-4 run. Nebraska was able to close within one at 21-20 with nine minutes to go in the first half.

But then the Quakers went on a 15-4 run and took a 46-34 lead into halftime.

That was exactly the kind of situation Nebraska hoped to avoid, Husker coach Danny Nee said.

"Our team plays on the edge," he said. "I was concerned that if we got behind six, eight, 10 points, with how they would react. Unfortunately we reacted the wrong way."

"We got impulsive. We took quick shots. They should have been more patient and set up shots. Instead, the kids got more impatient."

The Huskers' impatience grew as Penn's defensive pressure increased.

Nee said Penn coach Fran Dunphy did a good job of switching defenses to disrupt the flow of Nebraska's offense.

"They stopped us," Nee said. "We missed shots and didn't get the ball movement we wanted."

Meanwhile, Penn, 25-2, relied on



William Lauer/DN

Nebraska's Jamar Johnson and Erick Strickland trap Oklahoma's John Ontjes during the Big Eight men's basketball tournament. Johnson went 3-for-10 and Strickland went 3-for-9 from the field during the Cornhuskers' 90-80 loss to Penn Thursday night.

sharp ball movement from its guards. Junior guards Jerome Allen, who had 18 points, and Matt Maloney each dished out 10 assists.

Forward Barry Pierce had a game-high 25 points and center Eric Moore added 15 points for the Quakers.

"Their inside scoring surprised us," Nee said. "Eric Moore was a surprise. He played very well and once they got their confidence and the crowd got into it, they played even better."

Piatkowski said he was surprised that the Huskers didn't play well.

"It hurts an awful lot because we're seniors and we wanted to win a game in the NCAA tournament," he said.

"The way I look at it now is that I had a great career at Nebraska. I think Bruce (Chubick) and I can both say

that we helped elevate the program quite a bit.

"Hopefully the guys in years to come can come in and get some work done in (the NCAA tournament). But it's over now and there's no use crying about it. We've got to move on with life."

Nebraska	34	46	80
Pennsylvania	46	44	90

Pennsylvania — Pierce 11-15 3-3 25, Trice 0-0 0-0 0, Moore 7-10 0-3 15, Maloney 3-11 3-5 12, Allen 6-16 3-8 18, Moxley 1-1 0-0 2, Baratta 0-1 0-0 0, Kegler 3-7 0-0 9, Krug 4-7 0-0 9. Totals 35-68 9-19 90.

Nebraska — Badgett 4-9 2-6 10, Piatkowski 10-22 3-4 23, Chubick 5-8 2-3 12, Johnson 3-10 4-4 11, Boone 3-5 2-4 8, Strickland 3-9 0-0 7, Best 1-4 2-2 4, Brooks 2-2 0-0 5. Totals 31-69 15-23 80.

Assistant looking at UNO

From Staff Reports

One of Nebraska's assistant basketball coaches may be considering leaving the program, the Daily Nebraskan learned Thursday.

Jeff Smith, an assistant under Danny Nee for the past six years, has apparently expressed an interest in the coaching job at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, sources close to the situation said.

Bob Gibson, UNO's athletic director, wouldn't confirm or deny the report.

"We can't verify that one way or

another," Gibson said. "We've gotten a lot of resumes, but we haven't looked at anything."

Bob Hanson resigned under pressure earlier this week after 25 years at UNO.

Gibson said it may be a while before the university names a replacement for Hanson.

"We don't even have our selection committee formed yet," he said.

Smith was in Long Island, N.Y., for Nebraska's first-round matchup with Penn Thursday and could not be reached for comment.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Nebraska wrestlers have tough first day

From Staff Reports

Nebraska's wrestling team had a tough first day at the NCAA Wrestling Championships in Chapel Hill, N.C., Thursday.

Only one Husker, 118-pound Scott Gonyo, remains in the championship bracket. The Huskers placed 16th after the first day.

Steve Baer, at 126 pounds, Temoer Terry, at 150 pounds, and heavyweight Tolly Thompson are still alive in the consolation round.

At 134 pounds, third-seeded Frank Velazquez dropped an opening round match, 6-3. At 142 pounds, sixth-seeded Justin Ware was upset by a score of 14-11.

Tennis teams travel to play tournaments

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska men's tennis team, 3-5, will travel to Houston to compete in the Rice Invitational this weekend.

The Huskers will face South Alabama, Rice and Columbia.

The women's tennis team, meanwhile, will travel to Fullerton, Calif., to compete in the Third Annual Titan Tennis Classic this weekend.

The Husker women, 3-2, open the tournament against St. Mary's at 8 a.m. on Friday.

Iowa to be 'tuneup' for Husker gymnasts

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

One week after suffering a loss at the hands of No. 1 Ohio State, the Nebraska men's gymnastics team hits the road to take on No. 6 Iowa.

The Cornhuskers and the Hawkeyes will square off in Iowa City, Iowa, at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Last week, the Huskers were headed toward a great score before falling off in the final two events. Nebraska led the Buckeyes

190.55-189.05 after four events. Ohio State



Allen

came back to outscore the Huskers by 1.8 points in the final two events and win the meet 284.85 to 284.55.

"We had that score by hitting on 73 percent," Nebraska coach Francis Allen said. "That shows the potential of this team. We should have been up around 286, and if we hit 80 to 85 percent, we were looking at a record."

The Nebraska school record is 288.95 points — set at the 1992 national championships, where the Huskers finished second to Stanford.

Allen said the No. 2 Huskers had the potential to be one of the top Nebraska teams in recent history.

"This team has great potential," Allen said. "We just haven't gotten it out of them yet."

Allen said Iowa posed a threat to 13-3 Ne-

braska.

"Iowa is a good team," he said. "It'll be a good meet. We need a good meet, and Iowa probably does, too. I really don't look for them to beat us, but they could if we don't do any better than we did when we were on the road at Oklahoma."

Nebraska lost to the Sooners in Norman, Okla., on Feb. 19.

"I look at this meet as a tuneup for the Big Eights," Allen said. "Iowa is good, but they're not as good as Ohio State, and we should have beaten Ohio State."

Allen still thinks the Huskers have what it takes to beat the Buckeyes at the NCAA gymnastics championships April 22-23 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, he said.

NU coach: Women's gymnastics team confident

From Staff Reports

The confidence level of the Nebraska women's gymnastics team is back, Coach Dan Kendig said.

"You can see it in practice — in the way they are working," he said. "They have something extra in what they are doing."

After two straight disappointing finishes on the road, the 10-5 Huskers bounced back to beat Ohio State 192.325 to 186.75 last Sunday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The Huskers' score was their second highest of the season and the

seventh highest in school history.

Saturday, Nebraska returns to the road to take on Iowa State and Oklahoma in Ames, Iowa. The Huskers have competed against both schools already this season.

Nebraska beat Oklahoma in Norman, Okla., on Feb. 6 by a score of 192.05 to 189.90, and the Huskers scored a season-high 193.30 points in a six-point win over Iowa State on Feb. 11 in Lincoln.

"The bottom line is that you have to hit your routines," Kendig said. "We hit last week and we won. We had a good score, and we are going to need another good score this week. Iowa

State has been scoring good at home lately."

Kendig said he thought the Huskers had shaken their midseason slump and would gather steam heading into the Big Eight championships in Lincoln March 25-26.

"Their confidence level is just as high, if not higher, than it was earlier in the year," he said.

Nebraska started off the year 7-0 before falling to 9-5.

"They feel good going into this meet," Kendig said. "There's no unknown. We should have the same type of confidence that we have had at home, but there's no way to know until you get out on the mat."