

Dukart's slam may turn NU around

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

Heading into Saturday's game against eighth-ranked Oklahoma State, the Nebraska baseball team had lost six straight games.

And going into the seventh inning of Saturday's game against the Cowboys, the Huskers trailed 7-0 and looked like they were headed for seven losses in a row.

Then upstepped third baseman **Dukart** Derek Dukart.

The 6-foot-4-inch, 205-pound senior from Milwaukie, Ore., launched a grand slam over the right center field fence to ignite the Huskers. Alvie Shepherd followed Dukart's homer with a solo shot, and the rest was history.

Nebraska won Saturday's game 8-7 and thumped the Cowboys 10-3 on Sunday to climb out of the cellar in the Big Eight and improve its record to 14-15 overall and 2-6 in conference play.

"That big inning was the kind of thing that we really needed," Nebraska coach John Sanders said. "It really helped, and it builds confidence."

The Huskers needed the offensive confidence. During their six straight losses, the Cornhuskers had amassed a total of 17 runs, while giving up 44. Dukart again homered Wednesday

night to help Nebraska win the second game of a doubleheader at Iowa State.

Dukart, who leads Nebraska with a .383 average, has hit five home runs this season. His four RBI on Saturday were the biggest, he said.

"We were kind of struggling," Dukart said. "Nothing was really happening for our team, and it was kind of an emotional lift."

As a senior on a young team, Dukart said, providing a key hit is part of his job.

"I feel like I need to step up in big situations," he said. "Whether it is getting an RBI when we need it or leading off the inning by getting on base, that's what the team leaders need to do."

At this point in the season, somebody needed to spark the Huskers, Dukart said. And with All-American Troy Brohawn on the bench with a broken foot, he said, the Huskers weren't feeling like winners.

But now Brohawn is back, and Nebraska may have finally turned the corner after a 12-15 start.

"Having Troy out of the lineup really hurt," Dukart said, "and when he gets back on the mound, it will help out quite a bit."

"I think it's a psychological edge for us that we came back strong last year. Now, with two straight wins over a good team, we can get on a roll."

The Huskers won 23 of their final 31 games last season but were shut out of regionals. This year, Dukart said, they want to play in the postseason.

"Our goal is to win games," he

Huskers split with Cyclones

From Staff Reports

Nebraska exploded for eight runs in the nightcap to salvage a doubleheader split at Iowa State Wednesday.

After managing just three hits in a 1-0 loss in the opener, the Huskers came back to win the second game 8-7.

In the nightcap, Alvie Shepherd, Derek Dukart and John Strasser homered for Nebraska, 15-16 overall and 3-7 in the Big Eight. Cory Winget, 3-3, earned the win for the Huskers.

The only run in the opener came in the first inning when the Cyclones' Mark Eisinger scored from second base on Darrin DeReu's single.

said. "We have got to have a second half like we did last year, and hopefully we will get in this year."

He stressed the importance of Nebraska winning close games down the stretch.

During the Huskers' six-game skid, four of the losses came by three runs or less.

"It has been really frustrating losing some of the games that we have lost," Dukart said. "Our pitching has been there, but we haven't had the hitting."

Osborne earns coaching award

From Staff Reports

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne was named Wednesday as one of eight 1994 Giant Step Award winners.

Giant Step Awards are given annually to individuals and/or organizations who exemplify the ideals for student-athletes to achieve academic and athletic excellence.

Off the field, Osborne and his wife, Nancy, created Teammates, a program with the Lincoln Public Schools where students are teamed with Cornhusker football players. The goal of the program is to get the students to stay in school.

Osborne will be honored at a Nov. 2 banquet in Boston.

Frazier

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more of a big deal."

More times than not last season, Frazier battled injuries, ranging from his ankle to his shoulder. He sat out part of the Kansas game and played in pain during the Colorado game because of the shoulder injury.

With Nebraska's lack of depth at quarterback — the Huskers have just two scholarship quarterbacks this spring — remaining healthy is a must, Frazier said.

"Only a couple days earlier I thought about how I really needed to stay healthy," he said. "Once it (the ankle) gets healthy, all I have to do is keep it healthy. I shouldn't have any more problems with it once it heals."

"It won't be the type of injury that keeps bothering me. I just have to try to make this the last time I have to worry about an injury."

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