

Huskers hope for season turnaround this weekend

By Trevor Parks
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's basketball team begins its toughest road trip of the season at the worst time it possibly could.

The Cornhuskers play at No. 3 Colorado Friday night and at Missouri Sunday.

Coach Angela Beck said this was the hardest road trip because of the travel schedule this season.

"I wish that could be flip-flopped," Beck said. "What we need to do in the Colorado game is perform well enough to come out of that with some kind of dignity and maybe go down and steal one from Missouri."

Colorado, which has won 23 consecutive Big Eight home games, comes into Friday's

contest as the only team undefeated in conference play.

The Buffaloes are 20-2 overall and 10-0 in the conference. They defeated the Huskers for a 73-55 win in Lincoln on Jan. 22. After playing the Huskers Friday, they will face Iowa State at home.

Beck said the home-court advantage could be magnified because of the Colorado-Nebraska rivalry.

"I don't know how they will come out for the Iowa State-Nebraska weekend," Beck said. "There's a lot of negatives, but we should be able to go out there and just perform the best we can."

Missouri is coming off a 79-57 loss at Colorado last weekend.

The 13-9 Tigers, 3-7 in the conference, are

one of two Big Eight teams Nebraska has defeated this year.

The Huskers beat Missouri 75-63 on Jan. 20 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. But they've only been able to come up with one win in five conference games since then.

Nebraska has lost four straight conference games for the second time this season, and the Huskers are coming off an 85-83 loss to Oklahoma last Sunday.

The Huskers had a 16-point lead in the second half before losing to the Sooners.

Beck said the season had been one of change for the Nebraska basketball program.

"They say success is failure inside out and that's what I'm feeling right now, a little inside out."

One reason for that feeling is the Huskers'

woeful shooting at the free-throw line.

For the season, Nebraska is shooting 59.1 percent from the line, last in the Big Eight.

Beck said poor shooting may have cost Nebraska six games this season.

"I just kind of feel like the odds are against us," Beck said. "That's been our Achilles' heel all year."

Beck said she realized this season probably won't turn out the way she had hoped.

"I've come to grips with that," Beck said. "What we have to do is try to have a decent performance here down the stretch."

And this weekend could be the time to turn the season around.

"It's just one of those situations that we have to go and face and try to get something positive out of it."

Clinton to honor NU champions at White House

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska national college championship football team will be honored by President Clinton in a ceremony at the White House on March 13.

Sen. Jim Exon announced the trip Wednesday. He requested a White House ceremony after Nebraska won the Orange Bowl on Jan. 1 and was ranked No. 1 in post-season college football polls.

The Nebraska football office confirmed the trip Thursday.

Tennis team will profit at UNLV, coach says

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska men's tennis team will benefit this weekend by seeing both familiar and unfamiliar faces when it travels to Las Vegas for the UNLV Tournament.

Nebraska opens its competition today against Weber State, and a victory would match the Cornhuskers against the winner of the Tulsa-UNLV match.

Coach Kerry McDermott said Nebraska would get an opportunity to see both familiar foes and strangers.

"If we can get by the first round, win or lose in the second round, we'll pair up against either Oklahoma or Colorado," McDermott said. "That should help us, because we'll get the chance to see what they have and how we match up with them. Seeing them this early will only help us down the road in the conference."

"But the good part of this tournament is that we get to see some competition outside of our area — the Midwest. We get the opportunity to see some new people and new teams. That's nice to get out of the same routine."

McDermott said the Huskers were only concerned at this point with beat-

ing Weber State.

"We played them four or five years ago, and I know it will be a tough match," he said. "Our goal is to get that first one and build up some momentum. If we win, we'll have to face either Tulsa or UNLV, and they're both solid. So we need a win to get some momentum."

McDermott said he would also use the UNLV Tournament to test some of his players — freshman Thomas Wheat, junior Adrian Maizey and sophomore Dino Teppara—who will all be playing singles in spots they are not accustomed to.

"There is not a lot of experience at the four, five and six spots," McDermott said. "This will give me a chance to see how the four, five and six guys will handle the pressure this early in the season. I'm really interested in that."

Last, but not least, McDermott said he planned for the weekend's trip to be a learning experience.

"It's a real good tournament and a good place for the guys to go play," he said. "There is a lot going on there outside of the tournament. For the kids who have never been there, this gives them a chance to see UNLV's facilities, which are top-notch."

"They have really nice facilities, and the players will appreciate that."

Outside game with UNK to start Huskers' season

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska baseball team's season should begin ahead of schedule.

The Cornhuskers will open their season Sunday at 2 p.m. with a nine-inning game against the University of Nebraska-Kearney.

Nebraska was not scheduled to start its season until Friday, Feb. 24, on the road at the Arthur Gallagher Tournament in San Diego, Calif.

But when Nebraska coach John Sanders heard the forecasts of 60 degree temperatures this weekend, he wanted to seize the opportunity to get outside before the road trip.

Nebraska has been outside just three times during spring practice. The early game will also give

Nebraska's pitchers a chance to see live hitters for the first time this spring.

Although it seems like the Huskers are starting early, warm-weather schools have been playing for a month.

UCLA opened its season in Hawaii on Jan. 20, and 16 other West Coast Division I schools opened their seasons on Jan. 27.

Defending national champion Oklahoma was the first Big Eight team to play, opening at home against Missouri Southern Feb. 4.

"I really am dying to get outside and play," Nebraska catcher David Crain said Wednesday. "But I have to be careful not to get too excited, because you have to be ready for a letdown."

Baseball

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opening of camp.

Hot dog vendors, souvenir vendors and security guards sat around talking to each other. Nobody asked the players for autographs because practically nobody had heard of any of these guys.

The manager and coaches went through the motions, watching players with far inferior skills.

The pitchers had about 30 tosses apiece. No curveballs were allowed.

"We told them just to throw fastballs. We don't want anybody showing up hurt tomorrow," Yankee manager Buck Showalter said.

The batting also was substandard. During 20 minutes of batting practice, not a single ball was hit to the outfield fence or over it.

"A lot of these guys probably haven't swung wooden bats in years," Showalter said when asked if aluminum bats might have helped.

"We had some broken bats out there, but that was off our batting practice pitchers. Our regular players break bats, too, but they're hitting against Melido Perez and Steve Howe."

Yankees' owner George Steinbrenner also came to camp and used the opportunity to call for an immediate resumption of negotiations with some "new faces at the bargaining table."

The two sides haven't met together since spurning President Clinton's demand for a settlement earlier this month at the White House. Acting commissioner Bud Selig and union head Donald Fehr have been testifying before Congress, which is contemplating legislation that would bring an end to the strike.

"I'm a little embarrassed for the fans that we couldn't get this settled after seven months or so," Steinbrenner said. "We haven't lost the fans, but someday, in the not too distant future, we may."

Sutton

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setback on the road to Missouri on Feb. 11.

The Cowboys, 7-2 in conference play, stand at second place in the Big Eight, one-half game behind Kansas. Sutton said Oklahoma State's four seniors, who have finished second in the Big Eight each of the last three seasons, wanted to win a conference title this March.

"One of our main goals is to win the conference title," Sutton said. "But if we don't, we have other goals."

Before the season, he said the Cowboys broke their season into four stages: non-conference, regular-season Big Eight, Big Eight Tournament and NCAA Tournament.

"Our guys right now are focused on the Big Eight," he said.

So set on winning the Big Eight are the Cowboys, Sutton said, that he isn't worried about a letdown, even against a Nebraska team that has lost two home games by more than 15 points in the last three weeks.

"Nebraska is a good team," he said. "And when they are shooting the ball well on the perimeter, they

can be an excellent team. We played just about our best game of the year up there, and the way they can shoot, they are capable of beating anyone on a given night."

Sutton, who is in his sixth year at Oklahoma State after coaching stints with Kentucky, Arkansas and Creighton, said Husker guards Jaron Boone and Erick Strickland matched up with every team in the league.

"I know Coach (Danny) Nee would like to have a little more production out of their inside game," Sutton said. "And we make it tough on them because we've got the best center in the Big Eight. He's tough to control and that puts a lot of extra pressure on them."

With 16 victories and five games remaining on the schedule, Sutton said he thought the Huskers, 3-6 in the Big Eight, still had a legitimate chance to make the NCAA Tournament next month.

He said there was a chance that five, maybe even six, Big Eight teams could make the tournament. "Nebraska is at a point where they are going to have to win some games if they are going to get in," he said. "I don't think they are out of contention, but if they finish with an under .500 league record, they are going to need some help from some other teams."

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