

### Big 8

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team had played wasn't that strong, but the Wildcats had gained a lot of confidence by winning the matches they should win.

"We are far from turning the program around," Moore said. "It takes a long time for a program to become established, but I'm certainly pleased with our team's progress."

The Wildcats haven't been to the Big Eight tourney since 1986, but they are off to a good start after defeating No. 20 Colorado 3-1 last Saturday at Manhattan and losing a tough five-game match to the Cyclones.

Another team on the rise is Iowa State. The Cyclones are 2-0 in the conference and, like the Wildcats, have made major improvements since 1993.

In her first season as Iowa State coach in 1993, Jackie Nunez's team went 9-19 and finished 5-7 in conference play. Last year, the Cyclones won the most matches in school history, going 24-11. That record included an 18-game winning streak at one point.

The Cyclones also defeated Nebraska at a spring tournament in Lincoln and will play host to the Cornhuskers in a battle of conference unbeatens this Saturday in Ames, Iowa.

The Huskers' lone loss came to Stanford in the championship game of the State Farm/NACWAA Volleyball Classic, and since then they have won 12 matches in a row and 36 games in a row.

One team that has struggled this year is Missouri. The Tigers are 3-13 and 1-2 in the Big Eight. Missouri defeated Kansas in five games Saturday night at Columbia, Mo., and lost in four games to Oklahoma Wednesday night.

The Tigers' other two wins came against Western Illinois and Missouri-Kansas City. But Missouri has won two of its last five matches and three of its last eight after starting 0-8.

Colorado, which hasn't lost more than two matches in conference play in four years, has struggled. After a 7-2 start, the Buffaloes have fallen apart, losing their last five matches.

Colorado has lost two matches to Notre Dame, one to in-state rival Colorado State and to conference teams Nebraska and Kansas State. The Buffaloes haven't started the Big Eight with two losses since 1987, when they lost their first seven Big Eight matches.

Coach Brad Saindon said the overall toughness of the Big Eight was one reason for his team's slow start.

"There are a lot of teams on the rise in our conference," Saindon said. "Everyone's a step up from where they were last year."

Two teams looking for consistency, Kansas and Oklahoma, round out the Big Eight.

Kansas is 5-11 and has started 0-3 in the Big Eight after losing to Nebraska on Wednesday.

Coach Karen Schonewise said the Jayhawks were excited to start conference play, but they needed to make some improvements.

"We've played great volleyball at times, but we're just trying to become more consistent," Schonewise said. "From top to bottom, everyone is playing at a higher level."

The Sooners have been impressive at times, but looked unimpressive against Nebraska Saturday in the Cornhuskers' three-game sweep.

Coach Miles Pabst said his young team was going to have growing pains.

"We're so young this year; we haven't been quite as consistent as I would have liked," Pabst said.

The Sooners start three sophomores, two freshmen and one senior.

The consensus among the coaches was that Nebraska would win the Big Eight Conference title easily.

Pabst called this Nebraska team the best he'd seen in Lincoln in his 18 years at Oklahoma, and Schonewise, who played for the Huskers from 1983 to 1987, said this Nebraska team was tremendous.

Moore said he didn't think anyone could beat the Huskers.

"Nebraska is on a mission, and I've seen a team like that before," Moore said. "I'm impressed with the way their players are handling it; they look real tough to stop."

## Wounded Huskers to receive much-needed rest Saturday

**From Staff Reports**

Nebraska will get a much-needed Saturday off to rest many injuries suffered this week in practice.

Two offensive linemen and the Cornhuskers' top two fullbacks missed practice Wednesday.

Guard Aaron Taylor sat out with a sprained ankle, and tackle Chris Dishman missed practice because of pneumonia. Dishman may miss practice for the rest of the week.

Starting fullback Jeff Makovicka missed practice with a pulled groin, and his backup Brian Schuster sat out with a sprained ankle.

Quarterback Brook Berringer has traumatic bursitis in his right knee and has a lot of bleeding and swelling.

Reserve split end Lance Brown also missed the workout with either a dislocated or broken finger.




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