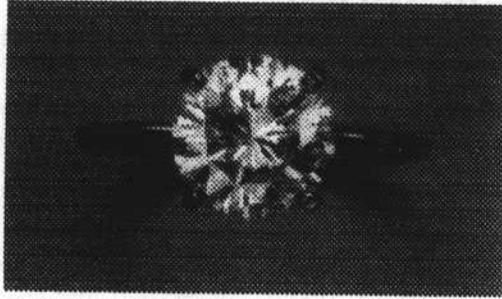


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Braves one win closer to World Series title

CLEVELAND (AP) - Even the Atlanta Braves will be hard-pressed to blow this.

The Braves, with Steve Avery starting ahead of Greg Maddux, moved within one victory of the World Series championship that always has eluded them, beating the Cleveland Indians 5-2 Wednesday night for a 3-1 lead.

Atlanta, whose postseason history is filled with failure, could not ask for a better position.

Now Maddux, held back a day to

rest, can clinch it Thursday night in Game 5 against Orel Hershiser.

The Braves broke open a 1-1 tie with three runs in the seventh. Luis Polonia's go-ahead double chased Ken Hill, and David Justice hit a two-out, two-run single off Paul Assenmacher.

"It felt really good because we needed that because we know what kind of team Cleveland has," Justice said. "The more runs we get ahead of them, the better for us."

Kansas

Continued from Page 7

be over at the beginning of the second game, but with the Huskers leading 4-0, the Jayhawks reeled off five straight points behind the play of sophomore outside hitter Leslie Purkeypille.

A kill by Crnich tied the second game at five, and Nebraska never trailed again. Reitsma served the game's final four points, and Jen McFadden and Weston combined for a block to end the second game.

McFadden, who has been ham-

pered by a lingering knee injury from last season, started the match Wednesday, her first start of the season. Pettit said earlier this week that the junior from Dubuque, Iowa, had been showing significant improvement in practice.

In the third game, the Huskers led 2-0 before surrendering five straight points. Led by Weston, Nebraska responded by scoring eight straight points. Kansas battled back to cut the lead to 10-8, but Nebraska scored the match's final five points. With Johnson serving, Reitsma pounded a kill off the Jayhawk block to end the match.

Baseball

Continued from Page 7

After losing Erstad, Sanders said that senior outfielders Francis Collins, Mel Motley and Matt Meyer, and sophomore outfielder Scott Schultz had stepped in well during the fall.

First baseman Todd Sears, who will be one of 66 players to compete at the USA Baseball national trials today, also performed well, Sanders said.

Another standout effort came from senior pitcher Sergio Betancourt, who took advantage of the small roster size and showcased his hitting ability.

The pitching staff's success, however, ended in the batter's box.

"I wasn't real happy with our pitching," Sanders said. "We've got a lot of work to do there. Our pitching staff right now is not very good, to be perfectly blunt about it."

Sanders said the development of the pitching staff would dictate how well the Huskers did in the spring.

"That will be the key to our season," he said. "It will take some hard work, and we'll have to pitch smarter, just do some things better in general. That will be the key to our season, no question about it. It always comes down to pitching."

The Huskers also will have to work hard to replace the four players who were drafted. Erstad was selected by the California Angels as the first pick in the draft, and Shepherd was picked by Baltimore.

Dalton also was picked by California, and Craig Sanders was chosen by Kansas City.

"There are a lot of good players that we've lost," Sanders said. "How will we respond? We'll let you know in June."

**Media pick
NU basketball
to place fourth**

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska men's basketball team was picked to finish fourth in the Big Eight by the media.

Kansas was picked to win the conference, picking up 576 of a possible 590 first-place votes.

Oklahoma's Ryan Minor was selected to win player of the year in the conference. Minor earned 66.5 of the 74 votes cast. Oklahoma State's Jerome Lambert was the pick for newcomer of the year, and Kansas' Paul Pierce was the pick for freshman of the year.

The Cornhuskers' Jaron Boone and Erick Strickland were named to the preseason second-team All-Big Eight team.

Jones

Continued from Page 7

their run.

"They're a great rushing team, probably the best in the country. But we've faced good backs this season. I don't know if we've played against a line as good as Nebraska's, but we've played some tough competition."

Among that competition was Heisman Trophy candidate Leeland McElroy of Texas A&M, and the nation's leading rusher, Iowa State's Troy Davis, who rushed for 203 yards last week against Colorado.

"He (Davis) was a great back," Jones said. "It was great for us to play him last week, and then have Nebraska this week. He's the real deal. It'll help us this week after trying to stop a guy like him."

Jones, who was a second team All-Big Eight pick last year, said Colorado might benefit from taking a more relaxed approach to Nebraska.

"It's still a big game for us, but it just isn't played up like it used to be," he said. "The red letters have been taken off the schedule. We just take it one game at a time now, and now it's Nebraska week. Last week, it was Iowa State week."



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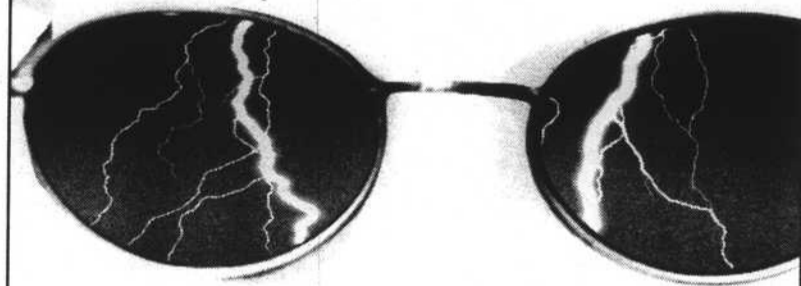
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