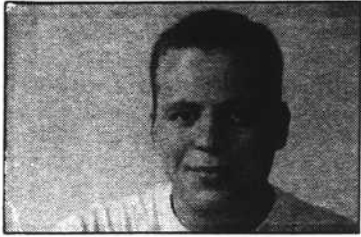


SPORTS

Thursday, November 30, 1995

Page 9

SPORTS OPINION



Mitch Sherman

Show-stealing Huskers show spirit in tourney

An unfamiliar sound rang out from the radios of the dedicated Nebraska basketball fans who ignored their clocks and stayed up until 3 a.m. to listen to the Cornhuskers play in Hawaii last weekend.

The voice of Nebraska's replacement play-by-play announcer John Baylor relayed back to the mainland a message saying the Huskers had won a tournament. So what if it wasn't a tournament full of big-name schools with All-American players. It's still a tournament.

In Hawaii, Nebraska stole the show. Behind the play of what soon may be known as the best backcourt to ever run the floor in the Cornhusker state, the Huskers beat two legitimate challengers for the NCAA Tournament on back-to-back nights.

For the first time in 28 years, Nebraska won a regular-season three-game event. It's been a long time since the 1967 Big Eight Holiday Tournament.

But the importance of these three victories pales in comparison to the significance of simply winning again.

"It's my opinion that last year's team wouldn't have come back," Coach Danny Nee said. "With the personality of the new players, we did. But last year's team wouldn't have done that."

It isn't all that important that Nebraska is 3-0. The Huskers have been 3-0 lots of times. So what? They won three games. What is important, however, is the way they did it. In all three games, Nebraska came from behind.

They fought back adversity. They battled back and found a way to win. And most importantly, they played as a team. Five players on the court. One team. To have any success in the Big Eight, that's the only way to play.

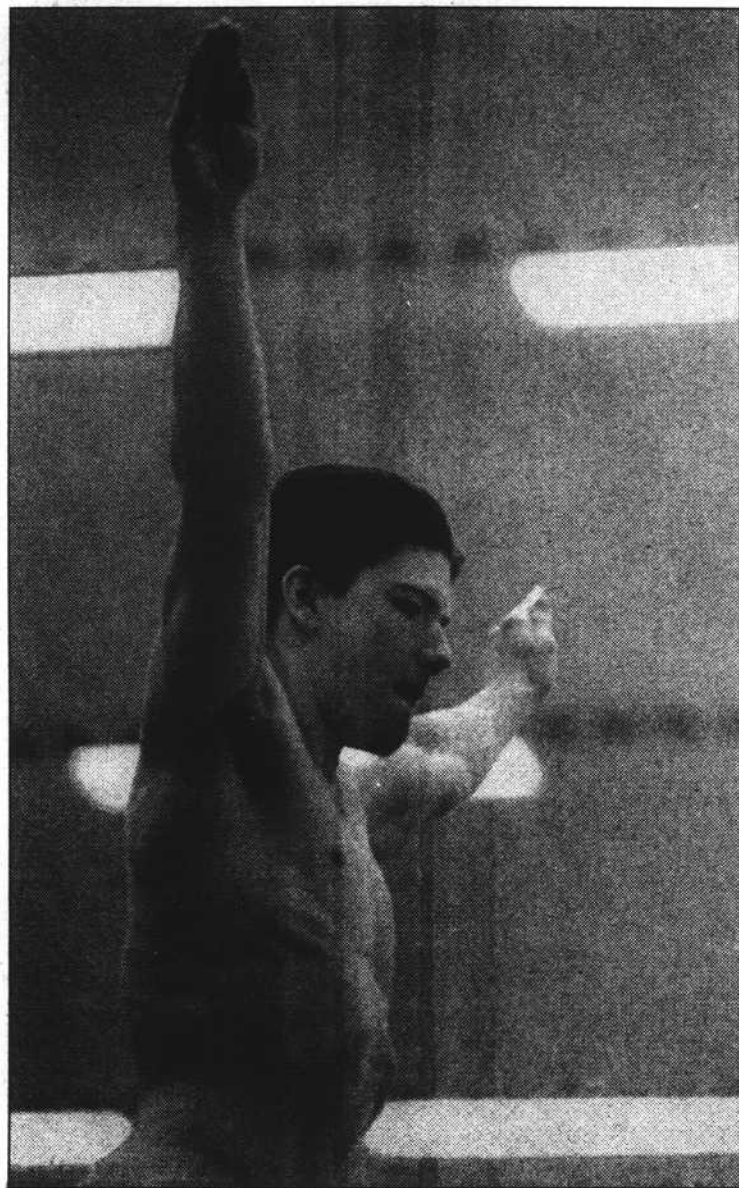
"The Oregon game was as high a level executed game as I have coached in November," Nee said of the Huskers' 114-106 overtime win. "It was high-octane, up and down the court."

Midway through the first half, Nebraska trailed 30-11. Last year's team may have decided to call it quits at that point. But the terrific trio of Husker guards, led by Tyrone Lue, wouldn't let that happen. The freshman lit up Kenya Wilkins, the Pac-10's quickest guard, scoring 30 points, stealing the ball five times and dishing out nine assists.

And with 12 seconds to play in regulation, when Wilkins hit a game-tying 3-pointer, which Nee described by saying, "the kid's foot was on the line by a whole 3 or 4 inches," the Huskers didn't complain. They didn't panic. They just won.

"That comeback will help the team," Nee said. "It probably already has."

Sherman is a junior news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan assistant sports editor.



Jay Calderon/DN

Nebraska diver Danny Bergman gets ready to attempt a dive during the Husker Shootout two weeks ago.

Diver makes big splash during freshman season

By Vince D'Adamo
Staff Reporter

Freshman diver Danny Bergman has wasted no time making an impact for Nebraska.

Bergman has not been in awe about collegiate competition during his first season.

He made his debut against Southern Illinois by winning both the one- and three-meter diving competitions. Cornhusker diving coach Jim Hocking said rarely has he seen a freshman blossom so quickly.

"You get a freshman and usually hope they develop by the time they are a sophomore," Hocking said.

But Bergman has developed, and it has been rare for Bergman not to place first or second. In the Husker Shootout finals last week, he finished fifth in the three-meter event but recorded a season-best score of 467.45 points. He also

"I always knew there was something special about Dan."

JIM HOCKING

Nebraska diving coach

placed fifth in the one-meter dive with a mark of 433.75, also a season high.

Bergman has a simple approach for his path to stardom.

"Just work hard, stay focused, and do the best I can do," he said.

That attitude has helped Bergman rise to the occasion against tough competition. He swept the one- and three-meter events in the Huskers' meet against then-No. 6 California.

Bergman liked sweeping both

See **BERGMAN** on 10

Nee hopes success continues this year

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

Nebraska basketball coach Danny Nee doesn't want people to compare this year's team — which won the Big Island Invitational — to the 1990-91 Cornhusker team that won a school-record 26 games.

In 1991, Nebraska lost in the championship game of the San Juan Shootout to Murray State 81-79. But that early-season success helped propel Nebraska to a 26-8 record and its first NCAA Tournament berth since 1986.

This season, the Huskers are 3-0 and off to their best start since 1992 when they won their first seven games,

but Nee said comparing this team to the 1991 team would be premature.

Nee said Nebraska depended more on inside players like Bruce Chubick, Tony Farmer and Rich King. This year's

team relies on the backcourt of Jaron Boone, Erick Strickland and freshman Tyronn Lue.

"On this team we have veterans, but our strength is in the backcourt," Nee said. "The talent and the attitude is similar; these guys want to win, and there is enough ability to do it."

That attitude showed in Hawaii. Nebraska trailed in all three games and rallied from a 30-11 deficit to beat Oregon 114-106 in overtime in the semifinals.

Senior guard Jaron Boone led the Huskers, averaging 19.7 points a game and 2.7 rebounds en route to being named the tournament's most valuable player.

Nee said if it had been last year, the Huskers would have folded against Oregon.

"Last year's team, if we were down 19 this year, we wouldn't have come back, and that's my opinion," Nee said. "I think with the personality of the new players and how we play and what we're doing, we're just way more effective and better."

Nee said all three games were very physical. In the championship game against Minnesota, center Mikki

Early season Success

This season's 3-0 start is the third time under Danny Nee that the Huskers have begun a season with three wins. The other seasons were:

Season	Final Record
'91 - '92	19-10
'92 - '93	20-11

Both previous teams lost in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Moore took an elbow to the mouth that loosened his front teeth. In the game against Oregon, center Chris Sallee suffered a split lip.

"As the intensity level increased, Nebraska increased their intensity," Nee said. "We didn't back down and we played well."

After winning the tournament with a 96-85 win over Minnesota, Nee said the team handled the situation well.

"I thought they handled it a lot better than we've handled other successes," Nee said. "I don't think any of us were overwhelmed and ready to cut down the nets and tap dance off the island."

But last year causes Nee to be somewhat cautious. Last season, Nebraska started well, finishing third in the San Juan Shootout and winning 11 of its first 12 games. The Huskers then went on to lose 13 of their final 20 games to finish 18-14.

Nee said it was too early to judge his team's potential for success.

"I don't look at it as anything very significant," Nee said. "I think it was a good start, and we expected to have a good start if we'd have won two games."

NOTE:

● Nee said forward Chester Surles and guard Tom Wald, who both missed the Big Island Invitational after suffering sprained ankles, may return to action when Nebraska plays host to Georgia Southern on Friday night in the Ameritas Classic.

NU to host George Mason

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska volleyball team will play host to George Mason in the second round of the NCAA Tournament on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the NU Coliseum.

The Patriots, 21-10, swept Indiana 15-8, 15-10, 15-13 Wednesday night in a first-round NCAA Tourna-

ment match in Fairfax, Va., to win their first NCAA match in school history.

Barbara Kovacs added 14 kills on 42 total attacks and served the final two points of the third game to give George Mason the victory.

The win was the Patriots' eighth consecutive match victory.

Seniors, Osborne reflect on winning season

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

For the seniors on the Nebraska defense, it couldn't get any better Friday.

In the seniors' last home game, the defense shut out Oklahoma 37-0, scored two touchdowns, forced three turnovers and held the Sooners to less than 100 yards rushing.

"This is unbelievable," defensive tackle Christian Peter said. "I couldn't wish for anything better than to go out and get a shutout in my last game here. It's been great. I'll have these memories for the rest of my life."

But all of the 21 seniors had plenty to be grateful for the day after Thanksgiving.

The win polished off Nebraska's third consecutive undefeated season, improved the seniors' four-year record to 44-4, gave Nebraska its fifth straight conference title and allowed the Huskers to become only one of three teams to ever win 35 games in three years.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne also was giving thanks for his seniors.

"I appreciate the attitude and effort of this football team," Osborne said. "There aren't very many teams

See **SENIORS** on 11

Frazier reaps more honors

From Staff Reports

Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier picked up two more honors Wednesday.

Frazier was named to the American Football Coaches All-America team for his efforts this season. He also was named Big Eight offensive player of the year by the conference coaches.

Earlier this year Frazier was chosen for the Football Writers Association and Walter Camp All-America teams.

I-back Ahman Green was selected by the coaches as the conference's offensive freshman of the year. Junior college transfer Terrell Farley was named as the top non-freshman newcomer of the year.