

SPORTS

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Fiesta matchup 'one of the greatest'

By Derek Samson

Senior Reporter

Everything actually worked out. The Florida football team put to rest a season of doubt Saturday with a 34-3 win over Arkansas in the Southeastern Conference championship game—meaning the Fiesta Bowl will pit the No. 1 team against the No. 2 team.

Tostitos Fiesta Bowl Executive Director John Junker called the Nebraska-Florida showdown on Jan. 2 at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz., one of "the mega games of all time." "This is a very special day," Junker said. "We're very grateful to the people in college football for making us part of the bowl alliance. We think this will be one of the top games in the history of college football."

Florida's win assured that for the 11th time, two undefeated, top-ranked teams will meet in a bowl game to decide the national championship, Junker said.

"We're certainly delighted with the quality of the matchup, the teams and the television rankings," he said. "But this is such a special day for Arizona sports. It means an awful lot to this community and state."

Junker said more than 2,500 volunteers from the area would help to make everything perfect for the game.

"The games always turn out to be great on the field," he said. "But they are so great off the field as well."

Not only will the Fiesta Bowl showcase the top two teams in college football, but it may also include the top two players.

Nebraska quarterback Tommie

Frazier and Florida quarterback Danny Wuerffel are both finalists for the Heisman Trophy, which will be announced Saturday in New York. It was announced Friday that Frazier was the winner of the Johnny Unitas Award, honoring the nation's top senior quarterback.

"Again, that's another reason why we think this will be proven as one of the greatest games in college football history," Junker said. "The thing that's so interesting about that is the contrasting styles."

"You have one of the most accurate and proficient passers in the history of college football matched against Tommie Frazier—a young man that has led his team to three straight national championship games. And the way he has done it—both running and passing—makes it even

more interesting."

Junker said the Fiesta Bowl could probably sell 200,000 tickets if it were possible.

"The demand is going to be unprecedented," he said.

But that didn't surprise Junker.

"This game draws a great deal of interest for a number of reasons," Junker said. "You have two schools with such great history and such a contrast in styles of play. I think the anticipation for this game will be matched by the quality on the field."

The other alliance games were also announced Sunday—pairing Notre Dame and Florida State in the Orange Bowl and Texas and Virginia Tech in the Sugar Bowl.

Bowl alliance pairings

Fiesta: Jan. 2

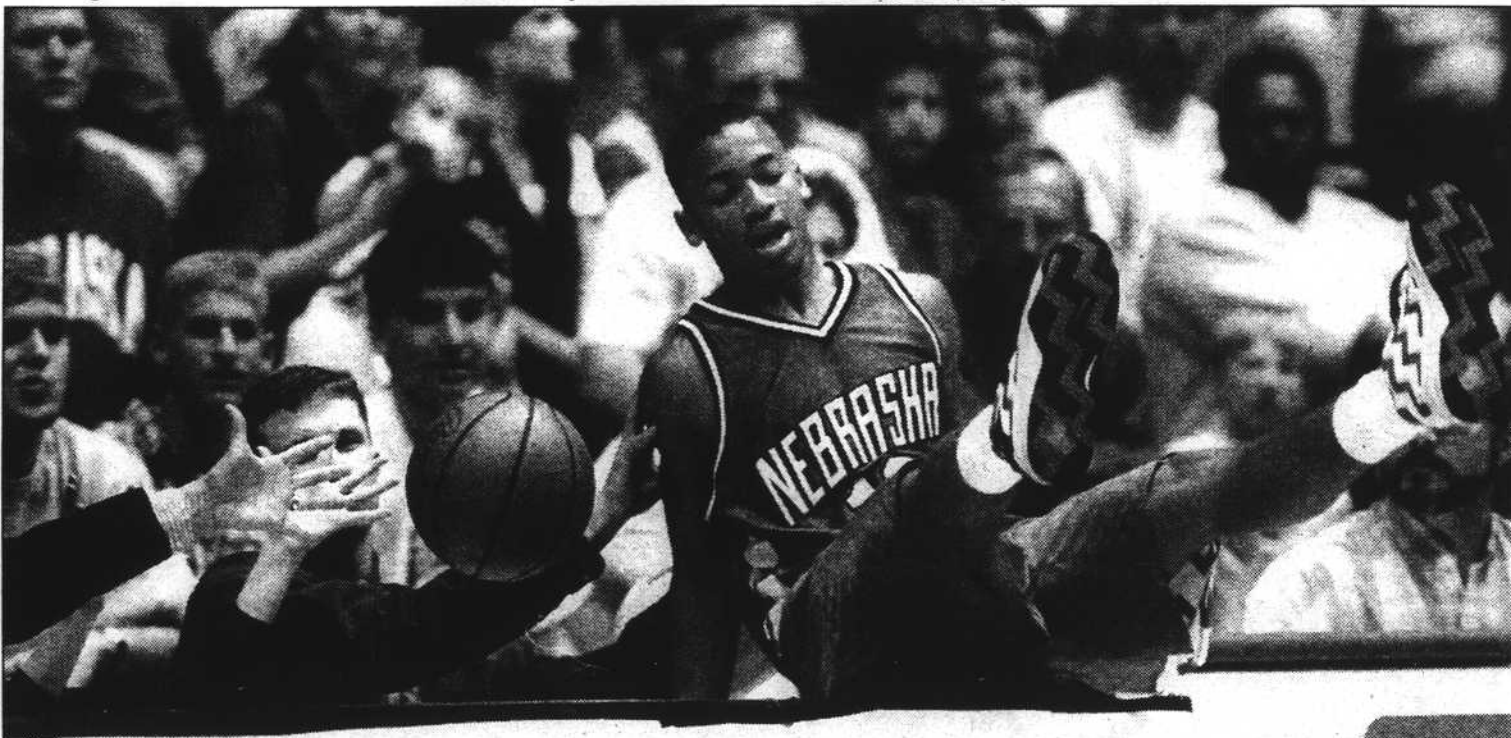
Nebraska vs. Florida

Orange: Jan. 1

Notre Dame vs. Florida State

Sugar: Dec. 31

Texas vs. Virginia Tech



Jay Calderon/DN

Nebraska point guard Tyronn Lue takes a seat on press row during the Huskers' 96-80 win over Grambling State Saturday. Lue scored 11 points in the win.

NU wrestlers finish behind ISU in Vegas invite

From Staff Reports

In the last year of the Big Eight, two wrestling teams, Iowa State and Nebraska, made a claim to be the top team in the conference during the Las Vegas Invitational this weekend in Las Vegas, Nev.

The Cornhuskers, wrestling without their top lineup, finished second to the Cyclones, who won the meet by 34 points. Nebraska finished ahead of Wyoming, Michigan and Cal-State Bakersfield.

The only individual champion for Nebraska was junior heavyweight Tolly Thompson, the returning national champion and currently No. 1-ranked heavyweight in the nation. Thompson defeated No. 2 Jeff Walter of Wisconsin 6-3 in the finals.

Nebraska placed six other wrestlers in the meet. Senior Tony DeAnda at 134 pounds was the only other finalist for Nebraska. But DeAnda had to settle for runner-up honors, losing to No. 3 Steve Schmidt of Oklahoma State in the finals.

Junior Ryan Tobin finished in fourth place at 190 pounds. Senior Erik Josephson took sixth place at 177 pounds and sophomore Jeramie Welder placed fifth at 126 pounds. Junior Jason Kraft (158 pounds) and freshman Chris Steele (150 pounds) both finished in eighth place.

Huskers advance to Central Regional

By Mitch Sherman

Senior Editor

The George Mason volleyball team nearly joined an elite group of company Saturday night.

Leading No. 1 Nebraska 14-12 in the third game of its NCAA Tournament second-round match, the Patriots were within one point of joining No. 3 Stanford and No. 4 Florida as the only teams to win a game over the Cornhuskers this season.

But when in need of a kill, Nebraska turned to its big guns and put the finishing touches on a 15-2, 15-5, 16-14 victory before a crowd of 4,360 at the NU Coliseum.

"The third game was the team I thought we were going to play in the first two games," said Nebraska middle blocker Allison Weston, who recorded a match-high 18 kills and hit .640.

The 28-1 Huskers advanced to the Central Regional semifinals Friday night at 5:30 at the Coliseum against Penn State, which beat Georgia Tech on Sunday. Ohio State and UCLA will play in the other semifinal Friday at 8 p.m.

The regional finals will be held Saturday night at 7:30 with the winner earning a spot in the Final Four, Dec. 14-16 in Amherst, Mass.

Nebraska held George Mason to eight kills and a .111 hitting percentage through two games Saturday, but the Patriots awoke early in the third game.

"That was something we talked about between games two and three," Nebraska coach Terry Pettit said. "It was a situation where George Mason was not competitive the first two games and kind of lulled us to sleep."

Patriot middle blocker Virag Domokos, a 6-foot-3 native of Budapest, Hungary, who en-

tered Saturday's match leading the nation in hitting percentage at .459, was held without a kill on seven attempts in games one and two. But Domokos came alive in game three, pounding seven kills and leading the Patriots to a 9-4 lead.

Nebraska battled back to tie the score at nine, but George Mason pulled away again, earning a 14-12 lead and a game point. With Patriot setter Martyne Schroder serving, a kill by Nebraska outside hitter Lisa Reitsma gave the Huskers a sideout, and a pair of kills by Weston and one by Christy Johnson put the Huskers up 15-14.

Nebraska won the game and the match on an errant hit by Schroder.

The Huskers had few problems in game one, which lasted only 12 minutes. Nebraska opened a 6-0 lead and scored the final nine points to win 15-2. In the second game, Nebraska reeled off nine straight points with the game tied at two to take an 11-2 lead, and won the game when Patriot outside hitter Joy Kingsley-Ibeh was whistled for a back row hitting violation.

"Even though we were getting kills and hitting high percentages, it seemed like everything was slow," Husker outside hitter Billie Winsett said. "Our passing was high. Our sets seemed high."

Nebraska has now won 27 consecutive matches and held the nation's top ranking for 12 weeks. The Huskers got progressively worse throughout Saturday's match, hitting a spiking .619 in game one, and falling to .217 in the second game and .208 in game three.

George Mason, which beat Indiana last week for its first-ever NCAA Tournament win, finished the season 21-11. The Patriots hit .011 for the match.

NU improves to 5-0 with tourney title

By Todd Walkenhorst

Staff Reporter

Two tournaments. Two titles.

By defeating Grambling State 96-80 in the championship game of the Ameritas Classic before a crowd of 9,087 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, the Cornhuskers swept their first two tournaments of the season.

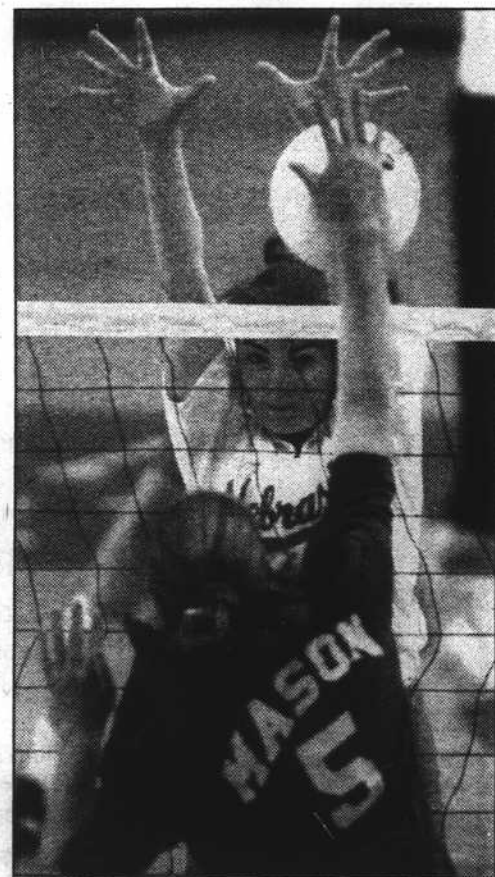
Three wins in the Big Island Invitational and an 82-59 victory over Georgia Southern on Friday night have given Coach Danny Nee's team a 5-0 record, the Huskers' best since 1992-93, when they began 7-0.

"It was a very successful tournament," Nee said. "Now we'll build on it and go on."

Nebraska broke a 2-2 tie early in the first quarter on a Bernard Garner jumper. The junior power forward scored five consecutive points to put the Huskers in front 7-2. Garner finished with seven points and six rebounds.

Nebraska built a 17-point lead with 4:37 remaining in the first half on a pair of Jaron Boone free throws. The senior guard finished

See HOOPS on 8



Scott Bruhn/DN

Husker outside hitter Billie Winsett blocks an attempt from George Mason's Carolyn Jaeger.