

NU heals from loss

By Mike Kluck
Senior Reporter

Staying focused for the remainder of the Big Eight season will be pivotal to the success of the Nebraska's women's basketball team, Coach Angela Beck said Tuesday.

But that concentration will not start until the Cornhuskers (12-4, 2-2) put their 74-71 Friday loss to Kansas behind them.

"I was disappointed losing to them, but realistically they're one of the teams to beat," Beck said.

"We were ranked fifth in the league, and they were ranked second."

Beck said the disappointment of the loss began to heal with the Huskers' 61-49 win over Kansas State on Sunday, but she said Nebraska needed to improve in other areas before its next game.

The Huskers play at Missouri on Friday and at Colorado on Sunday.

For Nebraska to improve on its fourth-place standing in the Big Eight, the Huskers must improve their defensive intensity and limit their turnovers, Beck said. Nebraska is giving up 64.1 points per game, sixth in the Big Eight, and averaging 22.1 turnovers a game.

Hibner recalls journey of NU women's athletics

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

Barbara Hibner knows that nothing is worth having unless you work for it.

That's why the Nebraska volleyball team's 1995 national championship season is so special to her.

In 1978, Hibner, now Nebraska's senior women's administrator, came to Nebraska. Since then, she has watched as the volleyball team — remaining a national power — grew in many ways.

Hibner remembers a time when players would complain during Saturday afternoon matches at the NU Coliseum that the sun was shining too brightly through the roof.

She recalls an ancient Coliseum that was inadequate for a successful program, one that has qualified for every NCAA tournament and won 19 Big Eight titles in 20 years.

The volleyball locker room at one time had only three shower heads, only one of which worked at full strength, Hibner said. She said there were no doors in front of the toilets, no soap dishes, and no hair dryers or mirrors.

"You know what, we are all the richer for it," Hibner said. "Nothing is worth having unless you labor for it."

Eventually the locker rooms were improved, and the Coliseum was renovated during the 1991 and 1992 seasons, when the volleyball team had to vacate its homecourt and play in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Everything Hibner described led to what happened on Dec. 16. That was the day the Cornhuskers defeated Texas in the NCAA championship match in Amherst, Mass.

"I would say that the fans anticipated and expected the football team to repeat. They prayed and dreamed and hoped the women's team would reach the pinnacle."

BARBARA HIBNER

NU associate athletic director



Hibner

"We've gone from the outhouse to the penthouse," Hibner said. "Unless you've seen low tide, you really can't appreciate the beauty of high tide. I've seen low tide and I've been in the outhouse. I've got to tell you, it is indeed the journey."

"The highs, the lows, the sharing, the caring — that's made it all the more memorable."

Hibner said she was extremely happy for Coach Terry Pettit. Pettit arrived two years before Hibner, and after 19 years and 701 matches on the Nebraska sideline, he was rewarded with volleyball's ultimate prize.

"This coach is one of the most deserving," Hibner said. "He's finally reaped the rewards of his labor."

"Not only the team of 1995, but those from 1977-1994 have all made it possible and can share in the glory for old NU."

As for her personal feelings:

"What I feel is satisfaction and just a warm glow of having seen all this come together after years and years," Hibner said. "I would have to say it was great satisfaction to see the different publics embrace a women's collegiate team. I've witnessed this in the male domain, but never before in the world of women's sports."

For 17 years Hibner has been associated with women's sports at Nebraska, but she has been especially close to the volleyball team. That's why this season was so special to her. This was the second NCAA national

championship won by a women's team in Lincoln. In 1984, the Husker indoor track and field team won the first title.

Hibner said she almost couldn't contain her excitement at the championship match.

"Many people said, 'I saw you leaping up and down,'" she said. "And I said, 'I must have done that 10 times on the last three points.'"

Eventually Hibner got to hand the championship T-shirts to the team. She said it couldn't have come at a better time.

The Nebraska athletic department has received more publicity for its off-the-field problems recently than for its on-the-field success, Hibner said.

"This particular team at this particular event did so much to galvanize both the community and the state, and it came at a time when it was sorely needed," Hibner said. "I've never witnessed the beating of any school over such a prolonged period of time. It couldn't help but weaken my heart."

But with the football team and the volleyball team winning national championships just 17 days apart, Hibner said, this was a special time for Nebraska athletics.

"I would say that the fans anticipated and expected the football team to repeat," Hibner said. "They prayed and dreamed and hoped the women's team would reach the pinnacle. They were indeed elated when the event finished and Nebraska raised the trophy to the heavens."

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Stai

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test, Stai said he knew the game would go down to one final dramatic play. Colts' quarterback Jim Harbaugh lofted a 47-yard pass to Aaron Bailey as time expired.

"I saw the ball go up and closed my eyes," Stai said. "I just listened to the crowd, and it was funny because they were silent for a long period of time. It was like they were all holding their breath. And then they started screaming and cheering and I knew we won."

The ball bounced off Bailey in the end zone and fell to the turf.

"One thing that stands out in my mind is a

few days before the game, Coach (Bill) Cowher walked over to me and said, 'This is no big deal for you, Mr. National Champion,'" Stai said.

"Then after the game, as he was standing there holding the trophy, he looked at me again and said, 'Boy this is nothing new for you.'"

The Steelers will leave Monday for Tempe, Ariz., for their fifth Super Bowl, a game in which an AFC team hasn't won since 1984. But the Steelers are 4-0 all-time in the Super Bowl with two wins over Dallas.

Stai said he was using his experience as a Cornhusker to prepare for the Super Bowl.

That experience includes starting on a team that completed two undefeated seasons and played for two national championships.

Bartlett

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"I guess when I look ahead, I know that the goals we set for ourselves, we can definitely achieve," Bartlett said. "We basically will have to have consistency. We've got the tricks, and we've got the form."

The Huskers have won 11 conference championships since 1978. Bartlett has been a part of two of them. But for all her accomplishments on the beam, floor exercise, vault and uneven bars, Bartlett said she was most satisfied with an academic honor.

"Our biggest thing was our academic national championship," said Bartlett of the Huskers' 1995 award. "That was a goal that we didn't even concentrate on. We all just worked together to make our grades."

An education major, Bartlett said she planned to be a graduate assistant in gymnastics and eventually hoped to become a history professor. Bartlett's academic prowess is just another

example of the kind of person she is, Nebraska coach Dan Kendig said.

"She's just had good work ethic from day one," Kendig said. "Sometimes, if anything, she's a little hard on herself when things aren't going well. She really pushes herself hard."

Bartlett was recruited by Washington, Minnesota and Cal State Fullerton, but she said the decision to come to Nebraska was an easy one.

"Nebraska was my first trip, and after I got home from that, I was like, 'I want to go to Nebraska,'" she said. "There was no contest. It was a black-and-white decision for me."

Bartlett won the all-around during Nebraska's first meet of the season on Sunday, a victory over Iowa State. The Huskers have four home meets at the Bob Devaney Sports Center this year, the first of which is on Jan. 27 against Missouri. Bartlett said she hoped to see larger crowds than she had seen the past two years.

"I would have to say that all we have to do is get you to come to one and you'll be back," she said, "because they are so entertaining and you're on the edge of your seat every moment."

UMKC

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potential and was a significant boost to the offense. It shows what potential and ability that he has. Now we just have to tap into it."

Moore also has helped out down low. In Nebraska's two Big Eight Conference games, Moore has made 14-of-16 shots, scored 16 points in each game while grabbing 13 rebounds.

"When he has the hot hand, I really would

like to get the ball to him," Nee said. "It would take the pressure off when we play some real tough defense."

Hamilton, a true freshman, also has had an impact, pulling down 14 rebounds in Nebraska's two conference games.

Meanwhile, senior guards Jaron Boone and Erick Strickland have been suffering from shooting problems. Strickland has made 12-of-33 attempts in the past two games. Boone is not shooting much better, making only 13-of-48 shots in that span.

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