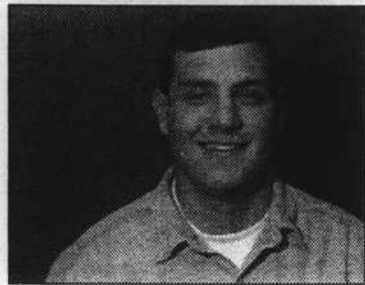


SPORTS OPINION



Trevor Parks

Good health helps Huskers court success

When Angela Beck addressed the media at a press conference last season, her first statement was always an injury update about her team.

That's nothing new. All of the coaches mention their team's injury situation. But Beck spent at least five minutes mentioning five or six players' wounds, sprains or whatever.

Then Beck wandered out to practice and tried to make the temporary medical ward play basketball. She even admitted that the difficulty of practicing hurt the team in games.

"Our goal as a team is not to get anybody hurt today," Beck said last year at this time.

At this point last season, the Huskers had eight players — Tanya Upthegrove, Lis Brenden, Emily Thompson, Pyra Aarden, Chris Dillavou, Roquayyah Brown, Anna DeForge and Tina McClain — with some sort of ailment. They also had a 10-8 record, which quickly took a change for the worse.

The Cornhuskers hobbled home, finishing 13-14. The frustration showed on Beck's face after her team blew an 18-point second-half lead to Oklahoma.

She looked as if she was trying to fight back tears because of what happened to her team.

At the Big Eight Tournament in Salina, Kan., she had a look of relief after her team lost again to the Sooners. The injury nightmare was finally over.

This year with a healthy team, Beck's enjoyment for coaching basketball has returned along with a team whose health is as good as ever.

The Huskers are having a successful season with a 13-5 record and a 3-3 mark in the Big Eight. The 13 wins equal Nebraska's total last season. With a win Sunday at Iowa State, Nebraska can equal the number of conference wins it had last year.

With the newfound success, Beck's voice carries a different tune this year. No longer does she worry about the turning of a knee or the twisting of an ankle. Her main concern now is how to stop the first-half struggles the Huskers have had in Sunday afternoon games.

"I'm disappointed we're not undefeated in the Big Eight," Beck said. "All this team needs to do is develop a mentality or more of a killer instinct."

A far cry from exactly one year ago, when the Huskers could barely hold a practice together.

Luckily for Beck, the only time she has mentioned anything about injuries was this week when DeForge and McClain were suffering from the flu.

This time maybe the injuries won't be as contagious.

Parks is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan senior reporter and columnist.

NU hammers Tigers by 18

By Mike Kluck
Senior Reporter

Every member of the Nebraska basketball team knew Missouri was going to come into the Bob Devaney Sports Center Wednesday night ready to play a physical game.

Nebraska	76
Missouri	58

The Cornhuskers, who had lost three of their last four home games to the Tigers, did not let Missouri's aggressiveness play a role in the game, cruising to a 76-58 victory.

Nebraska improved to 15-4 and 3-1 in the Big Eight, while Missouri fell to 12-6 and 2-2.

The win was Nebraska coach Danny Nee's largest margin of victory over the Tigers in his 10-year-career at Nebraska and the Huskers' largest win ever at the Bob Devaney Sports Center over the Tigers.

Nebraska senior guard Erick Strickland, who led the Huskers with 21 points, said the team was focused on ending the Tigers' dominance the last two years in Lincoln.

Guard Tom Wald scored 13 points and center Mikki Moore added 10 points for Nebraska. Forward Bernard Garner scored nine points and led Nebraska with six rebounds.

"The team was fired up and everybody just wanted to get after it," Strickland said. "We're going to get after it defensively, and I don't think we are going to give anybody any games. I think that's the key."

Nee, who bashed Nebraska fans earlier this week for not cheering players and booing at the Devaney Center, said the 12,870 fans in attendance helped provide the team with support

throughout the contest.

"I was so appreciative of the atmosphere," Nee said. "The environment in the Devaney Center tonight was what I called a Big Eight caliber. I thought the fans set the tone from the beginning of the game with their enthusiasm and cheering."

"Then I thought Nebraska came to play. I thought we did a lot of things necessary. We got off to a good start and we played as hard as we possibly can."

The good start was Strickland scoring seven of Nebraska's first nine points as the Huskers took a 9-0 lead three minutes into the game. During that span, the Tigers missed their first four shots.

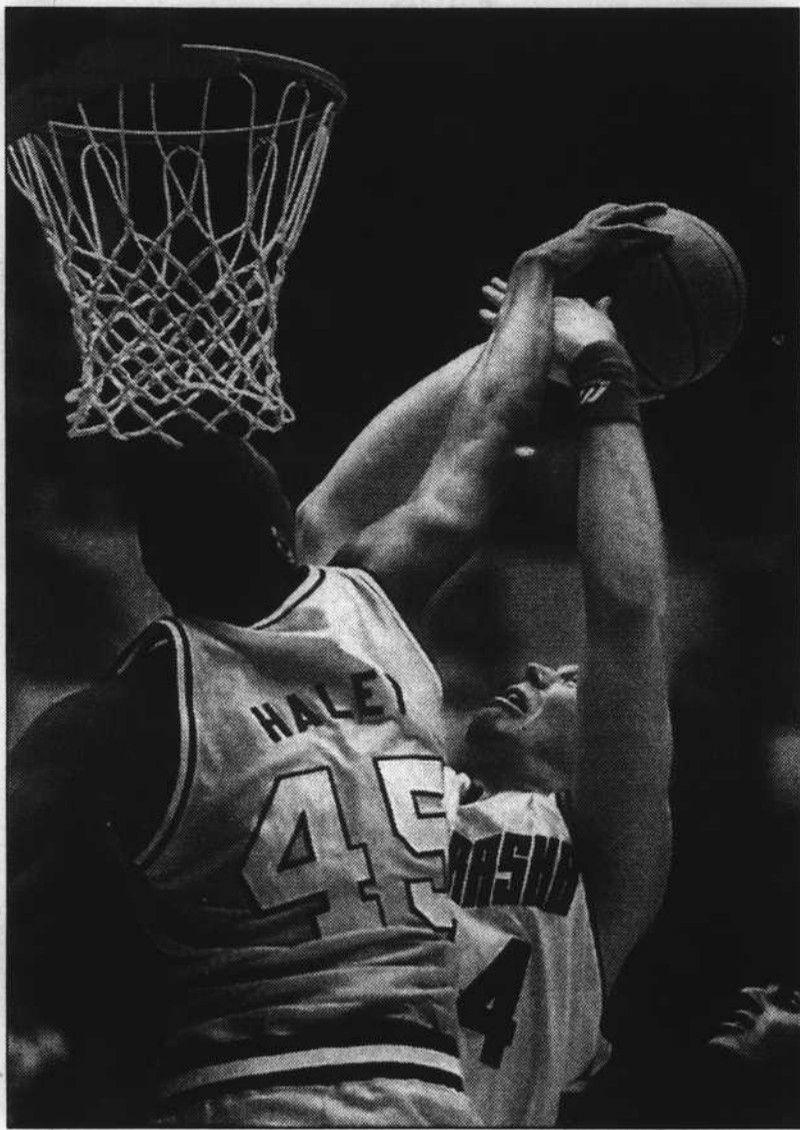
Nebraska built its lead to 12 points five minutes later when Husker freshman Tyrone Lue grabbed senior Jaron Boone's missed shot and put it back in.

But Missouri had a chance to make a run, trailing by only eight points with 8:53 left in the half. Tiger junior guard Jason Sutherland grabbed a Strickland miss and was flagrantly fouled by Husker senior Terrance Badgett.

Badgett was ejected and Sutherland had a chance to cut the lead to six points with two free throws, but he missed both tries, and on Missouri's ensuing possession the Tigers committed a turnover.

Wald followed with a basket, and the Huskers went on a 15-2 run to take their biggest lead of the game at 34-13 with less than four minutes left in the half.

"Some people say that (ejection) triggered us to play harder," Badgett said. "Missouri makes you rise to the occasion and play their type of ball. I got caught up in it and instead of play-



Matt Miller/DN

Nebraska center Leif Nelson is rejected Wednesday night by Missouri center Simeon Haley. Nelson, a redshirt freshman, scored six points and grabbed five rebounds in 13 minutes of Nebraska's 76-58.

ing Nebraska basketball, it became a personal battle."

The Tigers made a run right before halftime to cut the Husker lead to 39-26. Except for committing 12 turn-

overs in the first half, Nee said he was pleased with the Huskers' play. In the second half, Nebraska turned the ball over twice.

See **TIGERS** on 8

NU looks for quarterback

By David Wilson
Staff Reporter

With national letter-of-intent signing day just 13 days away, it's crunch time for the Nebraska football coaching staff.

The Cornhuskers already have received 15 verbal commitments.

Steve Pederson, Nebraska's associate athletic director for football operations, estimated that 18 scholarships would be given to the incoming class.

But of the 15 commitments that Nebraska has received, not one is from a quarterback.

"We'd like to get a quarterback every year. But certainly you want to get someone who can help you," said Pederson, who like all athletic department officials cannot talk about individual recruits.

"We wouldn't just take a quarterback. We would try to take a quarterback we thought could play at the level that we've had quarterbacks play here."

The loss of seniors Tommie Frazier and Brook Berringer will leave the Huskers with minimal experience behind center.

Scott Frost, a junior transfer from Stanford, will be a front-runner for the starting job. Frost threw for 464 yards and ran for 198 yards in 1994, his final season with the Cardinal.

With the exception of Frost, junior Matt Turman and sophomore Monte

"We wouldn't just take a quarterback. We would try to take a quarterback we thought could play at the level that we've had quarterbacks play here."

STEVE PEDERSON

Nebraska associate athletic director for football operations

Christo will be the only returning Huskers to have ever taken a snap at the college level.

Over the past three years, Turman has attempted 25 passes, and although he does have experience on his side, he has started only one game in his college career.

Pederson said he hoped Christo, who sat out the entire 1995 season tending to a torn anterior cruciate ligament, would be healthy next season.

The other two returning Husker quarterbacks are Frankie London and Jeff Perino. Both players were 1995 scholarship recruits and redshirted this season.

"We have good quarterbacks here," Pederson said. "Scott Frost comes back, along with Monte Christo, Jeff Perino, and Frankie London, all of whom are good players."

According to The National Recruiting Advisor, Nebraska showed interest in three of the nation's top high school quarterbacks. But Odell James, from Aldine, Texas, committed to Baylor earlier this month, and Tee Martin, from Mobile, Ala., is headed to Auburn.

James and Martin endured sub-

zero temperatures when visiting Lincoln on the same weekend last month.

Nebraska was also after Rashard Casey of Hoboken, N.J., but Casey, considered one of the nation's top run-pass quarterbacks, canceled his scheduled visit to Lincoln last weekend.

Bobby Burton, managing editor of The National Recruiting Advisor, said Nebraska was still showing interest in at least two signal callers: Chad Jones of Nevada, Mo., and Clint Finley from Cuero, Texas.

Jones, 6-foot-2 and 195 pounds, visited Nebraska last weekend. He is also looking at Arkansas and Pittsburgh State. Finley, 6-1 and 200 pounds, is also considering Texas A&M, Baylor, Houston and Texas.

Pederson said walk-ons Brian Schuster, a junior fullback, and Mike Fullman, a junior cornerback, have earned scholarships.

Defensive end Luis Almanzar, who was recruited last year out of Jersey City, N.J., was put on scholarship at the beginning of the semester, Pederson said. Lonnie Fulton, a 6-5, 250-pound offensive lineman from Grand Island recruited last year, also received a scholarship beginning this semester.

NU tennis leads off in Topeka

By Vince D'Adamo
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska men's tennis team will see its first competitive action of the spring season this weekend.

The Huskers will compete in the Big Eight Indoor Tournament in Topeka, Kan., where a combination of 64 singles and 32 doubles teams from the Big Eight will participate.

Cornhusker coach Kerry McDermott will send eight players to the tournament.

"It's basically an open tournament," McDermott said. "No team scoring will be kept. But I think the guys are ready for competitive action. They've worked hard."

Key returning players to the team are Fredrik Riesbeck, Thomas Wheat, Henrik Anderson, Adrian Maizey and Markus Bergerheim. McDermott said in October that all five players had improved their games, but freshman Roshan Fernando had caught McDermott's eye.

"I think at this point he's playing the best among our singles players," McDermott said.

Fernando was promoted to the Huskers' No. 1 singles

See **TENNIS** on 8