

# SPORTS WEEKEND

Friday, January 26, 1996

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## SPORTS OPINION



### Mike Kluck

## More support needed if wins are to continue

Nebraska basketball fans and the Cornhusker basketball team both are getting something they dearly wanted. Finally.

The team is getting wins and gaining fan support.

Also, the fans are getting a two-week period of good basketball, as Nebraska plays five teams—Oklahoma State, Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State and Iowa State—with a Jeff Sagarin computer power rating in the top 75 instead of the bottom 75.

Included during this time was a visit from the grandfather of the Big Eight, Missouri coach Norm Stewart, who gave the season-high crowd of 12,870 fans a show Wednesday night.

Stewart has the ability to bring out the best in a fan, whether it be his on-court demeanor or in the way he intimidates the referees by hamming it up on the sideline.

At one point, Stewart, who became enraged with a call, walked up to and began directing the Nebraska basketball band.

"It didn't have anything to do with the outcome of the game," Stewart said after Nebraska posted its 76-58 win.

Still upset 16 seconds later, Stewart was slapped with a technical foul, which set off "Sit Down Norm" chants throughout the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Missouri, alone, was probably enough to bring some life back into the Devaney Center, but now the big, bad fourth-ranked Jayhawks come to town on Sunday.

Kansas always has brought out a loud Husker crowd, and the Devaney Center has been cruel to the Jayhawks, as its dismal 4-14 record there shows.

As far as the crowd goes, this year looks to be no different as Nebraska will play host to its only sellout of the season against a highly ranked foe.

But where have these fans been during the rest of the season?

This year, Nebraska is averaging only 9,633 fans for 10 home games, while on the road the opposition brings out an average of 9,946 spectators. The Devaney Center seats 14,500.

I'll grant that Nebraska fans have had to put up with watching a bunch of patsies play this season, like winless No. 300 Georgia Southern and No. 302 Delaware State.

But if the Huskers are going to make a run and make the NCAA Tournament, the fans are going to have to show up in full force for Nebraska's final four home games.

Coach Danny Nee said the fans at the Missouri game were Big Eight caliber; now they have to be NCAA Tournament caliber for the Kansas game, along with the other three home games.

It'll be a lot better than a half-full Devaney Center that we saw for the first nine games.

Kluck is a journalism graduate student and a Daily Nebraskan senior reporter.

## NU's confidence builds with big wins

### KU up next for Huskers

By Mike Kluck  
Senior Reporter

With a win at Oklahoma State and a home win against Missouri, the Nebraska basketball team's confidence may be at a season high.

Now, with fourth-ranked Kansas visiting the Bob Devaney Sports Center, the Cornhuskers need to maintain that confidence if they hope to beat the Jayhawks, senior guard Erick Strickland said.

"We feel we can beat (Kansas)," Strickland said. "They've got great tradition and have a great team, but we know they've got to come in here, and we feel we can win here and give them a run down there. That's the way we feel right now as a team, and we got to keep that approach."

Nebraska, 15-4 and 2-1 in the Big Eight, will play host to the Jayhawks, 15-1, 3-0, Sunday at 2 p.m.

Strickland said the Huskers' confidence started building when they opened Big Eight play with a 79-74 win against Colorado on Jan. 10.

And although just three days later Nebraska lost at Oklahoma 117-100 in triple overtime, Strickland said the Huskers were playing aggressive basketball now.

"The team feels that if we go out and play hard, we can live with a loss or a victory," Strickland said. "But if we go out and play tentative and don't play where we're suppose to and we lose, then it really hurts."

With the 66-57 win over the Cowboys in Stillwater, Okla., Nebraska ended eight seasons of frustration by winning in Gallagher-Iba Arena.

And after beating Missouri 76-58 on Wednesday night, the Huskers' confidence may be beginning to steamroll. The Tigers had won three of the four previous games in Lincoln.

Now against the Jayhawks, the Huskers are in the opposite role.

Against the Jayhawks, the Huskers have a 14-4 record at the Devaney Center, and before last season's 91-68 loss, Nebraska had won the previous four meetings in Lincoln.

Kansas has been successful this season, with its lone loss coming to Temple. On Sunday against the Huskers, Jayhawk coach Roy Williams will be going for his 200th career victory.

Williams, who is in his eighth season with the Jayhawks, has won 199 games and could reach the 200-win plateau faster than any coach in conference history.

Williams said he hoped to see a large,



Travis Heying/DN

Nebraska's Mikki Moore shoots a jumper over Missouri's L. Dee Murdock. The Cornhuskers play host to fourth-ranked Kansas on Sunday.

"If we get it Sunday, that would be fantastic and if we don't, I'm not going to be disappointed in the slightest bit about not getting win No. 200," Williams said. "I'd be extremely disappointed if we don't get win No. 16."

But Williams said he knew win No. 200 would not come easily against the Huskers.

Williams has a 9-6 record against Nebraska, but has won only twice in the Devaney Center.

"As long as you've got (Jaron) Boone and Strickland back there in the backcourt, you're going to win some games," Williams said. "Tyronn (Lue) is doing a good job for them, and (Terrance) Badgett is still there along with Mikki Moore, so they have a good team."

### Humble guard wants to win

By Gregg Madsen  
Staff Reporter

Although Kansas guard Jacque Vaughn made the Playboy preseason All-America team and had his picture on the cover of Sports Illustrated's college basketball preview, he still remains unconcerned about individual recognition.

"I'm still the same person," Vaughn said during a teleconference Wednesday evening.

Vaughn, a junior from Pasadena, Calif., said he had worked hard to get in a position to lead the Jayhawks, and said he was thankful for his talents and the chance to represent his family and his school on the basketball court.

His hard work has paid off.

In 1994, Vaughn was named the Big Eight freshman of the year and was selected honorable mention all-conference.

As a sophomore, he started every game for Coach Roy Williams and led the Big Eight in assists, averaging 7.7 per game. His total of 238 assists ranked second in Kansas history.

More impressive to Vaughn, however, is that he was named first-team academic All-Big Eight both seasons. A business administration major, Vaughn said he felt the recognition he received for his high grades was unnecessary.

This season, the 5-foot-11 guard has helped lead the fourth-ranked Jayhawks to a 15-1 record.

But Vaughn said that wasn't because of his play, it was because of improved team unity. This year's team is vastly different from the teams from his last two seasons, Vaughn said.

"The team is much closer this year," Vaughn said. "The players care for one another, and we've put our per-

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## Basketball Starters

Allen Fieldhouse  
Saturday, 8:05 p.m.  
Lawrence, Kan.

Nebraska 15-4, 3-1	Ht.	Wt.	Class	PPG	RPG
G Tyronn Lue	6-0	165	Fr.	8.4	2.8
G Jaron Boone	6-6	195	Sr.	16.3	2.7
F Erick Strickland	6-3	210	Sr.	15.5	4.8
F Bernard Garner	6-7	225	Jr.	10.5	6.4
C Mikki Moore	6-11	205	Jr.	9.2	5.1
Kansas 15-1, 3-0					
G Jacque Vaughn	6-1	195	Jr.	11.2	3.3
G Jerod Haase	6-3	185	Jr.	11.9	3.2
F Paul Pierce	6-6	220	Fr.	12.6	5.8
F Raef LaFrentz	6-11	220	So.	13.2	8.5
C Scott Pollard	6-10	250	Jr.	10.9	7.8

## Husker gymnasts hoping for crowd support

By Gregg Madsen  
Staff Reporter

Christmas was more than a month ago, but Nebraska women's gymnastics coach Dan Kendig is still hoping for a belated present: a large home crowd.

Kendig hopes to find that present this Saturday at Nebraska's home opener against Missouri at 7 p.m. at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"We're just trying to build a clientele, build a crowd," Kendig said. "I really believe that we can get people out there. It's an hour and a half of action-packed excitement, and they'll come back."

Kendig said he hoped to see a large,

vocal crowd like the 7,800 fans that attended the Cornhuskers' meet last Friday in Tuscaloosa, Ala. Nebraska's score of 189.5 placed them third behind Alabama and Penn State. Kendig said the crowd definitely played a factor.

Senior Joy Taylor said a large crowd would mean a lot to the Huskers.

"We are excited to be home finally," Taylor said. "It would be great to have excitement like there was in Alabama. It gives us a lot more adrenalin."

Nebraska had its first complete week of practice since returning from winter break and because of that, Kendig and Taylor both said they ex-

pected a better performance Saturday.

"We had just been running around so much that I think we were too tired at Alabama," Kendig said.

Kendig said he thought the week of practice would help the 1-2 Huskers to hit a higher percentage of routines consistently.

"If we just put together our events and have four or five out of six hit this weekend, then we'll score a 192, if not more," Kendig said. "If we can put the two meets together, we'd be where we want to be right now."

Nebraska has struggled on the vault and floor exercise in its first two meets, but junior Kim DeHaan agreed with Kendig and said one of the keys to success against the Tigers would be

consistency.

"We need to go out and hit all four events," DeHaan said. "We just need a solid performance all the way around."

Kendig said he expected to see a strong effort from Missouri. The Huskers were defeated last season at Columbia, Mo., 188.1-187.5. Nebraska then returned to the Hearnest Center and beat the Tigers at the Big Eight Championships.

Missouri, 3-3, scored a 183.6 and finished fourth last weekend in the Shakespeare Festival held in Columbia.

"It will probably be a typical Missouri-type team," Kendig said. "I expect them to score in the mid-180s."