

# SPORTS

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## SPORTS OPINION



### Trevor Parks

## Floyd turns ISU program into winner

This isn't the Iowa State team of old.

No Fred Hoiberg to chant "Go Big Fred" at. No weird-looking players like Loren Meyer or Julius Michalik. No funny names like Hurl Beechum.

No more poking fun at Johnny Orr's baldness and bad suits.

There is not much about the 1995-96 edition of Cyclone basketball to laugh at because this team is good.

Iowa State, which should be ranked when the polls are released this afternoon, is taking advantage of a mediocre Big Eight. The Cyclones are second in the conference, and Wednesday night, they will blow into Lawrence, Kan., to battle Kansas for the league lead.

Coach Tim Floyd has this team — built of junior college transfers and Conference USA escapees — winning. After Saturday's 75-65 drubbing of the Cornhuskers, Iowa State is 16-4 with a 5-1 conference record.

Dedric Willoughby and Kenny Pratt introduced themselves to Husker fans in a flashy way on Saturday. They combined for 44 points, and after the game they celebrated in the locker room.

Pratt transferred from Chicago, and Willoughby escaped having to play in the conference with the worst name in the country, following his coach to Ames, Iowa, from New Orleans.

The Cyclones start five juniors and bring five more off the bench. Senior night next season might take 30 minutes, but it will certainly come in the midst of a winning season. Three freshmen also dot the Cyclone roster.

Floyd has gone to the junior college level to recruit. After visiting Ames, I agree that this is the only way possible to get recruits to Iowa State. Floyd has made it work. No one in his right mind would ever want to spend four years of his life in Ames, the coldest spot on the face of the earth — no matter what the time of year.

The only person open to jabs from opposing fans Saturday was Jacy Holloway, a 6-foot junior who has spent three unfortunate years in Ames. He looks as if he is barely old enough to shave, but he scored 10 points against Nebraska.

"I said in the beginning of the year that in one game, Jacy Holloway would get double digits," said a shocked Willoughby after his prediction came true.

"Coach Floyd's motto is: 'Boys at home. Men on the road.' And we went out and played like a bunch of men."

If this team keeps playing like men, the rest of the conference has a lot of growing up to do.

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



Jay Calderon/DN

Nebraska guard Erick Strickland tries to draw a charge from Iowa State guard Kenny Pratt Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center during the Huskers' 75-65 loss to the Cyclones. Pratt, a junior from Chicago, led all players with 24 points. Strickland scored 10 points on 3-of-14 shooting.

## Huskers' losing streak continues

By Mike Kluck  
Senior Reporter

With the team's second-leading scorer in a three-piece suit instead of a playing uniform, it was important for the Nebraska basketball team to start strong in its game with Iowa State on Saturday.

Unfortunately for the Cornhuskers, that didn't happen. Nebraska fell behind 12-0 in the first three minutes and eventually lost 75-65 to the Cyclones. Without senior guard Jaron Boone, who was serving a suspension for disciplinary reasons, the Huskers may have lost more than just the game, which dropped Nebraska to 15-7 overall and 3-4 in the conference.

It was the Huskers' confidence that Nebraska coach Danny Nee was worried about after the game, which was played before 12,792 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"What I saw during the game was a loss of confidence," Nee said. "I feel they're starting to question themselves, and I still think we have got a good basketball team."

"It's a difficult situation. But I really feel that this coaching staff, and this team want the same thing. We just have to keep working on it on a day-to-day basis."

What confidence Nebraska had before the game was snuffed out in the first four minutes as the Huskers

missed their first six shots and committed five turnovers.

During that same period, the Cyclones, 16-4 overall and 5-1 in the conference, were using their full-court press to build a 12-0 lead before Nebraska freshman Venson Hamilton scored on a layup.

"I thought we set the tone in the first three minutes with our tough defense," Iowa State coach Tim Floyd. "Our press really helped early in the game."

Iowa State was led by guard Kenny Pratt, who scored 24 points, and Dedric Willoughby, who added 20 points. Bernard Garner scored 16 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for Nebraska. Hamilton led the Huskers with a career-best 19 points.

Nebraska senior guard Erick Strickland, who finished the game with 10 points, said he knew the Huskers weren't in right frame of mind before the game.

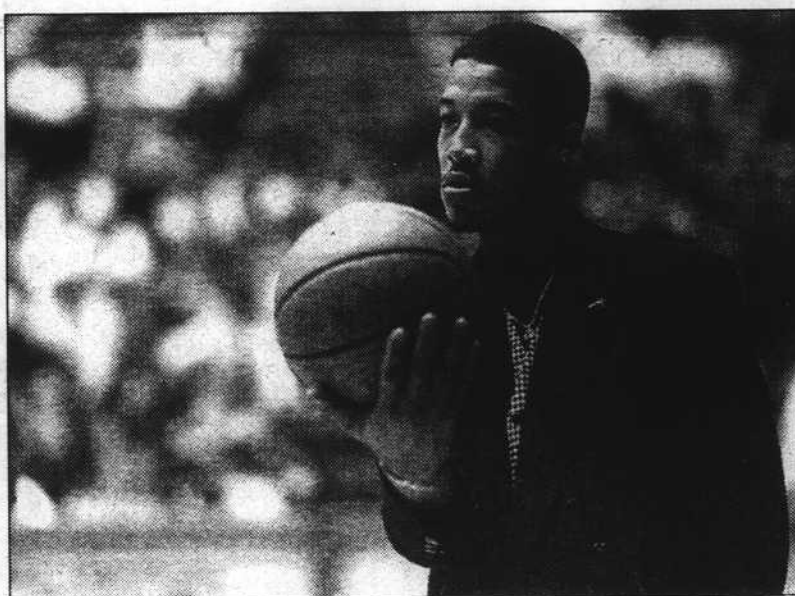
"I was just hoping we could play out of it," Strickland said. "I was hoping we'd get a run or something."

Strickland and Nee were both pleased that the Huskers didn't give up after the Cyclones' quick start.

Nebraska responded by outscoring Iowa State 10-2 to cut the lead to four points on a Strickland basket with 13:23 remaining in the half. The Cyclones came back with a 7-0 run, however, to push the lead back to 11.

The Huskers responded again and cut Iowa State's lead to four when

Iowa State	75
Nebraska	65



Jay Calderon/DN

Jaron Boone watches from the sidelines Saturday during Nebraska's loss to Iowa State. Boone, who was suspended for disciplinary reasons, also missed the second half of Nebraska's loss to Kansas State last Wednesday.

Hamilton made a layup with 2:21 remaining in the half. Hamilton was 7-for-7 from the field in the first half and finished the game 9-for-9, tying a Husker record set by Chuck Jura and Dave Hoppen for the most consecutive field goals made in a game.

But the Cyclones came back with an 8-1 run to close out the half and take a 40-29 lead.

"I thought that was really the turn-

ing point," Nee said. "It went back to 11 with about a minute and a half left. That's a back-breaker."

The Cyclones' final first-half run was crucial Nee said, because if the Huskers had been down only four points at the half, they would have had an easier time gaining second-half momentum.

See ISU on 9

## NU stays in conference race

By Jason Brunz  
Staff Reporter

With two conference wins at home, the Nebraska women's basketball team showed this weekend that it was still a Big Eight contender.

The Cornhuskers, 15-6 overall and 5-4 in the Big Eight, defeated 19th-ranked Oklahoma State 53-43 on Friday at the Bob Devaney Sports

Nebraska	71
Oklahoma	52

Center. On Sunday, the Huskers beat Oklahoma 71-52.

Against Oklahoma State, Nebraska was led by junior forward Tina McClain, who scored 20 points, and sophomore forward Anna DeForge, who added 14 points.

McClain also grabbed 11 rebounds against Oklahoma State. The Huskers shot 13-for-21 from the free-throw line. They were also 2-for-5 in 3-point shooting. McClain said Nebraska's intensity in the second half was the deciding

factor.

"We decided that we had to come out and take control," McClain said. "Our momentum carried us through the rest of the game."

Nebraska coach Angela Beck made changes in both the lineup and the defense in an attempt to wear down the Cowgirls.

Trying for a smaller, quicker defense, the Huskers came out starting sophomore Jami Kubik instead of senior Pyra Aarden. Nebraska

See WINS on 9

## Huskers can't come back to beat No. 3 OSU

By Antone Oseka  
Staff Reporter

Before Sunday, the last time Nebraska squared off against Oklahoma State, a winner couldn't be decided.

The Cornhuskers and Cowboys tied at 18 in the Reno Challenge on Jan. 13. On Sunday, the No. 2 Huskers would have been lucky to get the same results.

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