

SPORTS

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Eierman returns to mat with fire

By Antone Oseka
Staff Reporter

Mike Eierman is happy to be into the swing of things again for the Nebraska wrestling team.

Eierman, who was dismissed from the team for disciplinary actions before the season, returned to action for the Cornhuskers this weekend and came up big.

Really big. Eierman was a force at 150 pounds this weekend, pinning both wrestlers he faced from the state of Oklahoma.

When Nebraska wrestled Oklahoma on Saturday, Eierman gave the Huskers their first lead of the match at 12-9 with a pin over Biff Jones in the third period.

He then scored the first team points for Nebraska on Sunday, pinning Jimmy Arias of Oklahoma State in the third period. Nebraska lost the dual 22-16.

"Nobody put any pressure on me, saying we need this pin to win the dual or anything," Eierman said. "They just said go out there and wrestle the way you wrestle."

Eierman's plans, however, aren't to stay at 150.

Nebraska assistant coach Brad Penrith said he would like to see Eierman move down to 142 pounds by Friday to wrestle Indiana's Roger Chandler, who is rated fourth in the nation.

Nebraska wrestles in a double-dual against Illinois and Indiana on Saturday in Bloomington, Ind.

"This sport is a part of your life," Eierman said. "You have to be a part of the program, be around it."

Eierman said he was thankful

Neumann gave him another chance at a national title.

"Wrestling's always been there. I've never been in jeopardy of losing wrestling," Eierman said. "When I was gone it just made me realize how important it was to me; how it would kill me if I missed my senior year."

But after his pins last weekend, questions surrounding Eierman's eligibility have arisen.

Eierman sat out the 1991-92 season, but lost a year of eligibility because he did not qualify academically.

See EIERMAN on 8

Boone back in practice on Monday

By Mike Kluck
Senior Reporter

Nebraska guard Jaron Boone returned to practice Monday after serving a 1 1/2-game suspension for disciplinary reasons.



Boone

Boone did not practice with the team on Friday and didn't suit up for Saturday's 75-65 loss at home to Iowa State.

Two days later, Nee said, the incident is over. Boone will be back in uniform and back in the starting lineup Wednesday night when the 15-7 Huskers travel to Columbia, Mo., to play 13-8 Missouri at the Hearnes Center.

"I think people are acting like it's a killer," Nee said after practice Monday. "People get disciplined. It's been taken care of. It's been worked out. The thing is he's a high-profile player, and it gets magnified."

Boone had a good practice Monday, Nee said, and had learned from the incident.

"I feel very comfortable he is going to come out of this for the better," Nee said. "We can get stronger from this adversity and make us a better basketball team."

As Boone was leaving the court at the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Monday, he said he was done talking to the media for the remainder of the season.

Boone, a second-team All-Big Eight pick last year, is the Huskers' second-leading scorer, averaging 15.4 points per game. He had started 78 consecutive contests before Saturday and is seventh in the conference in scoring. This year, Boone was a pre-season first-team All-Big Eight selection.

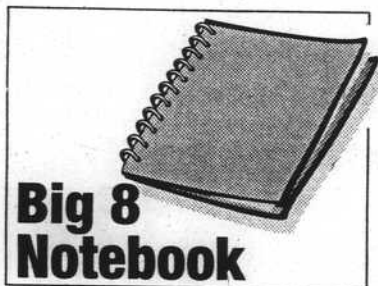
During Wednesday night's game at Kansas State—in which Boone led the Huskers with seven points in the first half—Nee and the senior from Salt Lake City clashed at halftime in the Nebraska locker room.

Nee said the confrontation was a result of a lack of communication on and off the court. But after meeting with Boone and his mother, Jackie, Nee said the communication lines had been reopened.

"Sometimes what people say and what people hear are totally different," Nee said. "The communication lines are way more clearer. Our relationship will improve."

"One of the things he and I agreed on is that we're going to talk daily. I think those little five minutes are important."

After arguing with Cornhusker coach Danny Nee during halftime of last Wednesday's 77-68 loss to Kansas State in Manhattan, Kan., Boone was benched. He did not practice with the team on Friday and didn't suit up for Saturday's 75-65 loss at home to Iowa State.



Big 8 Notebook

Missouri coach Norm Stewart said that although his constant jawing with Big Eight officials may not have had any immediate benefits, he had been involved in some interesting conversations with the men in stripes during his 28 years with the Tigers.

"Sometimes we talk about how bad of a golfer they are or whatever," Stewart said.

Kansas coach Roy Williams said his dialogue with officials could be purposeful during games, but it often depended on how much the other coach was talking to the officials. During the Jayhawks' 88-73 win at Nebraska on Jan. 28, Williams said, he and Nebraska coach Danny Nee didn't say more than 30 words to the officials during the entire game.

Oklahoma senior Ryan Minor was named the Big Eight player of the week on Monday for his play in the Sooners' 67-65 win against Texas on Jan. 31 and their 104-68 victory over Missouri on Saturday.

In the Texas game, Minor scored 14 points and grabbed nine rebounds. Against Missouri, he had 30 points and 10 rebounds. Last season's Big Eight player of the year, Minor leads the conference in scoring, averaging 21 points per game.

Iowa State's 75-65 win over Nebraska on Saturday marked the first time since 1978-79 that the Cyclones have won five straight Big Eight games. The Cyclones could tie a school record with six straight wins if they defeat Kansas on Wednesday night in Lawrence, Kan. The last time Iowa State won six straight games was in the 1962-63 season.

Missouri's 104-68 loss to Oklahoma on Saturday at the Lloyd Noble Center in Norman, Okla., was Stewart's 1,000th game as coach in 35 years at Northern Iowa and Missouri. The game also will be remembered as the third-worst loss ever by a Stewart-coached team.

Stewart is ranked 10th among all-time Division-I coaches in total games. Two other former Big Eight legends — Henry Iba and Phog Allen — are among the top 10 in games coached. Iba, who coached at Colorado and Oklahoma State, is No. 1 with 1,105 games, and Allen coached 1,010 games at Kansas.

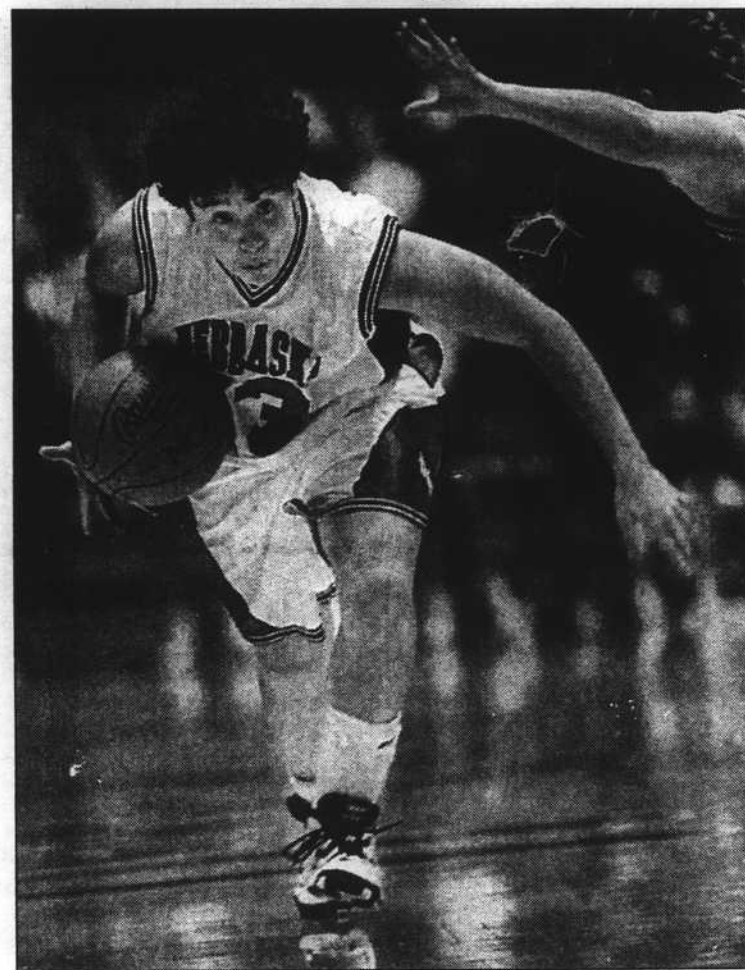
In the Missouri-Oklahoma game Saturday, the Sooners turned the ball over only twice. Oklahoma leads the conference, averaging just 11 turnovers per game.

Iowa State coach Tim Floyd said he never would have dreamed that the Cyclones would have a 5-1 record in the Big Eight.

But he said he also realized the Cyclones had received some luck along the way. In four of Iowa State's five conference wins, a starter for the opponent did not play or was limited in his playing time.

The Big Eight notebook was compiled by senior reporter Mike Kluck.

Thievery



Matt Miller/DN

Nebraska point guard Lis Brenden is the Cornhuskers' leader in steals this season. Brenden, a 5-foot-6 senior, also ranks second on the team in assists and has started every game.

NU guard swiftly steals ball, show

By Adam Krepela
Staff Reporter

Like a bolt of lightning.

Perhaps those are the best words to describe Nebraska's Lis Brenden. The speedy senior has been a treat for Cornhusker fans to watch this season; that is, if they can find her on the court.

Brenden, a 5-foot-6 point guard, has come a long way to play for the Huskers. In high school, she was named the Oregon 3A player of the year while averaging 23 points per game at Silverton High School. She often drew double- and triple-team attention from opposing defenses.

Brenden was recruited not only by Nebraska but by Weber State, Arizona State and Oregon. Nebraska coach Angela Beck said Brenden had come a long way on the court since the player arrived in Lincoln four years ago.

So why play for Nebraska? "There's a lot of support for women's athletics here," Brenden said. "And when you have a lot of support for it, you can do a lot of

great things."

Brenden, who has started 68 games in her career, averaged 7.1 points per game and accumulated 206 assists and 135 steals in her first three seasons.

Her scoring average has dropped off slightly to 6.7 points per game this season, but her court leadership is stronger than ever for the 15-6 Huskers.

Brenden has 68 assists, second on the team to Anna DeForge's 79, and has used her speed to gain a team-high 48 steals this season, making her the fifth-most productive thief in the Big Eight.

Brenden gave Oklahoma a taste of her defensive ability in Sunday's 71-52 Nebraska win at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. On the Sooners' first possession, Brenden's tenacious defense caused the game's first turnover. A few possessions later, she recorded her second steal of the game, sparking the Huskers to a 15-point halftime lead.

See BRENDEN on 8

Star back to sign on Wednesday

By David Wilson
Staff Reporter

Robert Pollard, a star running back from Jacksonville, Fla., confirmed his decision Monday night to play football for Nebraska next fall.

Pollard said he planned to sign a letter-of-intent during a press conference scheduled for Wednesday afternoon at Orange Park High School. Wednesday is the first day recruits are allowed to sign.

Although players are not allowed to speak with coaches in person during the dead period, which began Sunday at noon, Pollard said Nebraska coach Tom Osborne called him Thursday to tell him he was sending the scholarship papers.

Pollard said he spoke with Cornhusker assistant coach Craig Bohl Monday night about the specifics of faxing the letter to Lincoln.

Pollard, who has not yet qualified academically, said he was expecting to receive his SAT scores sometime in the next few weeks.

The 6-foot-2, 205-pound Pollard, who was also a highly touted safety, said he was focused on one thing: making an impact with Nebraska in his freshman year.

If he doesn't redshirt and remains a running back, Pollard will have to compete with Ahman Green, who led the Huskers in yards rushing last season as a true freshman.

"Ahman Green will probably be the starter," Pollard said, "unless I beat him out in fall practice. I like competition and I'm pretty sure he likes it, too. I'm willing to work extra hard to get what I want."

Pollard said he would be satisfied with a second-string spot if his attempt to start fell short.

Considered by analysts to be one of the top high school athletes in the country, Pollard said he enjoyed his visit to Lincoln on Dec. 8.

"It was pretty nice, but it was snowing," Pollard said. "But a good athlete wouldn't let the weather get in the way of his dreams."

Pollard said he hoped to play football in the NFL, but the high graduation rate of Husker football players was another factor that swayed him toward Nebraska.

Although new recruits will not suit up for practice for another six months, Pollard said he planned to work out over the summer.

"I'm going to do a lot of running so I can be in shape before I come up there," Pollard said. "I don't want to have to play catch-up with the rest of the players."

Nebraska has now received 17 verbal commitments. The Huskers are expected to award 18 scholarships Wednesday.

Among the candidates to fill the final spot are Cedric Bell, an offensive guard from Bradenton, Fla., and cornerback Ralph Brown from La Puente, Calif.