

Huskers to face 2 ranked teams

By David Wilson
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska baseball team will battle two traditional national powers this weekend in the Fiesta Bowl Diamond Classic in Tempe, Ariz.

The Cornhuskers will take on 11th-ranked Texas Tech today at 2 p.m., sixth-ranked Arizona State Friday and Northwestern on Saturday. The consolation and championship games will be played on Sunday.

"We've probably bitten off more than we can chew. New Mexico State was serious competition," said Nebraska coach John Sanders. "(Arizona State and Texas Tech) are outstanding ball clubs and certain NCAA qualifiers."

The 6-0 Red Raiders, coached by Larry Hays, are off to their best start since 1993. Hays helped Texas Tech to its first-ever NCAA regional berth last season, compiling a 51-14 record.

Left-handed pitcher Matt Miller, a junior, is expected to start today's game for the Raiders. Miller has won both of his outings this season, holding opposing hitters to a .224 average while maintaining a 1.93 earned-run average.

Offensively, the 2-1 Huskers are led by catcher Pete Jenkins, who is hitting .472 this season. Jenkins, a junior, is expected to bat sixth behind senior outfielders Mel Motley and Matt Meyer, who combined for 12 RBI in Nebraska's season-opening series against New Mexico State on Feb. 2-3.

Eugene Jenkins, the only other Husker senior expected to start, has led off the batting order in all three games this season. Jenkins, Nebraska's starting center fielder, will open the tournament hitting .312 with six runs scored.

The rest of the young Nebraska lineup will be put to the test against a Texas Tech pitching staff that has limited opposing hitters to a .225 average this season.

"Some of them may be a little afraid, and some may have some concerns," Sanders said. "But on the other side, I think any player here in a Nebraska uniform wants to play quality competition."

"We've probably bitten off more than we can chew."

JOHN SANDERS

Nebraska baseball coach

Junior Steve Fish will start today on the mound for the Huskers. Fish earned the win in Nebraska's season-opening 23-13 win over New Mexico State, allowing only two hits in 4 2/3 innings.

Texas Tech, a future Big 12 Conference rival of Nebraska, locked its series with the Huskers at two games apiece the last time they met in 1991.

Husker pitcher Jonas Armenta, a junior, will make his first start of the season Friday against 6-1 Arizona State at 7 p.m. The Sun Devils are averaging almost 12 runs per game and will enter the tournament with a .355 team batting average. Nebraska, which has played Arizona State five times, trails the series 3-2.

The Sun Devils are led offensively by sophomore left fielder Dan McKinley, who has hit .429 with three home runs in Arizona State's seven games this season.

Northwestern, which will open its season against Arizona State on Thursday, is scheduled to face Nebraska on Saturday at 2 p.m. The Wildcats are led by infielder Jake Suffian, who hit .346 last season.

Nebraska freshman Jay Siriani, who earned the Huskers' second win of the season, will start on Saturday. Siriani held New Mexico State to three runs in five innings in a 15-6 Husker win on Feb. 3.

Senior Jason Allen is expected to start Sunday's game. Allen was pulled after 3 1/3 innings in the second game of a doubleheader against New Mexico State after allowing only one run and striking out two batters. Sunday's consolation game will be played at 11 a.m. The championship game will be played at 2:30 p.m.

"These are really tough games. It doesn't get any tougher," Sanders said. "There is no comfort zone. If you make any mistakes, you're probably going to lose."

Swimmer provides inspiration for NU

By Vince D'Adamo
Staff Reporter

It's not always easy being on top. The top is where Nebraska freestyle swimmer and team captain Melanie Dodd thrives.

"She loves to compete," Cornhusker assistant coach Keith Moore said. "She has very high goals and strives in her daily practice regimen on achieving those goals."

Dodd, a senior from Sydney, Australia, has been an All-American twice at Nebraska.

Dodd has won at least two events at every meet this semester and was named Big Eight swimmer of the month for January. She recorded eight individual freestyle wins and six first-place finishes as a relay team member last month.

Dodd leads her Nebraska teammates into this week's Big Eight Championships in Oklahoma City, Okla. Swimming preliminary events begin today at 11 a.m. Husker freshman T.D. Rowe placed second in the 1-meter diving event Wednesday night with a score of 422.40. Freshman Nikki Markota finished sixth for Nebraska and senior Juli Jones placed eighth.

This weekend's competition is the final Big Eight meet. Next season, the Big 12 will be considered one of the premier swimming conferences in the nation.

"That makes it important," Dodd said. "It also makes it very special. I see it as a great opportunity."

Dodd is the all-time leader in Nebraska history with a time of 22.88 seconds in the 50-meter freestyle. She heads the all-time charts in the 100- and 200-meter events with times of 49.60 seconds and one minute, 47.85 seconds, respectively.

Husker coach Cal Bentz said Dodd set a great example for her teammates to follow.

"She's been a great student, a great athlete and a great inspiration to our women's team," Bentz said.

Dodd is a member of four Husker relay teams that are nationally ranked and on top of the all-time Nebraska charts. In addition to her individual relay teams, Dodd competes in the 400- and 200-meter medley relay and the 800- and 200-meter freestyle relays.

"She's at a great level in her swimming, and that's pulling the rest of the team to that level," Moore said.

Buffalo coach says NU will make tourney

By Jason Brunz
Staff Reporter

Heavy hearts were the only thing the Colorado women's basketball team took home from Lincoln Wednesday night.

Nebraska defeated the 18th-ranked Buffaloes (20-7 overall and 7-4 in the Big Eight) 83-75 in double-overtime at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Colorado coach Ceal Barry said she was not surprised Nebraska was able to end the Buffs' seven-game winning streak against Nebraska. Before Wednesday night, Nebraska had not defeated the Buffs since a 62-50 win on Jan. 22, 1993.

Barry, who has coached Colorado for four straight Big Eight titles, said she thought the Cornhuskers were well on their way to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in three years.

"They've got some very good offensive players," Barry said. "I totally expected them to come out and be aggressive."

Colorado, 30-3 a year ago, advanced to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament last season. The Buffaloes have made it to the Sweet 16 in three of the past four years.

Nebraska, which was down 35-29 at the half, scored 35 points in the second half to force overtime.

Return

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Byrne. What the players said was not disclosed, but the problems can be taken care of quickly, Nee said.

The team's meeting with Byrne, Nee said, dealt with putting an end to profanity and listening to the concerns of the players, who have decided not to speak to the media until Saturday's game against Oklahoma.

"I'm willing to listen," Nee said. "I'm willing to change."

Nee did not agree with the way the situation was handled. He said he wished that his players would have

come to him instead of going over his head to Byrne.

"I think it was very poor judgment on their part, and I didn't think it needed to get to that point," Nee said. "I respect them, but I don't agree with it."

"If my ego's bruised or my feelings are hurt, I'm supposed to be the guy to handle it. Did I like what happened or how it was handled? Absolutely not."

Despite his displeasure with the players' actions, Nee said, no disciplinary action will be taken against any of the players who were late to practice Tuesday.

"They want to play basketball," Nee said. "If they don't want to play basketball, they can get the hell out."

No one asked to transfer, Nee said, and the rumors that he may resign were false — although Nee did say he would re-evaluate his position at Nebraska following the season.

He said he asked Byrne about the possibility of resigning or being fired. Byrne told Nee his job was safe, the coach said.

"I've gotten stronger on this, and it's strengthened my position," Nee said. "I feel very comfortable, but it was two days wasted."

Win

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ranked No. 2 at 158 pounds, defeated

Todd Sacksteder 7-2.

Chad Nelson kept the momentum alive at 167. Erik Josephson added points at 177 for Nebraska and 190-pound freshman Kalin Makaiwi took

all hope away from the Tigers, pinning Thomas Patterson.

No.2 heavyweight Tolly Thompson added the final team points for Nebraska.

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