

Gymnasts split with Oklahoma

BY GREGG MADSEN
Staff Reporter

The home opener for Nebraska gymnastics produced opposite reactions from the women's and men's teams.



Brink

The women's team left the Bob Devaney Sports Center Saturday night with a sense of accomplishment. The men left in frustration.

The Nebraska women knocked off Oklahoma 195.25-187.85 while the men lost to the Sooners 227.575-226.15.

Women's Coach Dan Kendig said he was surprised at the Cornhuskers' margin of victory.

"I didn't expect it to be this bad," Kendig said. "Things started out pretty well and then it snowballed."

NU claimed the top three individual places in every event but the floor exercise.

Freshman Heather Brink won the all-around setting a new school record with a score of 39.4. Senior Shelly Bartlett was second in the all-around at 39.25 and freshman Nicole Wilkinson was third with a 38.85.

Brink won the balance beam (9.875), was second on the vault (9.925), third on the uneven bars (9.85) and fifth in the floor exercise (9.75).

Brink, a Lincoln native, has spent the last five years training at the Dynamo Gymnastics Club in Oklahoma City.

"I haven't performed in Lincoln, or even Nebraska, in five years," Brink said. "It was great being home again and having the crowd behind me."

Bartlett joined another senior, Kim

DeHaan, to finish 1-2 on the uneven bars, scoring a 9.9 and 9.875. Bartlett also won the floor exercise (9.875) and was third on the vault (9.85).

Misty Oxford won the vault with a school record 9.5. Oxford, a sophomore from Kelso, Wash., was third on the balance beam (9.7) and fourth on the floor (9.8).

The Huskers, 8-0, have not been defeated in the Devaney Center since they finished second behind eventual national champion Utah in the 1995 NCAA Midwest Regional.

For the men's team, it was an evening of missed opportunities.

Coach Francis Allen said the Huskers could have won the meet had they hit their routines more consistently.

"There were times in the meet when we had a chance to hit the routine, and we didn't," Allen said.

Nebraska led the Sooners 76.05-75.17 after the first two rotations. But on the third rotation, the Huskers lost

their slim lead with a dismal 36.4 performance on the still rings. Oklahoma jumped ahead 113.12-112.45 and never relinquished the lead.

Allen said not having senior Ted Harris at full strength took away the Huskers' scoring potential on rings. Harris, the 1996 NCAA runner-up on the rings, was hampered by a shoulder injury.

Despite the disappointing performance on rings, the Huskers did claim the top two spots in the all-around. Junior Bill Mulholland was first with a 56.625 and freshman Derek Leiter was second 56.325.

"I'd rather see the team win," Mulholland said. "I'm happy that I improved my all-around score, but I want the team to improve even more."

Leiter won the pommel horse (9.65) and was fourth on the parallel bars (9.625).

Sophomore Marshall Nelson won the pommel horse (9.7) and was second on the high bar with a 9.6.

Men's track team stuns Razorbacks

BY VINCE D'ADAMO
Staff Reporter

Although the Nebraska men's and women's track and field teams both won Saturday, NU Coach Gary



Pepin

Pepin believes both teams still have some work to do before the Cornhuskers become a well-oiled machine.

However, less than a well-oiled machine may not be too bad

for the NU men.

Nebraska stunned the top-ranked Arkansas men 137-132, a team Pepin said would win the NCAA indoor championships by more than 40 points.

Division II Abilene Christian finished third with 127 points, while Kansas State was last with 84 Saturday in the Nebraska Quadrangular in front of 1,317 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center track.

The women topped the competition with 129 points, pasting Kansas State (79 points) and Abilene Christian (67 points).

"It was a heck of a meet," Pepin said, "but we didn't do well in the men's long jump at all. But in most other areas it appeared as though we made some progress."

The NU men's squad netted five first-place finishes.

The time was just right for sprinter Tom Fish to bite. Fish, a senior from Hastings, won the 60-meter dash with a time of 6.8 seconds and won the 200-meters with an NCAA provisional qualifying and personal indoor best time of 21.55.

"I don't feel like I'm running to my abilities yet," Fish said. "I feel real confident coming up to the end of the indoor season."

Scott Warren topped the 35-pound weight throw with a school-record toss of 66 1/2 feet. In the 60-meter hurdles, junior Charles Reid beat Kansas State's Travis Livingston by an eyelash. Reid's NCAA provisional qualifying time of 7.9 beat Livingston by .01 seconds. Shane Lavy scaled 7-1 3/4 to earn first place in the high jump.

The NU women's team notched victories in nine events. Angee Henry dominated the action winning three of those nine. Henry captured the long jump with a Devaney Center record leap of 21-8. She also posted provisional marks en route to winning the 60-meter dash (7.48) and 200-meters (24.38).

Henry teamed with La'Tisha Croom, Stella Klassen, and Jill Myatt to garner first place in the 4 x 400-meter relay. Croom also won the 400-meters with a provisional qualifying mark of 55.08 seconds.

Croom, a junior from Bellevue, said she hopes her outing is a sign of future success.

"I was excited about winning," Croom said, "but hopefully it proves to me that I can do better."

Tressa Thompson dominated the shot put with a toss of 56-6 outdistancing Monique Kuenen of Abilene Christian by more than 10 feet. Kerry Doetker triumphed in the high jump by scaling a provisional qualifying mark of 5-10 1/2.

Nora Shepherd was victorious in the 3,000 meter run in a time of 9:50.29. Myatt notched first place in the 800-meters with a mark of 2:12.92.

"We had a lot of good performances for this early in the year against a lot of good competition," Pepin said.

Swimmers thrash MU in dual meet

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Staff Reporter

There were no surprises Saturday during the Nebraska men's and women's swimming and diving team's dual against Missouri at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.



Bentz

The Cornhuskers were expected to dominate, and they did. Both the men's and women's

teams posted wins in 12 of 16 events on the way to establishing several season-best marks.

NU Coach Cal Bentz said he expected nothing less from the Huskers.

"It wasn't a strategic thing to try and dominate them," Bentz said. "We wanted to swim faster than we have been. That was the most important thing to us going into this meet."

Both the 15th-ranked women (5-2) and the No. 16 men (8-2) accomplished that goal posting final victory margins of 183-114 and 177-118.

Senior Julia Russell, a member of the 1996 South African Olympic Team, tied her season-best in the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 1:01.73. Russell also clocked in at 55.29 in the 100-yard butterfly, a career-best mark that places her third on the all-time NU chart.

On the men's side, sophomore Danny Bergman won both the one- and three-meter diving events with scores of 320.47 and 352.5. Bergman now has posted victories in 19 of 21 competitions this season.

Junior All-American Alex Shleifman was also impressive for the men winning both the 50-yard freestyle (20.04) and the 100-yard backstroke (51:27).

Sophomore Josh Mathias — who won the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 1:41.07 — said NU's dominating performance might have surprised the Tigers.

"Last year it came down to the last relay, and we had to place 1 and 3 to win the meet," Mathias said. "But obviously we're a much better team this year."

The men's and women's teams return to action Feb. 9 when they play host to Kansas at the Devaney Center.

Jayhawks escape Husker charge

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him feel any better, but after the game I said to Danny that they played better than we played."

Lue, who scored a game-high 26 points with eight rebounds and five assists, directed Nebraska's comeback. Kansas led 36-26 early in the second half before a 6½-minute draught without a field goal.

Nebraska, which last led 24-23 with three minutes to play in the first half, cut the lead to 59-56 on a 12-foot baseline jumper by Lue with 2:10 left in the game. Lue hit two more free throws to cut the lead to one, and after a LaFrenz free throw, Hamilton tied the game at 60.

Husker forward Larry Florence then stole the ball from B.J. Williams,

and Nebraska called a timeout with 23 seconds to play. With the clock running down, Lue misfired into a ferocious Jayhawk defense from behind the 3-point arc, sending the game to overtime.

"Coach Williams did a good job of sending two or three people at me," said Lue, who committed 10 of Nebraska's season-high 28 turnovers. "I think they knew the ball was going to be in my hands."

Kansas scored on every possession in overtime, taking advantage of mismatches in the paint after Moore and Hamilton fouled out 70 seconds into the period. LaFrenz scored 11 of his 20 points after regulation, and KU didn't commit a turnover in the extra frame.

Huskers collapse against Kansas

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the lead to eight and ignite a 29-10 Jayhawk run.

Dixon, who said she was at best 70 percent, scored 10 of the Jayhawks' 29 points in the final nine minutes. More importantly she directed Kansas as they scored on 16 of 20 possessions during that same period. Dixon finished with 17 points on 3 of 13 shooting.

"We weren't sure whether she was even going to be able to play," Kansas Coach Marian Washington said. "She's the gamer that we know she is, and I want to compliment her on her effort."

But Beck said Nebraska's problem wasn't Dixon but freshman forward Lynn Pride.

Pride scored a career-best and game-high 19 points including 11

points during the final nine minutes.

"The point is that Kansas isn't Dixon," Beck said. "That's what everybody has to realize. I had said before the game that if one person goes off besides Dixon, we're in trouble. You can't let anybody have a career night, and I think Pride did. That's probably what killed us in the game."

After a Dixon 3-pointer with 8:48 left, which cut the Huskers' lead to eight, Nebraska turned the ball over. Kansas capitalized when Pride scored and was fouled by Charlie Rogers on a jump shot.

Pride, a 6-2 freshman from Arlington, Texas, — who Beck said the Huskers recruited aggressively — completed the 3-point play to cut the Nebraska lead to 49-44 with 8:18 remaining.

"They got those two key 3-point plays back-to-back, and it kind of

broke our backs defensively," said DeForge, who scored 11 points. "Those two plays were big changes in the game."

DeForge is averaging 17.3 points per game, but in the past four games she has averaged 26 points.

It wasn't just the KU offense in the final nine minute push, it was the Jayhawks' defense that also stepped up. Kansas limited NU to just three field goals in that span. Nicole Kubik scored all three NU field goals on 3-pointers. Kubik, a freshman from Cambridge, finished with five 3-pointers and a career-best 16 points.

Despite losing the Big 12 North Division lead, Beck said the Huskers still can accomplish their goal of winning the conference.

"Don't count us out yet," Beck said.

Munson salvages Nebraska win

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a 6-4 win at 126 pounds over the Huskers' Jeramie Welder. Welder was up 3-1 but lost on a takedown in the final minute.

"It came down to exactly what we thought it would come down to, a takedown in the third period," Neumann said. "They got it, and we didn't."

After that, NU won the next two matches to tie the dual at seven. No. 11 134-pounder Brad Canoyer won by a major decision over Frank Kiskey 17-7 to give the Huskers their first four points. Husker 142-pounder Dusty Morris added three more points with a 6-5 win over David Moldonado.

Second-ranked Chris Bono major decisioned Husker Ryan Bauer 19-6 to put the Cyclones ahead 11-7. But NU's Jason Kraft answered back pulling NU within one with a 4-3 decision of John DeLeon.

The Cyclones then started to roll. ISU won at 167 and 177 to gain an 18-10 advantage going into 190-pound match. Iowa State's Bart Horton beat Monte Christensen 7-2 for three points for ISU. At 177 pounds, top-ranked Barry Weldon added four team points with a 13-5 major decision over Charles McTorry.

Then Munson saved Nebraska. NU finished with the two wins at 190 and heavyweight to improve its dual record to 11-4.

Neumann said he was worried after Christensen lost at 167.

"I thought when we lost at 167, we were in trouble," he said. "We planned to win that one."

Entering the dual, both coaches agreed that each team would win three weight classes. Nebraska would win at 134, 158 and heavyweight and ISU at 126, 150 and 177. The other four matches were toss-ups.

Douglas said even after winning two

"You pin a guy from Iowa State to win the dual meet ... that's pretty huge."

TIM NEUMANN
NU wrestling coach

of the toss-up matches at 118 and 167, he knew the dual was still wide open.

Munson, a sophomore from Arkansas City, Kan., said Neumann gave him a pre-match pep talk as he waited for his match.

"He (Neumann) said 'Go out and do your best. Try for the win,'" Munson said. "Then, he cracked a smile and said 'because we need it.'"