

## Sports Opinion



**Gregg Madsen**

### Back injury can't keep Blomstedt out this weekend

Janet Blomstedt always thought lifting weights would help her become the best collegiate heptathlete in the country.

But last May, a week before the Big Eight outdoor track and field championships, her hard work in the weight room proved disastrous when she injured her lower back doing a power clean.

The injury was so painful it kept her from finishing the heptathlon in the Big Eight Championships and all but ended her dream of making the 1996 U.S. Olympic team.

Today, her back still hasn't completely healed.

"I'm maybe at 80 percent," Blomstedt said. "My back is doing better, but for the past three weeks I've just gone from injury to injury."

Blomstedt has had a shot put dropped on her foot by her coach, bruised her Achilles' tendon because of a defective pair of shoes and strained her hamstring all in that time frame.

Despite the injuries, Blomstedt still fights to get back to the level where she was a year ago.

Friday, she will compete in the pentathlon at the inaugural Big 12 Indoor Championships at the Bob Devaney Sports Center track.

"I want to win," Blomstedt said. "I'm going to do whatever I can to score points for the team."

Nebraska Multi-events Coach Steve Smith said Blomstedt will be a valuable asset for the Huskers this weekend. An average performance from Blomstedt should be good enough to win the pentathlon, Smith said.

"She's still close to the top," Smith said. "It's just that she's going through a lot with rehab."

During the 1996 Big Eight indoor championships, Blomstedt set a national record in the pentathlon, scoring 4,235 points.

A month and a half later, she was poised to win the heptathlon at the outdoor conference championships, but her back injury cut that dream short.

Blomstedt still competed in the heptathlon at the 1996 outdoor NCAA meet and finished 10th despite the intense pain she suffered.

She was named an All-American in the heptathlon, but at the U.S. Olympic Trials, Blomstedt failed to make the Olympic team.

She said the disappointment of missing the Olympics has motivated her to work harder for a shot at the team that will represent America at Sydney, Australia in 2000.

"The Olympics, well, they're kind of the big show," she said.

Keep an eye on Blomstedt. She just might have a starring role in that show.

Madsen is a junior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.

## Huskers still can't win on the road

From Staff Reports

WACO, Texas — The Nebraska basketball team dropped its 12th straight conference road game Wednesday night, falling 71-60 to Baylor.



**Skinner**

Brian Skinner scored a game-high 22 points with 11 rebounds and six blocked shots, dominating under the basket and leading the Bears to a 34-26 halftime lead before a crowd of 5,015 at the Ferrell Center.

"He scored at will inside," NU

Coach Danny Nee said of the Baylor center, a 6-foot-10, 245-pound junior. "He was a big factor inside the whole game. He's really, really good."

Nebraska (14-12 overall and 5-8 in the Big 12 Conference) continued its inconsistent play three days after what Nee called NU's best game of the season, a 79-67 win over Texas on Sunday.

On Saturday, the Cornhuskers visit No. 7 Iowa State, which lost 57-56 at Texas Wednesday night when UT center Dennis Jordan tipped in a miss with three seconds to play.

In Waco on Wednesday, the Bears (17-9 and 5-8) extended their eight-point halftime advantage to 56-40 with 11:22 to play in the game. But after Skinner and 6-10

forward Doug Brandt went to the bench with three fouls, the Huskers used an 8-0 run to cut the lead in half.

Brandt, a senior from Hastings, then returned and sank a 19-foot jumper to halt the Husker run. NU, which committed 15 turnovers to Baylor's six, never got closer than 10 points again.

In the first half, the Bears led 9-1 and 15-5 before Nebraska closed to 23-20 and Baylor ended the half with an 11-6 surge.

"I was disappointed in our start," Nee said. "We have to get off to a better start if we are going to win on the road."

NU center Mikki Moore agreed.

"It was disappointing to come out flat after playing so well on

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| Nebraska | 60 |
| Baylor   | 71 |

Sunday," Moore, who had 10 points, five rebounds and three blocked shots against the Bears.

Point guard Tyrone Lue paced the Huskers with 18 points, Cookie Belcher scored 14, and Venson Hamilton pulled down 10 rebounds in 23 minutes after picking three early fouls in the first half. Damond Mannon scored 15 points for Baylor, and Brandt and Patrick Hunter contributed 10 apiece.

"I never felt like we got to where we were a threat to win the game, to be honest," Nee said. "I thought Baylor controlled the game throughout."



MATT MILLER/DN  
JAMI KUBIK battles for the ball against Baylor's Amy Alcala (No. 24). Kubik was one of five players to score in double figures for Nebraska.

## Huskers roar past Bears in second half

By SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Staff Reporter

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|----------|----|
| Baylor   | 73 |
| Nebraska | 91 |

In a 91-73 drubbing of Baylor Wednesday night at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, the Nebraska women's basketball team found an answer to a season-long problem but walked away with a new question.

NU found an answer to their post problems in the name of freshman Charlie Rogers. Rogers, who grabbed a career-best 12 rebounds against Texas, made her presence felt in the middle again against Baylor. The 6-foot-2 center made 7-of-9 shots from the field on her way to tying Tina McClain with a game-high 16 points.

But the Cornhuskers (18-5 overall and 8-5 in the Big 12) had to deal with a new problem in front of a crowd of 2,146 at the Devaney Center. Senior point guard LaToya Doage, the Huskers' primary ball-handler and best defender, suffered a sprained ligament in her knee during the final seconds

of the first half.

Doage is questionable for the Huskers' game against Iowa State on Sunday, NU Coach Angela Beck said.

Both events have major implications for Nebraska.

Beck said the emergence of Rogers, who Beck thought about redshirting before the season, is important to the team's success.

"Charlie Rogers proved she could be the post of the future," Beck said. "She has superb hands and handled some great passes tonight. She had a great presence and just a great performance."

But the possible loss of Doage hurts the Huskers in several ways.

"LaToya is the defensive leader of our team," Rogers said. "We mimic what she does. Without her we really

Please see BEARS on 11

## Myatt shifts gears from 400 to 800

By ANDREW STERNAD  
Staff Reporter

This year's track and field season has been a big transition for Nebraska sprinter Jill Myatt.



**Myatt**

to add depth to the women's track

team. The senior from Iowa City, Iowa, said switching events has been a blessing.

"I'm glad I decided to do the 800-meters," Myatt said. "It gives me a better chance to qualify for nationals, and at the same time help our team at nationals."

Myatt's time of 2:09.82 in the 800 at the Frank Sevigne Husker Invitational was the fastest time in the Big 12 Conference this indoor season, and makes her the favorite entering this weekend's Big 12 Championship meet at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Billy Maxwell, NU's sprints

Please see MYATT on 11

## NU won't run away with title, coaches say

By SEAN LEWIS  
Staff Reporter

Don't expect Nebraska to run away from the field when the inaugural Big 12 Conference indoor track and field championships start Friday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The Cornhusker men and women are both favored to win on their home track, but the competition will not go down without a fight.

The Texas women look to push the Husker women — who won 17 straight Big Eight indoor titles — to the wire. The Longhorns — who have won three national indoor titles — won the last 12 Southwestern Conference titles and enter the meet as the

top-ranked team in the nation.

Texas Women's Coach Beverly Kearney said she doesn't know what to expect coming into the meet, but her team will be ready.

"We're going in blind and don't have any idea of what we'll see, and it will be a hindrance," Kearney said. "I don't know what to expect with it being the first conference championship, but we're going in like everyone looking to win."

"I think we're ready to run. We may not have the maturity, but we are a seasoned team and we'll line up to run."

Longhorn runners own the fastest times in the country in three events.

Please see TRACK on 11