

Macfee runs away with Big 12 title

By Andrew Strnad
Staff Reporter

For Nebraska middle distance runner Sherri Elwood Macfee, the inaugural Big 12 Indoor Track and Field Championships will be remembered as the high point of her career.

Macfee claimed her first conference title by winning the 1000-meter run with a time of 2:49.99. At the Big 12 meet, she was the lone Cornhusker to win a race as the NU women won the first-ever Big 12 title.

Macfee, a senior from Oberlin, Kan., set the tone for the first three laps before Colorado's Carrie Messner took the lead on lap No. 4.

Huskers shock ISU

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him do what he had to do." The one shot that Lue missed in the final minutes led to the completion of NU's comeback. Willoughby sank two free throws with 37 seconds left, giving ISU a 64-61 lead. Lue then launched a 3 from near the top of the key, and the ball caromed off the backboard and the rim to Moore, who stood four feet from the basket in the lane. "When I got that rebound, I turned and Bernard (Garner) hollered my name," Moore said. "I looked at him in his face, and he was set in ready position for the shot." From the right baseline directly in front of the Husker bench, Garner buried the shot with 24 seconds left, tying the game for the first time since the 13:01 mark. "I just ran out to the corner and they gave me the ball," Garner said. "I didn't think about it. I just let it go. I knew it was good when it left my hands."

Iowa State called timeout and point guard Jacy Holloway held the ball until the final five seconds before passing to Kenny Pratt, who shot over Moore from 4 feet. The ball hit the right side of the rim, bounced over the basket and fell to the floor as time expired.

In overtime, Nebraska took a 68-65 lead with 3:23 to play on a 12-foot Lue jumper. Bankhead and Willoughby scored for ISU, and Moore hit a shot and sank two free throws for Nebraska before Willoughby's fatal error with 18 seconds to play.

"I was trying to play aggressive defense on him," said Belcher, who guarded Willoughby when he dribbled off his foot. "Coach Nee had told us if we needed to foul, then to go ahead and foul. I just told myself to play good enough defense where I didn't have to foul. I think it worked out for the best."

Nebraska out-shot the Cyclones 53 to 38 percent, and the Huskers used a 13-4 run to lead 26-16 late in the first half and 28-23 at the break. Before Lue took charge in the final three minutes of the second half, Iowa State scored 26 of 36 points — including a 14-2 run — to lead 55-47 with 3:47 remaining.

Willoughby led Iowa State (18-6 and 9-5) with 22 points, Bankhead scored 13 and Kelvin Cato added 11 points, nine rebounds and seven blocked shots.

"We worked too hard to let it slip away," said Lue, who scored more than any individual against Iowa State since Oklahoma State's Bryant Reeves in 1993. "We celebrated more in the locker room here today than we did when we won the NIT championship."

"The plan was to take the lead early on," Macfee said, "and then if somebody got ahead of me, I would just push them."

Entering the fifth and final lap, Macfee said she heard the crowd roaring and she refused to let someone beat her on her home track in possibly the last indoor meet of her career.

"During that last lap, I knew in my mind that I was going to win the race," Macfee said. "She wasn't going to pull away, and once that crowd got going, I said, 'nobody's going to beat me on my own track.'"

Coach Jay Dirksen, who coaches NU's distance runners, said Macfee needed to believe in herself and in the end that pushed her across the finish line in first place.

"It's never been a lack of talent," Dirksen said. "Sherri has the talent. It's a question if she's mentally ready to race."

One thing that helped Macfee mature mentally was her marriage last

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SHERRI MACFEE
NU middle distance runner

summer. She married Darren Macfee and she said he has been a big contributor in her run to the Big 12 title.

"It's just great to have him here in the stands," Sherri Macfee said. "He's really kept me stable."

But during the race, Darren said, his nerves were on edge while his wife made a come-from-behind victory.

"I was pretty excited before and during the race," Macfee said. "Then after she won, I was just speechless."

Before her half-a-second win over Messner on Saturday, Macfee's previous best was a third-place finish at the 1995 Big Eight indoor meet.

Macfee now turns her attention on qualifying for the NCAA Championships as a member of NU's distance medley relay team. Her event, the 1000-meters is not run at the NCAA's.

"This is definitely the high point of my career," she said, "but I hope that I can continue to succeed like this during outdoors."

Dirksen said Macfee's victory is a testament to her focus and determination on and off the track.

"Sherri's an excellent student, and a truly great person," he said. "I'm just so proud of her. She deserved this."

Iowa State blows by NU

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NU missed a 3-pointer but grabbed the offensive rebound and found an open Jami Kubik whose 10-footer with 18 seconds left tied the game at 55.

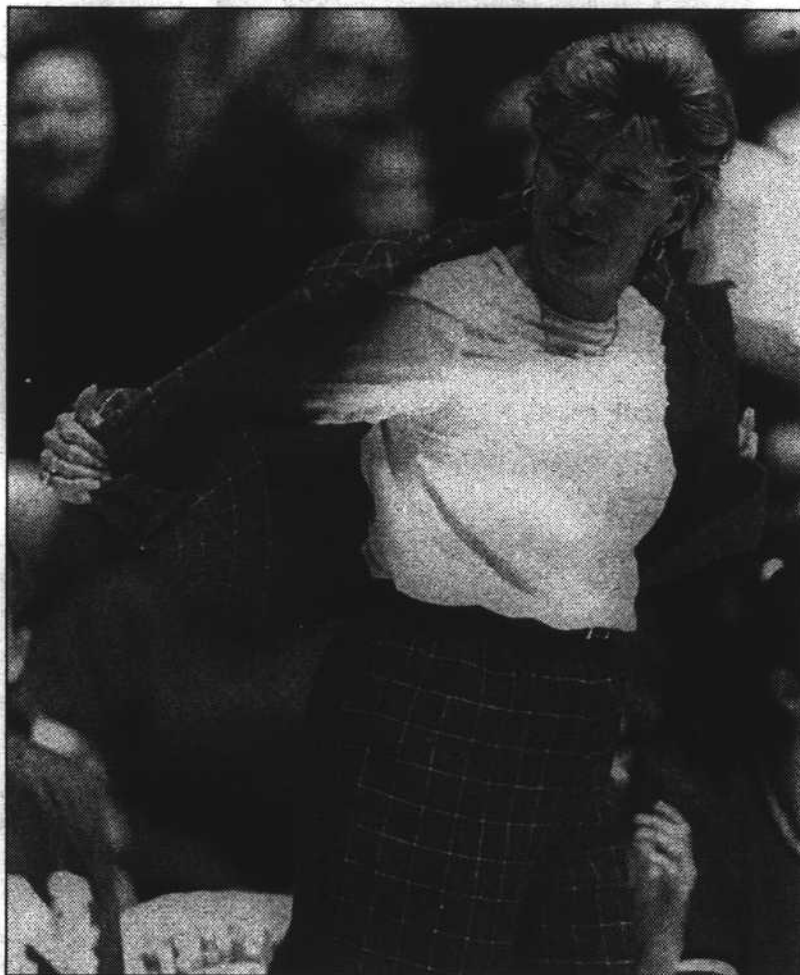
On Iowa State's next possession, Julie Hand missed a 3-point attempt but Janel Grimm grabbed the rebound and made a putback with three seconds remaining to give Iowa State a 57-55 lead.

The play was eerily similar to Monday night's Nebraska loss at Texas. Against the Longhorns, NU — which led by one in overtime — lost the game when Angela Jackson put in an offensive rebound with three seconds left.

"I thought Grimm really took it to our inexperience inside," Beck said. "We need to have an animal inside guarding them, and we couldn't find one on our bench. We really need somebody tough to guard Grimm late."

The Huskers had one last chance, but DeForge's running 20-foot jump shot at the buzzer hit the back of the rim and fell out.

DeForge led all scorers with 20 points — including 13 in the second half — but missed her final seven attempts from the field.



ANGELA BECK removes her coat during NU's 57-55 loss to Iowa State Sunday afternoon at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The Huskers are 18-6 overall and 8-6 in the Big 12 Conference following the loss.

Huskers smash record

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Nebraska Coach Dan Kendig said he isn't surprised by Bartlett's performance.

Bartlett, from Spokane, Wash., finished in a three-way tie for first on the vault (9.875) and a five-way tie for first on the floor exercise (9.9).

"Shelly did a great job again," Kendig said. "I know in her heart she knows she can do a better bar routine and a better beam routine. But as far as going out and hitting four events, she did that."

Kendig said Brink, who wasn't expected to compete in the all-around, turned in a gutsy performance despite an injured foot.

On the vault, Brink finished in a three-way tie with teammates Misty Oxford and Bartlett (9.875). Brink set another career-best on the uneven bars (9.875).

ASU Assistant Coach Kristin Smyth said she wasn't disappointed with the loss — only the second defeat this season for the Sun Devils.

"We came in here and hit our sets," Smyth said. "After coming off the meet on Friday night, we were predicting a 195 or mid-195. We came out with that. We could not be happier."

The Sun Devils, who defeated the Bears 195.95-192.925 Friday night,

School record

The Nebraska women's gymnastics team scored a school-record 196.625 on Sunday. Here are NU's top five all-time scores:

| | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| 1. 196.625 | 1997 Madison Club |
| 2. 195.75 | vs. Southern Utah, 1996 |
| 3. 195.575 | 1997 |
| 4. 195.45 | at SE Missouri St., 1997 |
| 5. 195.425 | 1997 |

were without their top all-arounder Meagan Wright.

ASU's Bridget Sandman won the uneven bars at 9.95. Bartlett tied Sun Devil Meagan Wright for second (9.9), and Nebraska senior Kim DeHaan came in fourth (9.875). DeHaan also joined Bartlett in the five-way tie for first on the uneven bars.

Bartlett said Nebraska was motivated by a lackluster 194.4-192.05 defeat of Denver last Saturday.

"We came in to workout on Monday and we were really psyched," she said. "I don't know, we just wanted to get after it and prove that this wasn't a team that went really good at the beginning and then went down from there."

NU sweeps track titles

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the season. Topps, a junior from Decatur, Ill., had been nursing a hamstring injury this season, but he turned on the jets long enough to win the 55-meter dash with an effort of 6.24 seconds.

"It was anybody's race," Topps said. "You can't come into my house and get a victory."

After the race, Topps was so fired up that he waved his arms to the crowd and knocked over a trash can. Pepin said an emotional outburst like that gave the Huskers a shot in the arm.

Long jumper Chris Wright did all of the right things to earn a first-place finish with a leap of 25-7¼. High jumper Shane Lavy narrowly missed clearing the 7-6½ mark, which would have tied a Devaney Center record. However, his leap of 7-4½ sufficed to win the event.

Scott Warren topped the 35-pound weight throw with a heave of 66-2½. Warren said it was his event to lose.

"Unless I threw relatively lousy," Warren said, "I pretty much figured I'd get the win. I wanted to throw a little bit further, but it sets me up well for nationals."

Baseball team splits in tourney

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska baseball team dropped its final two games of the Rawlings Spring Training Tournament in Phoenix.

The Cornhuskers (5-2) lost 6-3 to in-state rival Creighton on Sunday. Nebraska lost 16-7 to Northern Iowa on Saturday.

NU began the tournament with a win over Northeastern and a 3-0 win over the Blue Jays. Against Creighton, Husker pitcher Steve Fish tossed a one-hitter to earn the win. Fish took a no-hitter into the seventh inning before giving up his first hit of the game.

The Huskers open Big 12 Conference play with a doubleheader at Kansas Tuesday.

Husker women lose first match

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska women's tennis team suffered its first loss of the season Saturday losing to No. 27 Texas A&M 7-2.

The Aggies won all six singles matches to lead them to victory. The only match that went three sets was at No. 3 singles, where A&M's Lisa Dingwall defeated Husker senior Annie Yang 6-4, 3-6, 6-2.

Nebraska's only victories came at No. 1 and No. 2 doubles. Sandra Noetzel and Jennifer Thoste won their No. 1 doubles match 8-5 over

Lisa Dingwall and Nancy Dingwall. Lisa Hart and Yang won at the No. 2 spot 8-6 over Leslie Dees and Kathryn Scott. Neither doubles team has lost this season.

The loss dropped Nebraska to 4-1 on the season.

NU golf team finishes third

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska men's golf team had a strong second day performance to finish in third place at the Crown Classic in Lufkin, Texas this weekend.

On the first day of the tournament the Cornhuskers shot a 313 as a team leaving them in ninth place. Nebraska turned things around on day two, shooting a day-low total of 299.

The two-day score of 612 was good enough for third place, finishing five strokes behind No. 1 Arkansas and two shots behind Texas-San Antonio.

Sophomore Josh Madden led the Husker charge with a two-round total of 150. Madden, from Gold Coast, Australia, finished in a tie for fifth place in the individual competition. His second-round score of 74 was the best individual round by a Husker in the tournament.

NU gymnasts lose to Sooners

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska men's gymnastics team lost to No. 7 Oklahoma 228.575-227.60 on Friday.

NU's Derek Leiter won the all-around with a score of 56.85. Marshall Nelson won the parallel bars with a score of 9.85 and won the high bar with a 9.75.