

# Sports

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1997

PAGE 7

## Big 12 Notebook

Nebraska point guard Tyrone Lue was named the Big 12 player of the week for his career-best tying effort of 30 points against Iowa State on Saturday. Lue, who scored 15 points in the Cornhuskers' loss at Baylor, is the first NU player to be named the Big 12 player of the week. Oklahoma's Tim Heskatt was named the league's rookie of the week after averaging 11 points in two Sooner victories last week. Heskatt, a freshman from Lexington, S.C., started the first two games of his career last week.

The Nebraska men's basketball team is now 14-0 this season in games attended by former Daily Nebraskan reporter Todd Walkenhorst. Walkenhorst, host of KRNU's "Monday Sports Madness" and video assistant for the NU volleyball team, has traveled to road games at Missouri-Kansas City, Northern Iowa and Iowa State. When the senior broadcasting major isn't present, NU is 1-12, winning only against Old Dominion Dec. 30 in Puerto Rico.

Kansas clinched the first-ever Big 12 Conference men's basketball regular season title with Saturday's 78-58 win over rival Kansas State. The Jayhawks, who captured the last two Big Eight Conference titles, remained at the top of The Associated Press Top 25 poll. After losing twice last week, Iowa State fell from seventh to 13th and Colorado is the only other ranked Big 12 school at 19th.

As of this weekend, more than 6,000 tickets remained for the NCAA Tournament first and second round games March 14 and 16 at Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Mo. Kansas is the host institution for the site so the top-ranked Jayhawks will not play in Kansas City during the NCAA Tournament.

The Big 12 women's basketball title remains wide open as the season comes to a close this week. Some key games feature Nebraska (18-6 overall and 8-6 in the Big 12) at No. 11 Kansas (21-4 and 12-2) and Colorado at No. 12 Texas (19-5 and 10-3) on Wednesday. Saturday's matchups have Texas traveling to Texas A&M and Iowa State at Colorado.

Colorado's Reagan Scott was named Big 12 women's basketball player of the week. In two games, Scott averaged 19 points, 7 rebounds and 3.5 blocks for the Buffaloes. Baylor freshman guard Mandy Hayworth was named the league's rookie of the week. Hayworth averaged 18 points and three rebounds in two games.

Big 12 Notebook was compiled by staff reporter Pete Marhofer.

## Teams vie for quality seeds

Only one tournament spot has been clinched entering final week.

By VINCE D'ADAMO  
Staff Reporter

With the Big 12 Conference men's basketball regular season winding down, teams are making a final push this week to position themselves in the league tournament. The first-ever Big 12 Tournament starts March 6 in Kansas City, Mo., but this week could be crucial to how teams perform next week.

The top two seeds for the tournament are the division winners. Top-ranked Kansas (28-1 overall and 14-1 in the conference) has clinched the Big 12's regular season title and will be the tournament's No. 1 seed from the North Division. Texas (15-9 and 9-5) narrowly leads the South Division by one game over Texas Tech (16-8 and 8-6) and Oklahoma (16-9 and 8-7). Texas



Patton

blew a chance to extend its lead after losing 72-70 at Texas Tech on Saturday.

Following the top two seeds, the remaining teams will be seeded No. 3 through No. 12 based on their conference record. Teams seeded third and fourth receive first-round byes. North Division representatives Colorado (19-7 and 10-4) and Iowa State (18-6 and 9-5) have the inside track to earn first-round byes entering the season's final week.

Teams seeded fifth through 12th face a task similar to that of climbing Mount Everest in winning the tournament.

Please see SEEDS on 8

## Tournament Time

If the Big 12 Conference men's basketball tournament started today, the pairings would look like this:

(5) Texas Tech vs. (12) Kansas St.  
(6) Oklahoma vs. (11) Texas A&M  
(7) Nebraska vs. (10) Missouri  
(8) Oklahoma St. vs. (9) Baylor

\* Kansas, Texas, Iowa St. and Colorado receive first-round byes.

KU plays either Oklahoma St. or Baylor  
UT plays either Nebraska or Missouri  
ISU plays either Oklahoma or Texas A&M  
CU plays either Texas Tech or Kansas St.

\* Kansas is the only team to have clinched its position



MATT MILLER/DN

SHEILA McPHERSON fights for a loose ball against Iowa State's Jayme Olson. McPherson scored a career-best 12 points in Sunday's game.

## McPherson steps into spotlight

By SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Staff Reporter

Finally, after two years of standing in her teammates' shadows, Sheila McPherson shifted into the spotlight.

McPherson, a senior guard on the Nebraska women's basketball team, was honored along with two other seniors before the Cornhuskers' final home game of the season against Iowa State on Sunday.

She also earned a spot in the starting lineup with the absence of guard LaToya Doage. Doage missed Sunday's game after having surgery to repair a torn lateral meniscus in her right knee, which she injured against Baylor last Wednesday. Doage is expected to be out 10 to 20 days, NU Coach Angela Beck said.

When the lights came back on after player introductions in front of 7,012 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, McPherson made sure she didn't fall back into the shadows.

The 5-foot-5 guard from Indianapolis opened the game with her first 3-point field goal in 11 games and went on to drill 3-of-6 from 3-

point range and 3-of-3 from the free-throw line on the way to scoring a career-best 12 points.

"I'd been thinking about this game for a month," McPherson said. "I was prepared. It was a dream come true and it felt so good to contribute in front of a huge crowd."

At times during the first half of NU's 57-55 loss, McPherson was the team's biggest contributor. Given the green light by Beck to shoot, McPherson out-scored the entire Cyclone team 9-8 during the first 12 minutes of the game.

"Usually, when I go into the game," McPherson said, "Coach tells me to pass it off. But I had more confidence because she gave me the freedom. I knew she wasn't going to take me out if I missed a shot."

McPherson, averaging just 4.8 minutes per game in Big 12 Conference play, was on the court for 23 minutes — 17 of which came in the first half.

She took advantage of the opportunity to establish career-highs in assists (2) and rebounds (4) while tying her career-best marks in field goals and free throws made and attempted.

Although she played six of her minutes in the second half, just playing at all was a personal vic-

"It was a dream come true."

SHEILA McPHERSON  
NU women's basketball player

tory for McPherson. Doing well against Iowa State made her performance all the more sweet.

The Huskers' Jan. 30 victory over the Cyclones in Ames, Iowa, came on the anniversary of her sister Shannon's death. McPherson did not play against ISU that night.

With family and friends in town to see her play in her final home game as a Husker, McPherson was once again reminded of her sister. "I tried to picture what Shannon would have said to me if she were here," McPherson said. "She had so much confidence in me, and I know she would have been proud."

Before Sunday's game, McPherson had not played in three of NU's seven previous contests and did not score in the four others.

"It's not frustrating because I know there's more out there for me after basketball," she said.

## Huskers ready for Jayhawks

By DAVID WILSON  
Staff Reporter

In February, 40 degrees is warm enough for a baseball game.

Nebraska Baseball Coach John Sanders said he is confident the Nebraska baseball team will take the field in Lawrence, Kan., today at 3 p.m. to face Kansas in the first-ever Big 12 conference game.

The Cornhuskers (5-2) send senior right-hander Jonas

Armenta to the mound at Hoglund-Maupin Stadium in an attempt to snap a two-game losing streak.

NU broke even in four games in the Rawlings Spring Training Tournament last weekend in Phoenix. The losses, Sanders said, were caused by a lack of run support.

"Three of the four games were beautifully pitched," Sanders said. "But just one of those four was supported with runs. Offensively, we're not hitting on all eight cylinders. We're just not scoring runs."

Senior starting pitchers Peter Lythgoe, Steve Fish and Pat Driscoll each had successful starts in the tournament, Sanders said. Driscoll, who started in Sunday's 6-3 loss to Creighton, was the only one of the three to not earn a win.

"The big, big, big problem was we left 15 people on base," Sanders said. "That's not good."

Nebraska also struck out 12 times against the Bluejays.

But when NU did get the run support, its pitching didn't follow suit. In Saturday's 16-7 loss to Northern Iowa — the tournament champion — the Husker pitchers were rocked, Sanders said.

"It was kind of a staff bang around," Sanders said.

The Husker lineup, Sanders said, has been solidified by All-American candidate Todd Sears and newcomers Kevin Harrington, Andy Sawyers and Michael Knust. But the rest of the team has been struggling at the plate — including leadoff hitter Francis Collins.

Please see SANDERS on 8