

Virus pushes NU past ISU, Iowa

By GREGG MADSEN
Staff Reporter

A virus isn't always a bad thing. The Nebraska men's and women's gymnastics teams found that out firsthand on Saturday in front of a crowd of 2,346 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Nebraska sophomore Marshall Nelson, who won two of the men's six events, said the Huskers were infected by intensity in their 231.7-229.7 win over third-ranked Iowa.

"We just kept hitting routines," Nelson said. "And once you start hitting routines, it's like a virus — you just keep going."

The virus spread to the sixth-ranked Nebraska women's team, which posted its second-highest score in school history with a 196.275-195.1 victory against Iowa State.

The men, competing at home for just the second time this season, posted a season-high team score.

Men's Coach Francis Allen said having the meet at the Devaney Center was an advantage for the Huskers.

"The thing about being at home is when you get hot and you get on a roll like we were, things are going to happen for you," Allen said.

Nelson had career bests in winning the high bar (9.875) and the floor exercise (9.825). The Greeley, Colo., native was also second on the pommel horse (9.85) and tied for third on the parallel bars with a 9.725.

Freshman Derek Leiter won the all-around with a career-best 57.58. Leiter, a graduate of Lincoln Southeast, won the parallel bars at 9.85 and the vault with a 9.65 — both career bests. Junior Bill Mulholland was second in the all-around with a score of 57.53.

Allen said the win is crucial for the Huskers, who had lost their last four meets.

The women's team also reaped the rewards of a solid team effort, scoring team records on the vault (49.45) and the floor exercise (49.475). NU gymnasts won all four events, tying school records in each.

After counting two falls on the balance beam the Huskers held a slim 146.8-146.7 lead over the Cyclones going into the final rotation on the floor exercise.

Nebraska senior Kim DeHaan said the Huskers were motivated by the close score.

"It was kind of like, 'OK, you guys, we've got to kick it into gear,'" DeHaan said.

The Huskers responded with the highest floor exercise score in school history.

Women's Coach Dan Kendig said DeHaan's performance on the floor and the uneven bars motivated the Huskers.

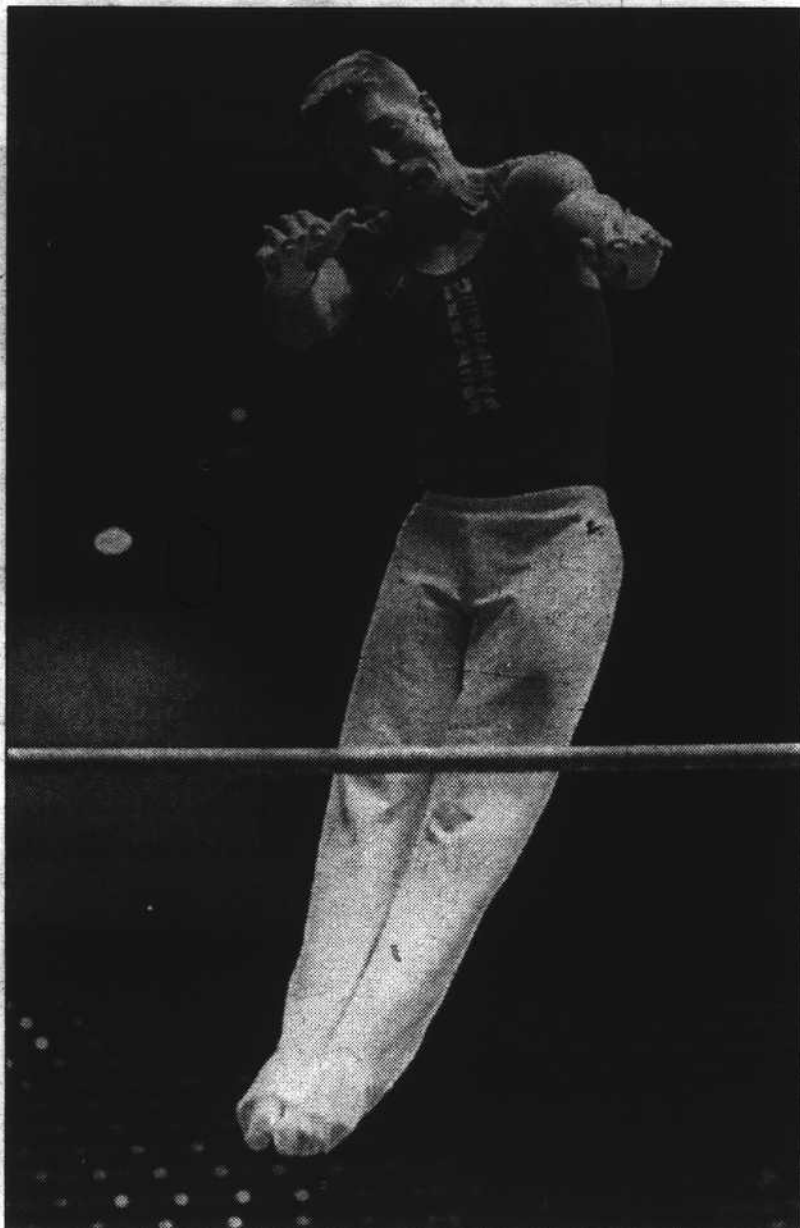
"Kim was more sore than usual, and she just rocked," Kendig said. "I mean, a 9.925 on bars; a 9.95 on floor — what else do you want from her?"

The Sioux Falls, S.D., native won the floor exercise with a score of 9.95, equalling her own school record. DeHaan's 9.925 on the uneven bars tied her career best and earned her second place behind teammate Shelly Bartlett, who scored a 9.95.

Bartlett tied Husker freshman Heather Brink for second on the vault (9.9) and sophomore Amie Dillman for second on the floor exercise (9.9). Despite her first fall of the season on the balance beam, Bartlett finished third in the all-around (39.050).

Iowa State's Kim Mazza won the all-around (39.325) and the Cyclones' Kelli More was second (39.275).

Freshman Nicole Wilkinson won the balance beam with a career-best 9.9 and sophomore Misty Oxford won the vault, tying her own school record of 9.95.



MATT MILLER/DN
RYAN McEWEN performs on the high bar Saturday. McEwen scored a 9.55 in the event to help NU beat Iowa 231.70-229.70. The Nebraska women also beat Iowa State on Saturday at the Devaney Center.

No. 1 Cowboys whip wrestlers

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska wrestling team suffered a 27-6 defeat to top-ranked Oklahoma State on Sunday at Gallagher-Iba Arena in Stillwater.

The Cornhuskers, who dropped to 15-6 on the season, trailed the No. 1 Cowboys (21-0) all afternoon.

Eighth-ranked NU — which lost at Oklahoma on Thursday night — did not post a victory until Scott Munson (19-7) defeated OSU's Pat Papolizio 13-7 at 190 pounds. Nebraska's only other winner was third-ranked heavy-weight Tolly Thompson, who recorded his 150th-career victory, with a 7-2 victory over Ben Lee. Thompson improved to 33-3.

In Sunday's other matches: Teague Moore defeated NU's Todd Beckerman (118 pounds) 8-4, Eric Guerrero beat Jeramie Welder 5-3 at 126, Steven Schmidt defeated Brad Canoyer (134) 8-3, Scott Reyna posted a 7-3 win over Jose DeAnda (142), Jimmy Arias beat Ryan Bauer 8-2 at 150, Hardell Moore defeated Jason Kraft (158) 5-3, Mark Branch defeated Monte Christensen (167) 16-0 and Mark Smith needed only two periods to post a 16-1 victory over Charles McTorry at 177.

Three Huskers break records

From Staff Reports

It was a record-breaking weekend for several members of the Nebraska men's and women's track teams.

Husker senior Tom Fish set a school record in the 200-meter dash, crossing the finish line in a time of 21.06 seconds. Fish, who had previously qualified for the championships, finished third in his heat but failed to advance to the final.

NU's successful weekend continued at the Cyclone Last Chance Qualifier meet in Ames, Iowa, when three Cornhuskers set all-time school records. Junior Scott Warren — the 1997 Big 12 Conference 35-pound weight throw champion — eclipsed his own conference record of 66 feet 4 1/4 inches with a toss of 66-8 3/4.

Senior Joe Laster also broke an NU school record in the long jump with a leap of 26 -3 3/4 to win the competition.

Tennis team loses to OSU

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska women's tennis team was dealt a 5-4 loss at the hands of Oklahoma State on Saturday.

In the dual's deciding match, NU's No. 1 doubles team of Sandra Noetzel and Jennifer Thoste lost their first match of the year at 8-5. Annie Yang and Lisa Hart maintained their perfect doubles record with an 8-2 win.

The loss to the Cowgirls dropped Nebraska 4-3 overall and 0-3 in the Big 12 Conference.

The men's team split four matches at the Evian Intercollegiate Tennis Classic in Boise, Id.

Nebraska (4-5) dropped a 7-0 decision to Brigham Young on Saturday. In the next match against No. 6 Boise State, the Huskers fell 6-1 to the Broncos. The Huskers came back to post a pair of 7-0 victories over Weber State and Temple in the tournament's final two matches.

NU slide continues with loss to Cowgirls

By MIKE KLUCK
Senior Reporter

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STILLWATER, Okla. — The Nebraska women's basketball team went to Stillwater, Okla., looking for answers in its game against Oklahoma State and a win to open the path into the NCAA Tournament.

The Cornhuskers left with a 64-57 loss, a continuing inability to play well in the second half, and the possibility of a second straight NCAA Tournament rapidly diminishing.

"It's about this team, and this team should have been better," NU Coach Angela Beck said. "I'm disappointed in this team right now."

The Huskers, who have dropped five of their last six games, fell to 18-8 overall and 8-8 in the Big 12 Conference. Of Nebraska's eight losses this season, six have come after it has squandered second-half leads.

Against the Cowgirls on Saturday, Nebraska led 30-28 at intermission, but a 7-0 Oklahoma State run to start the second half gave the Cowgirls a lead the Huskers never regained.

"I thought that was really big, and it got us off and got us going," OSU Coach Dick Halterman said.

The win improved the Cowgirls to 15-11 and 7-9. Oklahoma State started the year with an 11-3 with two of those wins coming against Texas Tech and Colorado, but OSU had lost eight of their last 11 games before beating NU.

In the first 4:22 after the break, Nebraska missed four shots — including one air ball and two free throws — and had three turnovers.

"It dug a hole and I don't think you want to dig a hole when you get on the road," Beck said. "We had everything to play for and came out a little

soft and a little frustrated, and we had some easy turnovers that gave them several opportunities. I'm very disappointed."

The Huskers had two opportunities in the second half, cutting the Cowgirls' lead to one, but on each occasion Oklahoma State responded.

Tina McClain's field goal with 8:33 cut the lead to 41-40 but 20 seconds later Oklahoma State junior Cheri Edwards hit a 3-pointer.

Then with 1:51 left freshman Charlie Rogers made a basket to cut the lead to 55-54.

On the Cowgirls' next possession, junior Renee Roberts scored a field goal. Nebraska turned the ball over on its next possession and never pulled closer the rest of the game.

"It's a big concern — we can't finish," Beck said. "You've got to be a big-time player to get the job done down the stretch, and we were very soft."

Nebraska freshman Nicole Kubik, who celebrated her 19th birthday Saturday, led the Huskers with 16 points, tying her career high.

The loss left Nebraska searching for an elusive 19th win. Beck said she thinks it will take at least 19, maybe 20 wins to qualify for the NCAA Tournament.

Nebraska will have a chance to pick up win No. 19 against Missouri in the Big 12 Tournament which begins on Tuesday in Kansas City, Mo.

Beck said she is concerned about the mind-set of her team entering the tournament.

"They're probably planning on spring break for as far as I know," Beck said. "I have no idea."

Husker bats awake in winless weekend

By DAVID WILSON
Staff Reporter

MINNEAPOLIS — The Nebraska baseball team's bats came alive this weekend at the Hormel Foods Classic, but its pitching and defense didn't follow.

Washington defeated the Cornhuskers 10-7 Sunday at the Metrodome before 191 fans and 55,000 empty seats. The loss extended NU's losing streak to six games. Nebraska lost to Minnesota 11-6 Friday and was defeated 12-9 by second-ranked UCLA Saturday.

The Huskers (5-6) exploded for six runs in the fourth inning before Washington (6-7-1) relieved its left-hander, Matt Hampton, with righty Shawn Hannah, who owned a 20.65 earned-run average. But Nebraska's bats couldn't touch Hannah, and the Huskers didn't get another hit until the ninth.

"We didn't do well offensively," NU Coach John Sanders said.

"The pitcher that came in had brutal statistics, and we basically made him look like an all-star. We got six runs kind of quick there, and then we just shut off."

With one out in the fourth, right fielder Gabe Garcia launched a 406-foot solo home run to left — his first of the season. Three walks, a hit batsman and four hits combined for five more runs, giving the Huskers a 6-0 lead.

"Our offense is coming," NU center fielder Francis Collins said. "We just have to get it all together."

Collins, who was hitting .171 entering the three-day tournament, finished the weekend 8 for 15 and was named to the all-tournament

team with the highest batting average. All-America candidate Todd Sears, who improved his team-high average to .410, went 5 for 11 with five RBIs and a home run. Sears was also selected to the all-tournament team at first base.

Nebraska starting pitcher Jonas Armenta (0-2) threw 5 2/3 innings and allowed nine earned runs, raising his ERA to 7.00. The Huskies scored all 10 runs on nine hits in the fourth, fifth and six innings.

"Armenta gave us a good effort," Sanders said. "He maybe got a little tired."

Armenta was relieved in the sixth by junior left-hander Brian Zubor, who allowed one earned run on two hits without retiring a batter. Juniors Tevis Arnold and Kenny Duebelbeis pitched the final 2 1/3 innings and held the Huskies scoreless.

Against UCLA Saturday, starter Pat Driscoll surrendered seven earned runs through five innings. But Sanders said it was the Husker defense that lost the game.

"Basically I thought we gave them the game," Sanders said. "We booted the ball. We out-hit them. We came up three runs short, but we gave them about three runs. They're a great ball club. They're No. 2 ranked for a reason."

UCLA sophomore Troy Glaus, the tournament's most valuable player, went 6 for 12 with three homers and knocked in nine runs for the Bruins (22-1), who finished 3-0 in the tournament.

The Huskers travel to Lawrence, Kan., to face Kansas Wednesday and Thursday.