

# Sports

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MATT MILLER/DN

VENSON HAMILTON falls away from Kansas' Scot Pollard in Nebraska's 85-65 loss Sunday. KU got the best of the Nebraska big men, out-rebounding the Huskers 52-24 in the last game of Big 12 regular season.

## Swimmers take crown from Texas

By JAY SAUNDERS  
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's swimming and diving team upset No. 8 Texas to earn the first-ever Big 12 Conference Championship in College Station, Texas Saturday.

After winning the last three Big Eight championships, the Cornhuskers kept their streak alive with a 927-865.5 come-from-behind victory. NU captured 12 titles out of 21 events on the way to the championship.

"I hope the people of Nebraska realize what this means for our athletes and our program," said NU Coach Cal Bentz who was named the conference's women's swimming coach of the year. "Our program has taken a giant step. This is absolutely a huge victory for us."

The Nebraska men finished second behind the Longhorns with a score of 735.5 points. UT scored 920.5 points en route to winning the men's inaugural league crown.

In the women's competition, Texas led after the first two days but entered the final day of the meet trailing the Longhorns by one point.

The Huskers were led in the finals by 16 swimmers on the final day in five events. NU took a big step toward the title sweeping the top three places in the 200-yard breaststroke.

All-American Julia Russell, who was named the meet's outstanding women's swimmer, won the event with a pool-record time of 2:10.25. NU's Lenka Manhalova, who finished second with a time of 2:12.55, and Helene Muller, who was third with a time of 2:13.82, rounded out the top three spots for the Huskers. The three times also were automatic qualifying times for the NCAA meet.

Muller also won the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 50.02 seconds. Husker swimmers captured the third-, sixth- and eighth-place spots in the race.

Nebraska also placed four swimmers in the top eight of the 200-yard backstroke. Christine Troy finished in a personal-best time of 2:00.13 to finish in second place.

Women's winners on Friday included: Russell in the 100-yard breaststroke (1:00.83, a new pool record), Anna Windsor in the 200-yard freestyle (1:48.49) and Laura Simon in the 400-yard IM (4:19.15).

Despite the strong performances in the individual races, it was the relays that were the icing on the cake.

The Huskers also swept the relays. The 400-yard freestyle capped off the conference crown for NU. The team of Windsor, Beth Karaica, Stacey Sedlacek and Muller had a first-place time of 3:20.19 shattering the school-record of 3:23.53 set in 1994.

Nebraska also won the 200-yard medley relay with a school-record and pool-record time of 1:41.49 and the 800-yard free relay with another school and pool-record time of 7:19.28.

On the men's side, Adam Pine and Michael Windisch were the only two Huskers to win gold medals over the weekend. Pine won the 100-yard butterfly with a pool-record and school-record time of 47.02 seconds. Windisch finished first in the 400-yard IM with a time of 3:52.42.



Russell

## Jayhawks hammer NU

KU big men dominate as Nebraska loses its regular-season finale by 20.

By MITCH SHERMAN  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska learned the hard way Sunday why Kansas heads into the Big 12 Conference Tournament with a first-round bye and ranked No. 1 in the nation for the 14th straight week.

The Jayhawks abused Nebraska on the boards, dominated the tempo and humbled the most energetic crowd in three seasons to watch a basketball game at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The 85-65 regular-season-ending Jayhawk win marked NU's worst defeat this season and stole valuable momentum from the Cornhuskers, who fell to 16-13 overall and 7-9 in conference play.

"You saw the No. 1 team in the country," Nebraska Coach Danny Nee said after the Devaney Center's seventh-largest all-time crowd of 14,759 watched Kansas pull away in the second half. "Obviously we would have liked to play better in our own house."

Nebraska must regroup by Thursday at 6 p.m., when it plays 10th-seeded Missouri in the first round of the league tournament in Kansas City, Mo. The Huskers, who earned the seventh seed by virtue of Baylor's loss Saturday to Oklahoma, likely need four wins in four days and a tournament title to qualify for the NCAA

Tournament.

With a win Thursday night, NU will meet Texas, the tournament's No. 2 seed and champion of the Big 12 South Division, Friday at 6 p.m.

A loss at any time this week probably sends NU back to the National Invitation Tournament, in which the Huskers would play host to a first-round game on March 12, according to Nebraska Ticket Manager John Anderson.

"You always want to win your last game at home," Nee said. "But we treat the postseason as a new season. That's the great thing about tournament play. You get another chance."

Kansas (29-1 and 15-1) out-rebounded Nebraska 27-10 in the first half, grabbing a 41-28 lead, and 52-24 for the game, by far NU's largest deficit on the glass this year. Seniors Mikki Moore and Bernard Garner, playing in the final regular-season home games of their careers, contributed just 13 points and nine rebounds Sunday.

Meanwhile, KU's Raef LaFrentz and Scot Pollard each posted double-doubles. LaFrentz scored 16 of his game-high 23 points in the first half — two less than Nebraska's five-player frontcourt — and the 6-foot-11 junior grabbed 10 rebounds in 29 minutes.

After falling behind 52-37 early in the second half, NU used a 9-0 run sparked by Troy Piatkowski's 17-foot jumper to close to 52-46 with 11:59 to play. But Pollard ignited an 8-0 Jayhawk run following a timeout to put Kansas back on top by 14.

"I felt we had another run in us, but we didn't," said Nebraska point guard Tyrone Lue, who scored a team-high 18 points with eight assists and no turnovers. "We got some good looks, but we just didn't finish."

With NU down 67-54 at the 4:33 mark, Cookie Belcher fouled

Kansas	85
Nebraska	65

"You always want to win your last game at home. But we treat the postseason as a new season."

DANNY NEE  
NU basketball coach

LaFrentz, and officials slapped the freshman guard with a technical foul — his fifth personal of the game — for taunting Pollard. Pollard and LaFrentz each connected on two free throws, and Jerod Haase converted a three-point play, completing a seven-point Kansas possession to stretch its lead to 74-54.

"We were going to try to make another run," Nee said. "But after that, it didn't matter."

"Coming into the game, I was cautiously optimistic. But we got dominated on the rebounds, and we thought that would be one of our strengths."

In the first half, KU opened an 11-4 lead before the Huskers closed to 21-19 on a Belcher 3 with 9:21 to play. But a 7-0 Jayhawk run erased NU's momentum, and Kansas ended the half with an 11-3 spurt to lead by 13.

"They were a very confident bunch today," KU Coach Roy Williams said of his team, which set a school record for regular-season victories. "We never let the crowd get into it, even when a couple calls and couple plays went against us."



MATT MILLER/DN

COOKIE BELCHER leaves the court after his fifth foul Sunday during Nebraska's 85-65 loss to Kansas.

Kansas forward Paul Pierce scored 18 points, and Pollard, in his third game back after missing eight with a fractured left foot, added 14 with a game-high 12 rebounds in 27 minutes.

Venson Hamilton scored 13 points but grabbed just four rebounds for Nebraska, which tied a season-low with nine turnovers to Kansas' 17. In NU's 82-77 overtime loss at KU on Feb. 1, the Huskers' out-rebounded Kansas 46-33 but turned the ball over a season-high 28 times.

"I thought we would come out and play a lot better than we did," Lue said. "I'd rather have 28 turnovers and have a chance to win in regulation than have nine and get blown out."