

Baylor sends NU to 11th straight loss

By DAVID WILSON
Staff Reporter

The cold March weather was supposed to give the Nebraska baseball team an advantage over Southern schools.

It didn't happen.

Sixty-degree temperatures at Buck Beltzer Field this weekend made Baylor feel at home as it swept a three-game series from the Cornhuskers, who fell to 5-11 and 0-6 in the Big 12 Conference.

Senior left-hander Kris Lambert allowed one earned run on five hits through eight innings on Sunday as the Bears (12-5 and 5-1) defeated Nebraska 12-3. Baylor downed the Huskers 7-6 and 13-4 in a doubleheader Saturday.

"He's an outstanding pitcher," NU Coach John Sanders said. "They pitched exceptionally well keeping their pitches down in the zone. We were throwing up in the zone. So they were able to drive the ball and we weren't."

The Bears knocked 23 hits out of four Husker pitchers, while the Nebraska bats were held to seven. In the series, the Bears out-hit NU 50-22.

Baylor catcher Chad Polk went 5 for 6 and was one of seven Bears with multiple hits in Sunday's game. Second baseman Eric Nelson also added four hits for Baylor.

Nebraska right-hander Steve Fish (2-3) took the loss for the Huskers after throwing four innings and allowing eight earned runs on 12 hits. Fish, who has thrown the Huskers only two complete games this season, raised his earned-run average to 5.34.

"That was uncharacteristic of him," Sanders said. "Usually, he can walk out to the mound and match up with anybody. He just had an off day and they took advantage of it."

Baylor scored in all but the third, sixth and seventh innings and were never retired without having at least one runner reach base.

But for the Huskers, offense came sparingly.

In the third inning, third baseman Clifton Durham took a pitch in the elbow with the bases loaded to knock in NU's first run. Durham, who started all three games against Baylor, raised his average to .321.

"He's a spark of hope for us,"

Please see SKID on 11

March Sadness

NU is not among six Big 12 teams to make the NCAA Tournament.

By MIKE KLUCK
Senior Reporter

The expression said it all. But it wasn't an indication of joy.

When Nebraska Women's Basketball Coach Angela Beck fell out of her chair after the announcement that Iowa State had made the NCAA Tournament, she knew the Cornhuskers', who finished the year at 19-9, chances of making the field of 64 were gone.

Although Beck, like the rest of the Husker players and boosters who gathered at the Hewitt Center on Sunday night, waited and hoped through the remaining 26 teams selected for a spot in the tournament she knew NU's dream of making the Big Dance for the second straight year had vanished.

Iowa State — which finished the season 17-11 — earned a 12th seed in the West Region and became the sixth Big 12 Conference team to get in the NCAA Tournament. The Cyclones join second-seeded Colorado, third-seeds Kansas and Texas, No. 8-seed Texas Tech and 10th-seed Kansas State.

"I left front and center because I knew that it would be a miracle to get seven," Beck said. "I really felt we would probably get six and we would be the sixth one."

"I didn't have a lot of fear Iowa State would get in it, except for the fact they had the senior women's administrator on the committee."

Beck said having Elaine Hieber, ISU's senior associate athletic director, as one of the members on the NCAA Tournament selection committee helped the Cyclones.

"It just means they have a lot more knowledge about that team," Beck said. "If that's our representative for the Big 12, how much is she really going to battle for me at that point versus Iowa State?"

Other factors that surprised Beck about Iowa State's placement in the tournament was that the Cyclones had only one win this season over a top 20 opponent, while the Huskers had two.

Also the Huskers beat Iowa State by 24 on Jan. 30 in Ames. Iowa State, which will be making



LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN

UPON LEARNING they did not make the NCAA Tournament, seniors Tina McClain and Sheila McPherson show their feelings. NU finished the year 19-9.

its first appearance in the NCAA Tournament, beat Nebraska 57-55 on Feb. 23 in Lincoln.

"I'm shocked at the Iowa State situation," Beck said. "I think head-to-head we would beat them anytime. Iowa State over Nebraska doesn't make sense to me."

Although senior Tina McClain's initial reaction to ISU making the tournament wasn't as visible as Beck's, she still knew the resounding effect.

"My hopes just kind of crashed right about then," McClain said. "Not two seconds before that, Coach Beck told us that if Iowa State popped up, there's probably

a good chance we aren't going to go. When they popped up, all the hopes that we had just kind of crashed."

Nebraska's non-invite to the NCAA Tournament comes after a season in which the Huskers opened with a school record nine straight wins and by the end of January had compiled a 16-1 record.

At that point, the Huskers looked to be a lock to make the NCAA Tournament.

However, it was the month of February that did NU in. Nebraska finished the season 3-8 including losing six of its last eight games by 26 points.

NU, UW to meet in NIT

By MITCH SHERMAN
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska basketball team will play host to a first-round National Invitation Tournament game Wednesday night at 7:05 against Washington at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.



Nee

The Huskies, who finished sixth in the Pac 10 Conference with a league record of 10-8 and an overall mark of 17-10, lost in the first round of the NIT last season at Michigan State. NU won five straight postseason games a year ago en route to the NIT championship.

A pair of bruisers, Mark Sanford and Todd MacCulloch, lead the Huskies. Sanford, a 6-foot-9 junior who is one of 30 finalists for the Wooden Award, averages 17.9 points and 8.7 rebounds per game.

MacCulloch, a 7-foot freshman center, averages 14.1 points, 7.2 rebounds and shoots 67.8 percent from the field, ranking him second nationally. NU Coach Danny Nee said Cornhusker coaches tried to recruit MacCulloch a year ago.

UW beat Southern California 94-84 Saturday in Seattle to finish with a winning conference record for the first time since 1987. The Huskies lost 87-85 to UCLA on Thursday and own a 3-5 record against ranked foes with wins over Oregon, Arizona and Stanford.

Until Sunday night, Nee said, the Huskers had not met as a group since losing 78-72 to Missouri Thursday in the first round of the Big 12 Conference Tournament.

"I told them to take a couple days off and get away from basketball," Nee said. "The goal was to go to the NCAA. You didn't achieve that. Now, the next opportunity we have is to play another game, and that happens to be in the NIT."

Nee said sophomores Alvin Mitchell and Larry Florence, suspended for NU's loss to Missouri, will rejoin the team today in practice.

Wednesday night's game will mark

Please see NIT on 11

SEC dominates crowns as NU is ninth, 18th

By ANDREW STERNAD
Staff Reporter

INDIANAPOLIS — Three letters can accurately describe the show put on at the RCA Dome this weekend at the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships.

S-E-C.

The members of the Southeastern Conference flexed their muscles as the Arkansas men's team captured the title for the 13th time in 14 years, scoring 59 points, far ahead of second-place finisher Auburn, which scored 27.

The Louisiana State women, who scored 49 points, also showed the nation their strength, by winning the crown for the fifth

straight year, outdistancing Wisconsin and Texas which each scored 39.

For both the Nebraska men's and women's teams, it was a different story. The Cornhusker men couldn't match last year's second-place finish. NU settled for just 12 points and finished in 18th place.

Once again two Husker men long jumpers came home empty-handed, as Joe Laster and Chris Wright, both amongst the nation's best, failed to place in the top eight.

"It was real frustrating to watch, since they're both such good jumpers," NU Coach Gary Pepin said. "I don't know why Joe has problems here at nationals. Last week he breaks the school record and this week, I wish

Please see TRACK on 11

Shot put championship fine with Thompson

By VINCE D'ADAMO
Staff Reporter

INDIANAPOLIS — Nebraska women's shot putter Tressa Thompson talked about becoming a national champion throughout the 1997 season.

After Saturday's NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championship, Thompson, a senior from Bloomfield, left the RCA Dome swaggering with the championship hardware.

Her throw of 59 feet outdistanced a 57 1/2 toss by Southern Methodist's Marike Tulineme.

Thompson and the NU coaches were smiling like a butcher's dog after the meet.

"You looked like the best," NU Throws Coach Mark Colligan said to Thompson as the

two embraced shortly after she accepted her first-place plaque.

"It's just really super," NU Coach Gary Pepin said. "It couldn't happen to a better person and a harder worker."

Thompson, who set the collegiate indoor record earlier this season with a heave of 60-7 3/4, said winning the national title is the ultimate achievement.

"I thought I'd pop a bigger throw," Thompson said. "But I was consistently in the upper 50s. It's just been one weekend at a time. I was trying to peak at this meet."

Tulineme defeated Thompson at the Frank Sevigne Husker Invitational on Feb. 8. This

Please see SHOT on 11