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## McCoy named league's best

With the way Nebraska junior pitcher/designated player Christie McCoy surprised Southwest Louisiana, Texas and Texas A&M last week, it was only fair the Big 12 Conference would surprise her on Tuesday.

So McCoy was shocked Tuesday night when she learned she was named the Big 12 player of the week.

"That's amazing to me right now," McCoy said. "Especially, since I had the fall off. It's a good accomplishment for me right now and I'm really grateful. It will help me improve and strive for bigger and better things. It's really exciting."

## Viola battles through disappointment

By **MIKE KLUCK**  
 Senior Reporter

Ali Viola knew right away what the pop meant.

After all, the Nebraska softball junior heard a similar noise her freshman year, which forced her into a year-long rehabilitation process and a redshirt season.

But when Viola heard the pop after rounding first base in her first at bat against Iowa at the Cellular One Classic in Sacramento, Calif., on March 22, the All-American shortstop knew right away she tore her anterior cruciate ligament in her right knee.

Viola had laid down a squeeze bunt to score Husker freshman Jennifer Lizama, but as Viola ran through first she made a movement toward second and felt something wrong happen to her knee.

Even when trainers and athletic personnel told Viola that her knee had a lot of stability and they wanted to

wait and do more tests when Viola returned to Lincoln, she still knew deep down her season was over.

"Sure I wanted to believe it wasn't torn," Viola said. "But I knew right away I had torn it. When I made my move at first, there was a major shift in my knee and I felt it go."

It only took Dr. Pat Clare, who is the school's top orthopedic doctor, one test to determine what Viola knew already.

This time — unlike her freshman year — Viola lost more than just her season of eligibility.

The injury stopped the junior from Novato, Calif., in her pursuit of re-writing both Nebraska and national record books. Viola holds the school career records for home runs with 31, RBI with 156 and slugging percentage at .721.

Her home run mark also ties her for 10th in the NCAA record book and her RBI mark ranks 16th.

"This injury hurts me in the national rankings," Viola said. "By the

time I would be done I could have been pretty far up there."

The injury also limits Viola's plans for the summer.

She had planned to participate in the Pan American camps and was invited to the USA Softball camp. Either of those two camps could have helped Viola earn a spot on the U.S. National Softball Team.

Despite all those losses, it's the loss of the season that disappoints Viola the most.

"Losing my season hurts more because I can't get that back," Viola said. "It hurts to miss those camps this summer but I still have a couple of years to make the USA Team. Now I lose this year of eligibility and some of my goals, like making four time all-American."

With all her disappointment though, Viola said she still plans on recovering fully from her reconstructive surgery on April 8.

"I'm determined to prove to be the player I was before," Viola said.

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## NU's Noetzel swings into success

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kind of sucks right now."

Even with a "bad serve," Noetzel is looking toward the end of the season with some big goals. Noetzel is hoping to play in both regional and NCAA Tournaments at the end of the season.

But after the Huskers' season is over, Noetzel will return to Hannover to compete in more tournaments. Noetzel, who is currently on of the Top 60 women's players in Germany, will have to start the readjustment process over again.

"I am scared to go home," Noetzel said. "I will have to stay out longer on the courts at home. Here a match is about an hour long, but on clay it can take much longer."

Whether it is in the United States

or Germany, Noetzel plays for the love of the game.

"I step on the court, and I want to win," Noetzel said. "I don't care about the rankings. I just play."

That attitude is what the rest of her Husker teammates have taken into action this season.

NU is 12-4 overall and 2-3 in the Big 12 Conference and is close to achieving its goal as one of the top teams in the region.

Last weekend, Nebraska posted an upset of conference rival Oklahoma 5-4. The then 44th-ranked Sooners were controlled by the No. 73 Huskers in the six singles matches. NU, which has had a very successful doubles year so far, lost two of the three doubles matches.

The No. 2 doubles team of Annie Yang and Lisa Hart continued to blow by their competition, picking up the

Huskers' only doubles win of the dual.

"It was a huge win for the girls," Jacobson said. "It was a big confidence builder. It doesn't get any easier next weekend."

Duals against Kansas and Texas Tech will test the heart of the Husker squad, Jacobson said. The match against the highly-ranked Jayhawks serves major importance as an all-important regional and conference contest.

"Both matches are so big," Jacobson said. "We don't have control over outcome. The only thing we have control over is effort. If the girls go down there and end up on the winning end, that is great."

Five of NU's final six regular season matches are at home giving the Huskers momentum to finish the season strong.

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