

Sports Opinion

Huskers shoot down Braves

Women's Basketball

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Assignment Reporter

On a night when its trademark defensive pressure was nowhere to be found, the Nebraska women's basketball team discovered a previously hidden element of its game—a solid offense.

The No. 12 Cornhuskers (7-1) defeated the unranked Bradley Braves 80-66 in front of 1,447 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center Wednesday night,

shooting a season-high 62 percent from the field.

Five players scored in double figures for NU, which committed just 22 turnovers, its second-lowest mark of the season.

"We were shooting good shots and we had a lot better selection," Husker Coach Paul Sanderford said. "But it seems like we have to sacrifice one thing for another. Bradley played extremely smart on offense. They drove the ball and kept the middle open, and we were a step slow."

Sanderford pointed to Nebraska's failure to bother the Braves (3-3) with a full-court trap and press.

Bradley Coach Donna Freitag said the Huskers' press benefited Bradley, which prefers to play a quick, up-tempo game.

"I think their press has really been harassing teams," Freitag said. "Their movement and trapping takes other teams out of their offense and keeps them off-balance."

"But it was better for us. We broke it and took advantage of it by getting some fast-break layups."

Eighteen of Bradley's 23 points in the first half came within five feet of the bucket, including four fast-break layups. But NU countered by shooting 65 percent from the field while committing just 11 turnovers, taking a 36-23 lead into the locker room at halftime.

Husker forward Cori McDill attributed the lack

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Nebraska: volleyball factory

For years the state of Nebraska has been known as a football factory.

Unknown to most, however, there's another factory in Nebraska that's been quietly producing quality athletes of a different kind for nearly 20 years.

While it's no secret that the Nebraska volleyball team is one of the top programs in the country, little is made of Nebraska and the quality players that come out of the state year after year.

Texas has approximately 19 million people, and 35 of them play women's volleyball in the Big 12. Nebraska has 1.6 million people, and 17 are competing in the Big 12.

Of the Huskers' 15 players, nine come from Nebraska and four others come from neighboring Iowa.

Hawaii native and NU All-American setter Fiona Nepo is astonished at how rich the talent pool is in Nebraska.

"It's amazing that all of our players are from Nebraska or Iowa. That says a lot about Nebraska. They're pretty talented in volleyball," Nepo said. "If we could only do that in Hawaii."

One would expect a school to have the majority of their talent home bred. Nebraska faced three schools this season without a single in-state player on the roster.

Four teams — Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas State and Oklahoma — have a combined one in-state player on their rosters, and they're all NCAA Tournament teams.

Oddly enough, three players on Kansas State's roster are from Nebraska.

This in-state success can be linked in part to the success of Husker Coach Terry Pettit.

Pettit has won 20 conference titles and has guided five clubs to the Final Four and led the 1995 team to a National Championship.

This success seems to create a cycle much like Nebraska football.

Young girls grow up watching the Huskers win and win. Then before high school those same girls are picking up volleyballs all over the state dreaming of the day they can play for the Big Red.

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MATT MILLER/DN

EVEN THOUGH JAIME KRONDAK has been sidelined for 10 matches this season because of back problems, she has stayed positive throughout her painful season. Krondak said she still plays in pain that could be caused by a herniated disk.

Krondak back in action

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Assignment Reporter

Jaime Krondak has seldom hesitated to express her feelings about anything that concerns her role on the Nebraska volleyball team.

In her junior season, Krondak has provided the team with its most vocal leader, rarely missing a chance to

express a straightforward opinion.

But after missing 10 matches with a back injury she suffered Oct. 4 at Missouri, Krondak lost a little of her signature outspoken leadership, she said.

And now as she attempts to weave her way back into Nebraska's lineup, Krondak doesn't speak of her role for with the same self-assuredness.

"I don't really know how to act

around the team now because before, I was such a leader and such a factor on the court," Krondak said. "Now I'm not in that position anymore, and it's hard to know how I'm supposed to act around my teammates, and I don't know how they are going to respond around me."

Rediscovering her leadership role

Please see KRONDAK on 11

Bowls not ruling out NU defeat

BY ANTONE OSEKA
Senior Reporter

History has a scary way of repeating itself.

Should history repeat itself this weekend with a Nebraska loss in the Big 12 Championship to Texas A&M in San Antonio, NU's bowl future could be up in the air.

The Huskers (11-0) are guaranteed a bowl berth, but a loss could take them from a national championship contest in the Orange Bowl to one of the other top bowls.

Even with a loss to A&M, Nebraska probably would be taken as an at-large opponent in the Bowl Alliance.

"I still think they'd be an Alliance bid," said Shawn Schoeffler, a public relations representative for the Fiesta Bowl. "It looks most likely we'll get Syracuse; I think we're in a good position with them."

The Bowl Alliance was created in 1995 to try to provide fans with a national championship contest and the best bowl matchups for college football fans. It includes the Orange, Fiesta and Sugar Bowls, which have to take the conference champions from the SEC, Big 12, ACC and Big East and two at-large opponents.

This season, the Orange Bowl has the top two selections and must take either the No. 1 or No. 2 team in either poll. Since Michigan is No. 1 in both polls and tied into the Rose Bowl, No. 2 Nebraska, with a win over Texas A&M, would go to the Orange Bowl.

Should Nebraska lose to the Aggies, the Huskers could get a spot in the Fiesta Bowl. The Fiesta Bowl has the fourth and sixth picks, while the Sugar Bowl has the third and fifth selections.

If Nebraska dropped out of the Bowl Alliance all together, the Cotton Bowl would have the next shot at Nebraska.

"Our group is going to look at Nebraska if Nebraska's available," said Marty McInnis, vice president for the Cotton Bowl. "They're on the top of that list; they have to be."

The Cotton Bowl is required to take the second-place Big 12 team. That list of candidates includes Nebraska, Texas A&M and Kansas State. Either of those teams would likely face UCLA in Dallas.

"All three of these teams vs. UCLA makes this game a great game," McInnis said. "We think we have a better game than two of the Alliance games."

Now, if Nebraska gets overlooked

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