

Lue, Belcher spark NU to Ameritas title

AMERITAS from page 10

Nebraska (7-1) was also able to play its bench, using 11 players and going with substitutes for the last 10 minutes of the game. NU's bench outscored GSU's 25-4.

"I was happy that some other guys got to see some time," Nee said. "They had a chance to get in there and get some good experience."

Early in the first half, it looked as though the starters might have to play the full 40 minutes.

Grambling State (3-2), which advanced to the championship with a 63-59 win over Cornell on Friday, hung with the Huskers for 10 minutes, taking its final lead at 20-19 on Kenneth Haynes' layup with just under 10 minutes remaining. Haynes led all players with 15 points.

The Huskers then responded with the 22-6 run. Troy Piatkowski and Lue each scored five points for the Huskers during the run.

"We were trying to be unselfish at first," Lue said, "a little too unselfish. But we played good after that and in the second half."

The second half for the Huskers wasn't a question of if they would win, but by how much. Grambling State made seven of 40 shots in the second half and was only able to muster 22 points to Nebraska's 44. NU also shot a season-high 36 free

throws, 28 of which came in the second half.

"The second half was a white-wash," Nee said. "With all the breakaways, it looked like an intramural game."

Nebraska reversed its poor shooting performance from a 85-68 loss to Tulsa on Monday with torrid shooting against both Grambling State and North Carolina-Wilmington. NU shot 51 percent (30 of 58) against the Tigers, and shot 72.3 percent against the Seahawks Friday, the best mark in nine seasons and the second best in school history.

"Generally speaking, I was happy with the shooting," Nee said. "We got some good looks both nights."

In the game against UNCW, Lue scored a team-high 27 points, while Belcher added 20 points and a career-high nine assists.

UNC-Wilmington (4-4), which defeated Cornell 65-53 in the third-place game, was led by guard Stan Simmons with 18 points.

Nebraska now goes on the road for the next month of the season, starting with a Wednesday matchup at Creighton in Omaha.

Nee said Nebraska has to put everything together for the road trip.

"We know we have to play well to win on the road," he said. "We're going to have to put a solid game together."

Huskers bounce Spartans, prepare for California trip

VOLLEY from page 10

teams to list no more than 12 players on their rosters.

Even Oxley, who recorded a .353 hitting percentage with seven kills and tied Monson for a match-high 10 digs, fell victim to nerves, Pettit said.

"I think we had two or three people who were almost too eager to play," Pettit said. "Maybe we should have had them go out and run around the coliseum a few times before the match."

But MSU Coach Chuck Erbe said Nebraska's experience at other key positions hurt the Spartans.

Erbe praised Nepo - who record-

ed four service aces, five kills and 36 set assists - and Lisa Reitsma, who led NU with 13 kills with a .500 hitting percentage.

"When you're forced to set the ball into 6-foot-4 Lisa Reitsma, it's not rocket science to figure out that you're going to have a difficult time," Erbe said.

MSU hit .147 for the match, and Christie Landry, a 6-2 freshman playing only her sixth game at the setter position, recorded 26 set assists.

"We had problems with our setter," Erbe said, "but it's kind of hard to set when the pass comes at your naval."

"I think it's just being really

young and having too high of expectations on you. You don't give your players a pill and say, 'There, now you have four years of experience.' Hopefully, they'll remember how this feels, and they won't make the same mistakes again next year."

Nebraska moves on to the semifinals of the Pacific Regional and a possible match with host Long Beach State (31-1 and ranked No. 1) in the regional finals. The Huskers will face Southern California (21-5) on Friday in Long Beach, Calif.

"What lies ahead are 16 teams like Nebraska," Pettit said. "We'll have to play better. We have to make better decisions, and we will."

Young coach wants Husker spot

BASEBALL from page 10

State-Northridge since 1996, and in two seasons he led the Matadors to a 94-36 record.

In his first season, the Matadors were 52-18, winning the Western Division of the Western Athletic Conference and coming within one game from advancing to the College World Series. Last season the Matadors were 42-18.

Prior to coaching at Cal State-Northridge, Batesole played college baseball at Oral Roberts. Batesole then played third base in the Los Angeles Dodgers organization in the mid- to late 1980s.

Batesole moved to the coaching profession and worked as an assistant

coach with Cypress College for one year and at Orange Coast College for four years before joining the Matadors as an assistant.

Batesole, 33, said he has always been interested in a job at Nebraska because of his desire to raise his family in the Midwest.

"I have four young kids, and I've been trying to get to the Midwest, specifically the Big 12 and Nebraska," Batesole said. "If I could pick a school, it would be Nebraska. They have the total athletic package, and their academics are stressed highly."

In the last few years, Batesole expressed interests in head coaching jobs at Pepperdine, Iowa and assistant-coaching jobs at Oklahoma State

and Texas.

Batesole said he believes there's no reason Nebraska can't be a perennial top 20 team in baseball and compete with the best teams in the Big 12.

"They're a school with rich tradition in all sports and definitely have the tools to field a ballclub that can compete on a level with anybody," Batesole said.

Batesole said he enjoys his current position as coach of the Matadors, but said the opportunity to move his family to the Midwest would be too hard to pass up.

"Nebraska's a great place to raise a family," Batesole said. "And there's no doubt about it, I wouldn't leave here unless I had an opportunity to go somewhere like Nebraska."

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