

Big 12 Notebook

The Nebraska women's basketball team jumped back into the Associated Press poll Monday.

NU, which fell out of the poll last week, downed Oklahoma State 77-47 Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sport Center improving its record to 16-6.

The 25th-ranked Cornhuskers return to action Wednesday against Missouri at 7:05 p.m. in the Devaney Center.

It's reunion time for Kansas men's basketball team. The Jayhawks, who are in the midst of celebrating their 100-year anniversary, will have their legends game on Saturday, in which many of KU's former players are expected to play.

Sunday, the Jayhawks will play host to Missouri at Allen Fieldhouse in Lawrence, Kan. The Tigers are the only team to have defeated Kansas in conference play this season.

But MU Coach Norm Stewart isn't too excited about taking part in Kansas' reunion weekend.

"I don't think there's anybody that wants to be there on that particular day as the guest or guest team," Stewart said.

Texas A&M Coach Tony Barone must be feeling like he's cursed this season. The Aggies have yet to win a conference game, starting the season 0-9 and losing Monday night 81-80 to Texas.

Before the season started, the Aggies lost senior center Dario Quesada, who has a bulging disc in his back. Then, in A&M's first conference game against Oklahoma State, Calvin Davis developed a herniated disc in his back. Davis was the Aggies' top scorer and rebounder last year.

Finally, on Saturday against Oklahoma, freshman T.J. Brown tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his knee and will miss the rest of the season.

"I've been going to church on a regular basis and I don't think the big guy up above is looking down on us," Barone said. "But there must be some basketball god looking on us unfavorably. I think I need to go back to Creighton and get the Jesuits to say some rosaries for me."

Barone coached at Creighton for six seasons before taking the A&M job in 1991.

In Cory Carr's four seasons at Texas Tech, the senior from Kingland, Ark., has had some memorable games. But maybe not as memorable as his two games last week.

Against Missouri Jan. 28, Carr had 21 points while helping the Red Raiders to a 80-60 win. At Baylor Saturday, Carr finished with 21 points, including 20 in the second half, and teamed with Tech's senior center to lead the team to a 77-66 victory.

Against Missouri, Carr was named Big 12 Player of the Week. Against Baylor, he was named Big 12 Player of the Week. Carr is the first player in Big 12 history to be named Player of the Week in two consecutive weeks.

Big 12 Notebook compiled by staff reporter Mike Kluck.

Huskers lose recruit to USC

By SAM MCKEWON
Senior Reporter

There's a saying that home is where the heart is, and Cornhusker recruit Frank Strong decided that's where he belongs.

Strong, who committed to Nebraska in December to play football as a running back, decided to change that decision and go to Southern California, which is closer to his home in Stockton, Calif.

"It was closer to my family and my friends," Strong said.

High school athletes can sign letters of intent beginning Wednesday.

As a senior at Franklin High School in Stockton, Strong rushed for 1,460 yards and 14 touchdowns. Strong said he initially made the choice to Nebraska because of its national prominence and fan support.

Then came the calls from his relatives.

"They were all calling me up and talking about how much they'd miss me," Strong said. "I started to realize that ... I wanted to be close to my family rather than far away."

Strong's mother, Patricia, said it was the bond between them that

weighed heavily on the decision.

"I've always been there for him," she said.

Nebraska coaches were not notified of Strong's decision until last Friday, but Strong said he had begun to change his mind as early as Jan. 14.

"They were pretty disappointed," Strong said. "The Nebraska coaches said they really wanted me to come."

Still committed to Nebraska in early January, Strong said a peculiar incident started to change his mind about going to NU.

Strong said he saw his name on a Husker Web site that listed him as a

linebacker recruit rather than a running back.

"I said to myself, 'I'm not going to go out there to play linebacker,'" Strong said. "It wasn't a big deal or anything, but it made me think about what I was doing."

In other recruiting news, Tony Bedford, a 6-foot-4, 265-pound defensive lineman from Denver has yet to decide between Nebraska and Florida State. Thomas Jefferson High School Coach Tim Cross said Monday.

Jason Thomas, a 6-4, 230-pound quarterback from Compton, Calif., will not announce where he will

NU kicks off winter program

By SAM MCKEWON
Senior Reporter

The winter program for the Nebraska football team could probably pass muster as a NASA training regimen.

Headed by the Nebraska Performance Team, the program, which started Monday, is all about enhancing speed, agility and lean body mass by exact, scientific means.

"The winter program is based on scientific principles more than anything else," said Boyd Epley, director of athletic performance. "We've spent years trying to find the best way to enhance performance."

Often misconstrued as winter conditioning, the winter program concentrates on putting strain on the body in order to make it bigger, stronger and faster, Epley said.

The program consists of various lifts and drills that eliminate body fat and enhance performance. The performance team will add a running regimen to its program Feb. 16.

Epley said the most important aspect of the winter program is the addition of lean body mass.

"There is direct correlation between an increase of lean body mass and an increase in performance," Epley said. "This is prime time of the season to get that done."

Sophomore rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch, who finished second in the pre-program fitness testing for NU, said the program enhances all parts of the Huskers' athletic prowess.

"I think everybody comes out of (the winter program) stronger and faster than they were before it," Vanden Bosch said.

Another aspect to the program is proper food intake. Coordinator of Performance Nutrition Dave Ellis said the program focuses on each player's individual needs.

"The program is designed to help each player reach his maximum potential," Ellis said. "It's not just about the physical, it's about the mental and emotional aspects of the game. We want to make sure each player knows exactly what to do and when to do it. We want to make sure each player is motivated and focused on the goal."



Epley



MATT MILLER/DN

NU GYMNASTICS COACH Dan Kendig checks to make sure gymnast Nicole Wilkinson is all right after she landed short and stung her ankle in a dual against Missouri Saturday night.

Gutsy efforts lift Huskers

By DARRIN IVEY
Assistant Sports Editor

The Nebraska football team's gutsy efforts in the second half of its game against Missouri Saturday night lifted the Huskers to a 21-17 victory.

After trailing 17-14 at halftime, the Huskers scored three touchdowns in the second half to take the lead.

After a warm-up, Oxford discovered he fractured his left ankle in the warm-up.

Oxford and teammate Heather Brink tied for the all-around title, but Oxford's personal best and improvement from last year's performance was the key to his victory. Oxford's score of 14.950 was his best ever. Brink's score of 14.900 was her best ever.

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Please see GYM on 8