

Tigers eye season sweep of Nebraska

BY SAM MCKEWN
Senior Reporter

The Missouri men's basketball team enters Wednesday's game against Nebraska as a little bit of everything.

A little banged up. A little inconsistent. A little uncertain.

And, according to Tiger Coach Norm Stewart, MU is feeling a lot like most other teams in the Big 12 Conference.

"Everybody in this league has

had difficulties, some more than others," Stewart said. "We've certainly had our problems."

Missouri (14-11 overall and 6-6 in the conference) enters the 7:05 p.m. contest at the Bob Devaney Sports Center in a six-way tie for fourth in the conference. A win over the Cornhuskers would not only put the Tigers over .500, it would give Missouri a season sweep of Nebraska.

But the Tigers come into Lincoln having been bitten by the injury bug. Forward Albert White,

who has been battling an injured knee all season, may not be able to contribute his 9.9 points and 4.5 rebounds per game.

"He's in and out of the lineup, and right now he's out," Stewart said. "When we get him back, he hasn't been able to work out."

Stewart said Missouri's level of play has been up and down most of the season. The ups include a 74-73 win over No. 4 Kansas, while the downs include a 111-56 loss at Kansas State.

Furthermore, MU has yet to

win a Big 12 game on the road.

"We need to get five or six guys on a consistent level, and then we'll start to make a move," Stewart said.

Defense has also been a weakness of the Tigers, Stewart said. MU is giving up an average of 76.1 points per game, including 89 in a loss to Baylor last week.

"I don't see the defensive intensity that the Missouri teams that have won at the end have had," Stewart said. "If we get that and we get Albert White back, we could get things going."

NU drops three games to Gophers

SWEEP from page 7

Durham's two-out error allowed a run to score and kept the inning alive. Then Egan's first hit of the game scored the Gophers second run giving UM a 2-1 lead.

In the bottom of the second, Minnesota looked to score again as they had runners on first and second and no outs, but Gopher shortstop Rick Brosseau hit into a triple play.

It was the first triple play turned by the Huskers since March 18, 1989, when they did it against Fort Hays State (Kansas).

Offensively, the Huskers were kept in check by Gopher starter Kai Freeman (1-0), who scattered eight hits over six innings and allowed four runs.

"They made me work," Freeman said. "And basically, when I kept the ball down, I was OK, but when the ball stayed up, they were hitting."

Husker sophomore Ken Harvey went 2 for 3 against Freeman. The first baseman's offense sparked the Huskers throughout the series as he finished 6 for 14 in the three-game set.

The Gophers put the game on ice in the fourth inning with three hits to start the frame. NU starting pitcher Jarod Beringer (0-1) was charged for three runs in the inning as Minnesota took a 5-1 lead. The Husker right-hander threw four innings and surrendered five runs on eight hits.

In the first game Monday, Minnesota took advantage of five Husker errors in the last three innings as they defeated NU 11-4.

The Huskers led 4-3 after the top through 6½ innings, but Nebraska fielding miscues allowed Minnesota to score four runs in the seventh and four more in the eighth to insure the victory.

"We just couldn't finish the deal," Van Horn said. "We just fell apart with a bad pitch or a bad throw. We've got to turn this around mentally."

The Huskers will open the season at home Saturday against Wisconsin-Milwaukee in a doubleheader at Buck Beltzer Field beginning at 1 p.m.

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16	17 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL/V AT MISSOURI M/W/Co FLOOR HOCKEY/I ENTRY DEADLINE M/W/Co RACQUETBALL DOUBLES/I ENTRY DEADLINE	18 MEN'S BASKETBALL/V VS. MISSOURI AT DEVANEY 7:05 PM MEN'S WRESTLING/V VS. MISSOURI AT DEVANEY 7:30 PM	19	20 M/W INDOOR TRACK/V NIAC INVITATIONAL AT DEVANEY 4:00 PM	21 MEN'S BASKETBALL/V AT COLORADO
22 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL/V VS. COLORADO AT DEVANEY 2:05 PM MEN'S WRESTLING/V VS. OKLAHOMA STATE AT DEVANEY 2:00 PM	23	24 M/W/Co TABLE TENNIS/I ENTRY DEADLINE	25 MEN'S BASKETBALL/V VS. TEXAS TECH AT DEVANEY 7:05 PM WOMEN'S BASKETBALL/V AT TEXAS TECH	26	27 M/W INDOOR TRACK/V BIG 12 INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS AMES, IA
					28 MEN'S BASKETBALL/V AT IOWA STATE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL/V VS. IOWA STATE AT DEVANEY 7:05 PM



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