

NU hopes pitching leads to road wins

BY ANDREW STRNAD
Staff Reporter

If ain't broke, don't fix it. Backed by three strong starting pitching performances, the Nebraska baseball team evened its record at 3-3 with a sweep of Wisconsin-Milwaukee last weekend.

And NU Assistant Coach Rob Childress said he hoped that remedy of pitching will work this weekend as the Cornhuskers travel to Louisville, Ky., to play six games over four days.

The Huskers will play the first of two games today against Eastern Kentucky (1-1-1) at 3 p.m. The second game pits NU against Cincinnati (1-5) at 6 p.m.

Childress said the Huskers will start the same three pitchers that started against Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"We feel that Kenny (Dubelbeis) and Jay (Sirianni) are our two strongest pitchers, and they pitched real well last week, so we'll continue to stick with them," Childress said.

Dubelbeis (1-0) and Sirianni (1-1), both southpaws, received their first wins of the season last weekend.

Dubelbeis, a senior, has started two games in which he pitched a total of 12 2/3 innings with nine strikeouts to go along with his 2.13 earned-run aver-

age. Sirianni, a junior, is 1-1 and leads the Huskers with 13 strikeouts in 11 2/3 innings pitched.

Pitching the third game for NU on Friday against Louisville (3-1) will be sophomore right-hander Chad Wiles.

Wiles (1-0) got his first victory last Sunday, pitching seven innings and surrendering two runs on five hits.

Junior right fielder Donny Starkins said the Husker pitching staff made it easier for the offense to drive in runs last weekend.

"When they're able to get guys out, it seems to take the pressure off of us to get base hits and puts the pressure on the opposing pitchers," Starkins said.

Starkins went 2 for 3 with 2 RBIs and a walk during the Huskers' 9-2 win last Saturday in the second game of a doubleheader.

Starkins is hitting .300 on the year, and said the Huskers won't always be able to rely on pitching to win ball games.

"We have confidence in our pitching, but scoring runs is how you win games, and you can't score runs without timely hitting," Starkins said. "That's where you have to believe in yourself - when there's that guy on second with two outs and the game's tied."

Starkins and the Huskers will attempt to win their first road game of the season. Last year NU struggled the entire season on the road winning only two of 20 road contests.

The Huskers opened their 1998 campaign with three losses at Minnesota Feb. 15-16.



Childress

Crowd key for weekend meet

Coach hopes fan support brings NCAAs to Lincoln

BY DARREN IVY
Assignment Reporter

How well the Nebraska women's gymnastics team performs at the eighth annual Masters Classic Saturday will be most important to NU Coach Dan Kendig.

But how many fans show up at the Bob Devaney Sports Center also will be on his mind.

Having a large crowd for the meet is important because Nebraska and Boise State are competing to host the 2000 NCAA Championships, Kendig said.

"We are a little behind right now," Kendig said. "All the students have to do is come out and give us a try. It's free. If they don't like it, they aren't losing a thing, but I think that once they come one time they will want to come back."

They'll want to come back, Kendig said, because they will be seeing some of the top competition in the country at one of the top meets.

This year's Masters Classic fea-



Lamb

tures three ranked teams, including No. 8 Kentucky, No. 19 Michigan State and No. 20 Nebraska. Rhode Island rounds out the field.

The meet will pit Kendig against his former boss Kentucky Coach Leah Little - who got him involved in coaching for the first time.

Kendig was a UK graduate when Little asked him to be a spotter for the women's team. He was a little hesitant at first, he said, but she kept on him and he finally agreed.

And he is glad he did.

"I fell in love with it," Kendig said.

Twenty years later, Kendig is one of the top coaches in the country with a 178-134-1 record.

Since taking over the Husker program five years ago, Kendig has a 71-19 record.

Included in that record is a perfect 18-0 mark at home. But that streak could be in jeopardy as Michigan State - the last team to beat NU at home - comes to town fresh off a school-record 195.85 performance last week.

"It is not going to be a walk in the park," Kendig said.

Although the gymnasts have changed since 1993, one Husker remembers watching that loss.

"It was hard watching because I admired those girls," said Arica Lamb,

a sophomore gymnast from Lincoln Northeast. "It gives the girls who remember some motivation because we don't want to see it happen again."

Being from Lincoln and having attended NU gym meets, Lamb also knows about the Masters Classic tradition.

"It was the biggest home meet and always my favorite to go to," Lamb said. "Now I feel I have to live up to what I always thought it was."

The Masters Classic, which NU has won the last three years, starts the championship part of the season for the Huskers, Kendig said.

Because the meet is a step up from the regular season, he expects his gymnasts' scores to show it.

"I think we will score somewhere between 195.5 and 196.5," Kendig said.

Competing at home also will help Nebraska. The Huskers average 194.77 at home meets compared to 191.17 on the road.

"I think the familiarity with surroundings helps," Kendig said. "They also want to do good in front of their friends and families."

With a lot of families, friends and University of Nebraska-Lincoln students in attendance, Kendig hopes NU can keep the Masters Classic trophy in Lincoln.

Texas Tech rolls over NU in fourth road loss

WOMEN from page 7

that has helped us all year to try and look for Thompson and Braziel inside."

Thompson finished the game leading all scorers with 29 points, and Braziel added 21. Also, with 5:19 remaining in the first half, Thompson connected on two free throws to give her 2,000 points for her career at Texas Tech.

Once the Red Raiders had their inside game going, they started connecting on their outside shots as junior Renee Hanebutt hit two back-to-back 3-pointers during the run.

"Those points really turned it," Sharp said. "Those were two big shots."

As good as Tech's two go-to players were, Nebraska's main scorers - senior Anna DeForge and sophomore Nicole Kubik - were off. The two combined for just six first-half points on 3-of-15 shooting.

To make matters worse for NU, sophomore Brooke Schwartz, who had averaged 15 points the last five games, left Wednesday's game for good with 11:35 remaining in the first half as her right leg tightened up. Schwartz had missed part of Sunday's game against Colorado and most of Wednesday's shoot-around in Lubbock, Texas.

"(The loss of Schwartz) tripled us tonight," Sanderford said. "We lost one of our better rebounders and defenders. It made it extremely difficult to play a great team like Texas

Tech."

Sophomore Charlie Rogers, who was expected to be back against the Red Raiders, wasn't cleared to play. Rogers has missed the last five games with a stress reaction in her left foot.

The second half provided no relief for NU as Tech opened the period with a 14-2 run and the Huskers connected on just one of their first 14 shots. By the 11:30 mark of the second period, junior Cori McDill had fouled out and DeForge and Kubik were a combined 3 of 20 from the field. DeForge finished the game with eight points - the second time in the last three games the All-American has failed to score in double digits.

"Anna was horrible tonight," Sanderford said.

Tech opened a 37-point lead before Nebraska staged a small comeback as Kubik found her long-range shooting touch. Within a seven-minute span, the sophomore hit a career-best six 3-pointers. She finished the second half connecting on 6 of 12 shots, while leading the Huskers with 21 points.

"Coach told me at halftime I had to get a smile on and get rid of the frustration," Kubik said. "I hit that first 3-pointer and was fouled and got a little confidence. Plus, the whole team was playing harder the second half."

The Huskers will close out the regular season against Iowa State at home Saturday night at 7.

Turnovers, missed shots hurt Raiders

BY SAM MCKEOWN
Senior Reporter

Texas Tech's well-oiled offensive machine went kaput in the first half Wednesday night against Nebraska.

The Red Raiders came into the game averaging 78 points per contest, but scored only 24 points in the first twenty minutes against NU and fell behind by 18 at halftime.

Tech never climbed back up that mountain of points and lost to the Cornhuskers 82-65.

"It was pretty simple out there," Texas Tech guard Cory Carr said. "We didn't make any plays in the first half. We didn't do anything."

But it looked promising early. Red Raider guard Stan Bonewitz made a 3-pointer to cut NU's lead to 5-3 with 18:20 remaining in the first half.

It went downhill from there. Tech turned the ball over 16 times in the first half and made only 8 of 24 shots (33 percent). Five of those shots were blocked.

Carr, who came in the game leading the Big 12 Conference in scoring at 24.1 points per game, scored only eight. Guard Rayford Young was averaging 16.2 points and scored just one point.

"We really didn't show what kind of team we were in that first half," Young said. "That and against Kansas were the worst first halves we've had all year."

Texas Tech Coach James Dickey had high praise for both NU's defense and the play of Husker point guard Tyrone Lue. But Tech shot itself in the foot, Dickey said.

"When you look at our guns, Cory, Rayford and Stanley, they were 9 out of 31 shooting. That's obviously not very good."

With the loss, Texas Tech dropped below .500 in the conference and has lost four of its last five games.

Still, Dickey said, the Red Raiders aren't out of a possible NCAA bid. Dickey said he thought Nebraska would earn a berth to the NCAA Tournament in March.

Golf team finishes 12th

From Staff Reports

Senior Rachele Tacha shot a 77 to lead the Nebraska women's golf team to a 12th-place finish at the Pioneer Electrics Bruin Classic in Menifee, Calif., Wednesday.

A 1997 first-team All-Big 12 selection, Tacha tied for 19th place, shooting a 152 over 36 holes.

The Cornhuskers shot a 315 Wednesday to put their total at 637.

Fifth-ranked Tulsa shot a 600 to finish first among the 18-team field and

beat Oregon by one stroke. Fourth-ranked Stanford and top-ranked Arizona State tied for third with a 604. Southern California finished fifth shooting a 609.

Nebraska sophomore Hanne Nyquist finished 58th, putting rounds of 82 and 78 together to shoot a 160.

Husker junior Gretchen Doerr finished with a 162, senior Shirin Hornecker shot a 166 and sophomore Elizabeth Bahensky shot a 173.

NU returns to action March 13-15 at the Betsy Rawls Invite in Austin, Texas.

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