

ONE NINE E more dance NU returns to Big Dance but bows out in first round

By **DARREN IVY**
Assignment Reporter

Getting back to the promised land — otherwise known as the NCAA Tournament — for the first time since 1994 highlighted the year for the Nebraska men's basketball team.

But the Cornhuskers (20-12) didn't satisfy all their desires.

"Our goal was to make it to the tourney and win one game," sophomore Cookie Belcher said. "We didn't accomplish our overall goal."

But the Cornhuskers finished fourth in the Big 12 Conference with a 10-6 record, won 20 overall games and had a first-team All-Big 12 player in junior Tyrone Lue.

Lue said he also was disappointed with the season finale.

"I wanted to win," Lue said after the Huskers' tournament game. "There's no pride for me. We were up by 10. We just gave it away."

The Huskers opened the season with five wins in a row at home before falling to Tulsa 85-68 on the road Dec. 1.

Coach Danny Nee said the Tulsa loss was one of the low points of the year. NU led 44-38 at halftime but was outscored 47-24 in the second half.

Another low came nine days later when NU lost to Creighton 84-73.

Winning on the road was something NU had a hard time doing in nonconference play, going 1-3.

However, the Huskers' lone win was a big one: Dec. 13 against Minnesota.

"Everybody was down mentally after the Creighton loss," Belcher said. "We had to come back and win this one."

Going into conference play, NU was 9-4.

In the conference, NU went 10-

6 and finished fourth behind Kansas, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State. For Nee, the 10-6 conference mark was his best in 11 years at NU.

The Huskers also learned how to win on the road in the conference, going 4-4. NU was the only team to defeat Oklahoma State in Stillwater, Okla.

Nee credited solid team defense for keeping the Huskers in most games.

Having Lue also helped. Lue was the focus of most opposing teams this season. The junior from Mexico, Mo., averaged 21.3 points, 4.3 rebounds and 4.5 assists per game.

Despite being the focus of other teams, Lue led NU in scoring 25 of the 32 games.

After the season, Lue declared himself eligible for the NBA Draft.

"He gave us a lot in his three years," Nee said. "He got us back to the NCAAs. He is a big-time player."

But it was the time Lue went out during the first half of the Baylor game

Feb. 14 that Belcher said he remembers vividly.

Belcher said the game was the most memorable game for him because the team stepped up when Lue went out.

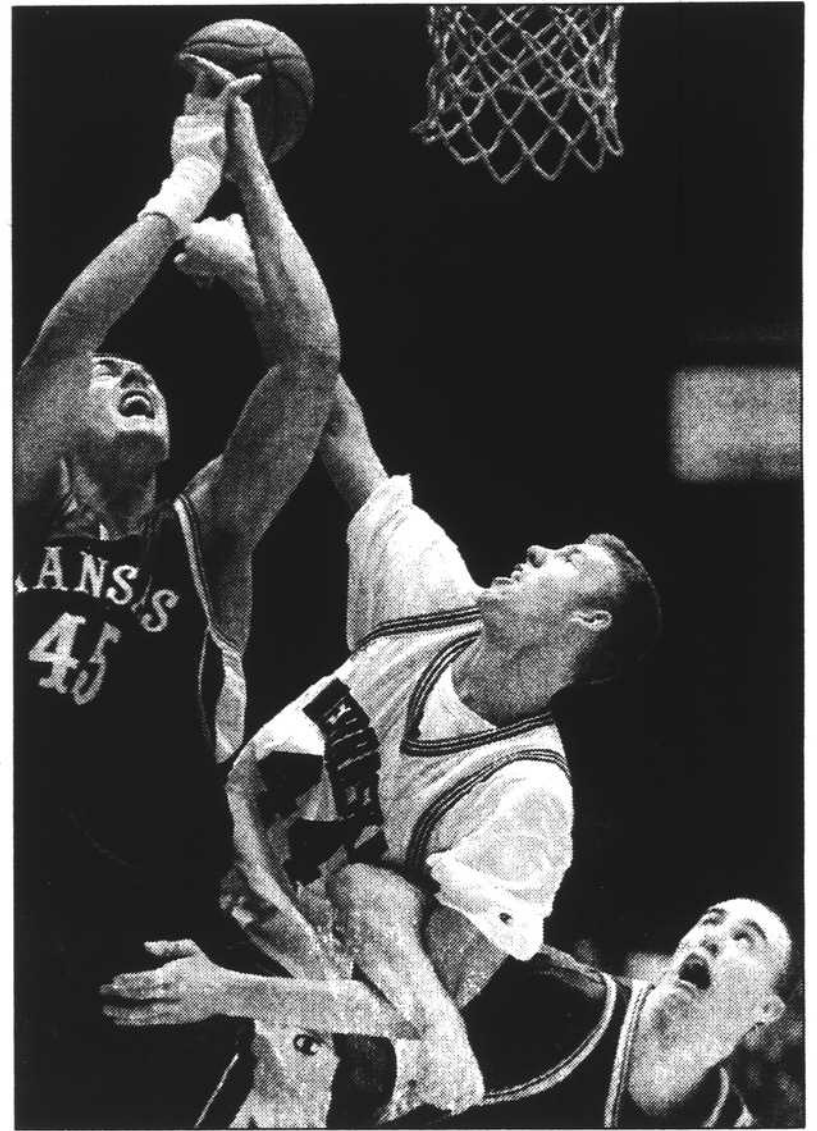
"It was neat to see how the team pulled together," Belcher said. "We went on a 21-0 run. Tyrone saw how well the team can play without him."

The win came during the second game of a regular-season-ending six-game winning streak.

Nebraska then defeated Baylor again in the first round of the Big 12 Tournament 65-46 before falling to Kansas 91-59.

All of the wins were necessary for NU to earn a bid to the NCAA Tournament, Belcher said.

With its 19-12 record, NU notched an 11th seed in the Big Dance and earned a date with



MATT MILLER/DN
Despite being held by Kansas' T.J. Pugh, NU's ANDY MARKOWSKI blocks Kansas' Raef LaFrentz at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The Cornhuskers qualified for the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 1994.

Arkansas in the first round.

Nebraska played well for 30 minutes, leading by 10 points with 10 minutes left, but then fatigue set in.

Arkansas came back to win 74-65.

"I wish we could have won one more game," Nee said. "I feel the next step is to win a game or two — maybe become a Cinderella team."

For the Huskers to make it back, NU is going to need a point guard. Tyler (Texas) Junior College guard Joe Holmes is one possibility.

With the exception of Lue, however, the Huskers return every starter.

Returning is Venson Hamilton, the leading rebounder and third-leading scorer; Belcher, NU's second-leading scorer; Andy Markowski, the Huskers' second-leading rebounder; Larry Florence; and Chad Johnson.

Belcher said he thinks NU will have a good team next year.

"We have a solid nucleus coming back," Belcher said. "We will have to pull together and play as more of a team next year."

Sanderford sets standard for success in his first year

By **SARAH DOSE**
Staff Reporter

At the beginning of the season, first-year Coach Paul Sanderford wanted to make NU women's basketball more visible.

At the end of its regular season, a record 12,181 fans watched NU cruise past Iowa State 68-60 to a perfect home record.

"I don't think women's basketball has ever been as visible in the state as it is now," Sanderford said after the Cornhuskers' loss in the NCAA Tournament to Old Dominion.

But Nebraska, which finished its season 23-10, broke more than just attendance records in its 1997-98 season.

Senior forward Anna DeForge finished her career fourth on the Husker career charts in four different categories: points (1,859), rebounds (804), assists (392) and steals (222).

As a team, the Huskers recorded the most home wins in a season with 16 and tied for most wins in a season with three other seasons.

Despite losing to Oklahoma State in the first round of the Big 12 Tournament, NU advanced to the NCAA Tournament, where it defeated New Mexico 76-59 in the first round.

But Nebraska's success didn't last long. The Huskers fell to No. 2 Old Dominion 75-60 in the second round of the Big Dance. As a team, the Huskers finished the game shooting just 39 percent from the field.

DeForge, who finished the season

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PAUL SANDERFORD
NU women's basketball coach

shooting 42 percent from the field, hit only 8 of 23 field goal attempts.

During four years at Nebraska, DeForge was twice named to the first-team All-Big 12 team and was also an honorable mention All-America selection. Last month, she opted to enter the Women's National Basketball Association draft.

After NU's loss to Old Dominion, Sanderford said it would be hard to replace seniors DeForge and Nicole Kubik. DeForge also said she would miss the team.

"I'll never have teammates like this again," she said. "This is something that is never going to be replaced."

But Sanderford remained confident for the future.

"I can guarantee you those sophomores and younger players are going to learn from this," Sanderford said. "This might be the first time that I brought Nebraska to the tournament, but it won't be the last time."

Check out the new Revised Schedule for the 1998 - 1999 School Year at UNL.

August 24 (Mon.)
August 31 (Mon.)

First Semester begins
Last day for late registrations and adds including adds of thesis or dissertation credits (census date)

September 4 (Fri.)

Last day to drop a full semester course and receive 100% refund
Last day to drop a full semester course and receive 75% refund
Last day to file a drop to remove course from student's record

September 7 (Mon.)

Labor Day (Student & Staff Holiday)

September 11 (Fri.)

Last day to withdraw from a full semester course and receive 50% refund

September 18 (Fri.)

Last day to withdraw from a full semester course and receive 25% refund

October 14 (Wed.)

Tuition and fee payment deadline

October 16 (Fri.)

Last day to change a course registration to or from "Pass/No Pass"

Oct. 19 - Nov. 5

Priority Registration for Second Semester

Oct. 26-27 (Mon-Tue)

Fall Semester Break (Student Holiday, UNL offices open)

November 13 (Fri.)

Last day to withdraw from one or more courses for the term

November 25 (Wed.)

Student Holiday (UNL offices are open)

Nov. 28 - 29 (Thur-Sun.)

Thanksgiving Vacation (UNL offices are closed)

December 12 (Sat.)

Last day of classes

Dec. 14 - 18 (Mon. - Fri.)

First Semester Final Exams

December 19 (Sat.)

First Semester Commencement

Dec. 24-Jan 1

Holiday Closedown (UNL offices are closed)

SECOND SEMESTER 1998-99

January 11 (Mon.)

Second Semester begins

January 18 (Mon.)

Martin Luther King Day (Student & Staff Holiday)

January 19 (Tue.)

Last day for late registrations and adds including adds of thesis or dissertation credits (census date)

January 22 (Fri.)

Last day to drop a full semester course and receive 100% refund

January 29 (Fri.)

Last day to drop a full semester course and receive 75% refund

February 5 (Fri.)

Last day to file a drop to remove course from student's record

February 10 (Wed.)

Last day to withdraw from a full semester course and receive 50% refund

March 5 (Fri.)

Last day to withdraw from a full semester course and receive 25% refund

March 8 (Mon.)

Tuition and fee payment deadline

March 14 - 21 (Sun.-Sun.)

Last day to change a course registration to or from "Pass/No Pass"

March 29-Apr. 16

Early Registration for Summer, 1999, begins

April 9 (Fri.)

Spring Vacation (UNL offices are open Monday through Friday)

May 1 (Sat.)

Priority Registration for First Semester, 1999-00

May 3 - 7 (Mon. - Fri.)

Honors Convocation

May 8 (Sat.)

Last day to withdraw from one or more courses for the term

Last day of classes

Second Semester Final Exams

Second Semester Commencement

Bold/Italic Events are Changes from the Previously Published Calendar