

Sports Opinion



Andrew Strnad Is K-State a fraud or real thing?

Last year I wrote a column calling Kansas State a fraud (See Oct. 2, 1997, Daily Nebraskan in the archives on the Web if you're interested).

This weekend's game against Nebraska will effectively put an end to that fraud investigation, which has lasted the entire decade.

For the last 10 years, Wildcat Coach Bill Snyder has helped transform the worst team in college football history to a legitimate powerhouse. So the story goes.

Along the way, the Wildcats have defeated not two, not three, not five, but one top-10 team.

In their defense, they couldn't beat any because they weren't playing any top-10 teams.

Despite facing a top-10 Nebraska team nine of the last 10 years, Kansas State has only played one ranked non-conference opponent.

I understand what the Wildcats have done is very impressive. For instance, Snyder has won 75 games as coach of KSU. It took the school 28 years (1960-1988) to win 75 games before his arrival.

It is also notable that K-State has gone to bowl games each of the past five seasons.

The string is six straight if you believe the KSU media guide, which calls the '92 game against Nebraska in Tokyo, Japan, the Coca Cola Bowl.

But until Kansas State defeats one of the big boys (Nebraska, albeit 8-2, would be considered a big boy), it is going to face ridicule and criticism from fans and writers, not just from the so-called evil East Coast, but from fellow Midwestern states.

I'm no fool. I know K-State is for real. I don't think there is a better team out there, but it needs to prove it!

Nobody will believe the Wildcats are for real until they put up some real evidence.

The jury hasn't gone to deliberate yet. The Wildcat's defense won't end until they answer the questions of the prosecutors.

In this case, three prosecutors remain: Nebraska, Missouri, and Texas or Texas A&M. Answer their questions and the jury (media) will acquit the Wildcats of all fraud charges.

Better yet, the judge (Bowl Championship Series) will drop the charges and let K-State continue to practice in the Fiesta Bowl.

But if the Wildcats do stumble along the way on Saturday, then we have 43,000 witnesses to the crimes of fraud and conspiracy to commit fraud.

If that happens, we'll need to call the 21st district court in Kansas.

Anybody have the number?

Andrew Strnad is a senior broadcasting and political science major and Daily Nebraskan Staff writer.



SHAROLTA NONEN and the rest of the NU soccer team will play host to Texas A&M on Sunday in an NCAA second-round game. The rivals have already played twice this season, and the Huskers won both times.

MATT MILLER/DN

NU to do battle with A&M again

BY DARREN IVY
Staff writer

The saga continues. When the NCAA tournament pairings came out, and Nebraska Coach John Walker saw Texas A&M as a possible second-round opponent, he had no doubts that his team would be facing the Aggies on Sunday in Lincoln.

Wednesday, A&M defeated No. 22 Alabama 3-1 to fulfill Walker's prophecy and set up a third game between the two rivals Sunday at 1 p.m. at the Abbott Sports Complex.

"It's no surprise we are playing them," Walker said. "They are the best team we've played this year. No question."

The No. 13 Cornhuskers won the previous two matches, 2-0 in Lincoln Oct. 2 and 3-2 in triple overtime last Sunday. The most-recent win during the semifinal game of the Big 12 Conference tour-

nament in San Antonio propelled NU (16-3-1) into the championship game. It beat Missouri 4-0.

Two of the last three years, the A&M-Nebraska game has decided the Big 12 champion. But no previous matchup has had as much on the line. The winner moves on, and the loser goes home.

"The thing is, you wonder what the next chapter will be because every game we've played in postseason has been a classic," said A&M Coach G. Guerrieri. "I hope my kids have it in them to try it again."

Nebraska is hoping this third act follows the same script as the first two. However, Husker players and coaches would prefer a repeat of the first game as opposed to the second.

In the Nov. 8 game, A&M outshot Nebraska 25-7. NU freshman forward Becky Preston said A&M (14-7) controlled most of the game.

"They really did outplay us," Preston said. "It was almost embarrassing. Hopefully, that will motivate us on Sunday."

Walker is hoping the hometown fans will also motivate Nebraska. During the season NU averaged 919 fans.

"I hope we get a large crowd - nice and loud," Walker said. "You couldn't ask for a better game in terms of a fan perspective."

Junior striker Lindsay Eddleman said the Huskers feed off the crowd.

"We always come out with more intensity and energy at home," Eddleman said.

Guerrieri and the Aggies have concerns about NU's home-field advantage.

"Playing in Lincoln is a much tougher place than playing in a neutral site in our home state," Guerrieri said. "Playing on their field in their climate, I can think of a few places that we'd rather be than in Lincoln this weekend."

Walker said NU can throw its two wins over A&M out the door because they don't matter now.

Please see **SOCCER** on 11

Players say media wrong about team

BY DARREN IVY
Staff writer

Last season, Cookie Belcher, Venson Hamilton and the rest of the Nebraska men's basketball team hid in the shadows,

while Tyrone Lue got all the limelight. The new season starts Saturday for NU against UNC-Greensboro, and Lue has left for the NBA. Media and coaches don't see another Lue

and say there is no chance for Nebraska to repeat an NCAA Tournament berth.

Inside the Husker locker room, players and coaches don't mind the low expectations.

"We are motivated because of all the doubts people have," said Belcher, a 6-foot-4 junior guard. "I don't think a lot of people give us respect because we lost Tyrone. We have four returning starters, and I think we will be one of the stronger teams in the conference."

Coach Danny Nee remembered the pre-season polls last year.

"Last year the media picked us to finish eighth, and we finished fourth," Nee said. "This year, they have us picked to finish seventh. Hopefully, that means we will finish third."

If the Huskers are going to make it back to the NCAA Tournament, they will need to have a lot of players step it up, Belcher said.

Senior center Venson Hamilton is one player who will have to put up career numbers, Nee said.

"We are going to need him every night to play to his full potential," Nee said. "He has to score, rebound and not make turnovers."

As a junior, the 6-foot-10 Hamilton averaged 11.2 points and 9.8 rebounds per game. He had 17 double-digit rebounding and scoring games.

Nee would like to see Hamilton increase those numbers to 16 to 18 points and 10 to 12 rebounds a game.

Belcher said he saw a change in Hamilton after a preseason publication listed him as the most overrated player in the Big 12.

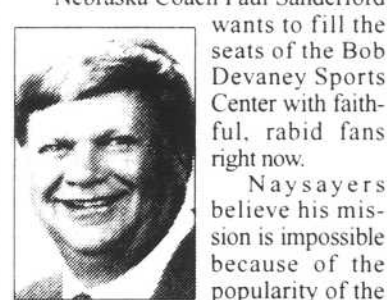
"He came out and worked really

Please see **HOOPS** on 11

Sanderford sets sights on drawing more fans

BY CHRISTOPHER HEINE
Staff writer

Not next season. Not even later this season. Nebraska Coach Paul Sanderford



Sanderford

wants to fill the seats of the Bob Devaney Sports Center with faithful, rabid fans right now.

Naysayers believe his mission is impossible because of the popularity of the Cornhusker football team.

"People have told me that you can't get people in Nebraska to come out for basketball in November," he said. "It's my job to prove them wrong."

The Cornhuskers open regular-season play Friday night against South Alabama in the CableVision Classic. NU plays host to the tournament that also pairs Arizona and Wisconsin-Green Bay in the first round.

Sanderford knows it is his team's responsibility to generate an exciting

brand of winning basketball. He said the Huskers will play his style of game - a hard and fast pace accented by good rebounding.

"We want to play up tempo," Sanderford said. "We want to play fast. We want to be aggressive. Physical, aggressive basketball. In your face."

NU center Lisa Reitsma, quick to point out the bruises on her shoulders and arms, said she is enjoying the Sanderford style.

The former All-American in volleyball said the Huskers will put more points on the board because of their full-court attack.

"I like pressuring the ball," she said. "We're going to get a lot more steals that way, and it makes things a lot easier on the offensive end."

Sanderford said the Huskers will need more than steals to light up the scoreboard. He said they will miss the shooting of All-Big 12 player Anna DeForge. DeForge graduated and now plays with the San Jose Lasers. NU will have to make up for her departure by getting offensive rebounds, he said.

"We might not be the best shooting team in the country," Sanderford said.

Please see **BALL** on 11