

Huskers grab No. 1 seed in tourney

NU's postseason will begin Friday night against Morgan State

BY ANDREW STRNAD
Staff writer

There were very few surprises when the NCAA volleyball tournament brackets were announced Sunday night at the Hewitt Center in the bowels of Memorial Stadium.

Nebraska, fresh off a sweep over Kansas State on Saturday night, clinched its second Big 12 Championship and all but assured the Cornhuskers' playing host to a NCAA regional.

When the brackets were announced Sunday night, the Huskers were more relieved than excited with their No. 1 seeding in the Pacific region.

"Friday night after practice I just wanted to know," NU senior setter Fiona Nepo said. "I was getting nervous waiting until the end here."

The Huskers (28-1 overall, and 19-1 in the Big 12 Conference) were the last No. 1 seed unveiled during the half-hour 64-team selection show that saw NU earn its fourth top seed in the past five

years. Some first-round matches begin Thursday, but the Huskers play Morgan State (25-10, 15-0) of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference on Friday night at the NU Coliseum.



Pettit

"I don't know anything about Morgan State," NU Coach Terry Pettit said. "But it looks like its an exciting bracket."

If the Huskers get by the Honey Bears from Baltimore, they will play the Utah/Illinois State winner Saturday night.

The top four teams are seeded in each region and will play host to the first- and second-round matches with the top seeded team holding the regional.

The other seeded teams in the Pacific region include No. 2 Wisconsin, No. 3 UC-Santa Barbara

and No. 4 Michigan State.

The other three top seeds were no surprise as both Long Beach State (30-0, 16-0 in the Big West) and Penn State (30-0, 18-0 in the Big Ten) finished the season undefeated.

The 49ers will play host to the Mountain region, and the Nittany Lions will play host to the Central region.

Florida (31-2, 14-0 in the Southeastern Conference) received the other top seed in the East region.

In terms of conference bids, the Big 12 received six bids, along with the Big 10 and Western Athletic Conference.

Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Kansas State and Colorado join NU in the tournament.

Despite five other teams from the conference in the tournament, the Huskers wouldn't be forced to play any one of them until the Final Four at the earliest.

Both Pettit and senior outside hitter Jaime Krondak like that arrangement as Krondak would

"I'm very pleased. I don't know a lot about these teams, and that's what's exciting about the tournament."

JAIME KRONDAK
NU outside hitter

rather face a different set of teams.

"I'm very pleased," Krondak said. "I don't know a lot about these teams, and that's what's exciting about the tournament."

The Final Four is to be played Dec. 17th and 19th at the Kohl Center in Madison, Wis.

Tickets for this weekend's first- and second-round matches at the NU Coliseum will go on sale this morning at 8:30 at the NU ticket office.

Mistake-plagued Huskers manage win over Aggies

BY SAM MCKEWON
Senior editor

The turnovers just keep on comin' for the Nebraska men's basketball team.

Fortunately for the Cornhuskers, their charitable spirit didn't hurt them against an overmatched North Carolina A&T on Saturday.

NU defeated the Aggies 65-47 despite 21 giveaways to move to 3-2 for the season. The Huskers had averaged 22 turnovers in their first four games of the year.

In the process of the sloppy victory,

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| Nebraska | 65 |
| N. Carolina A&T | 47 |

NU senior center Venson Hamilton became the Huskers' career leading rebounder. With nine rebounds, Hamilton surpassed Leroy Chalk for the No. 1 spot and now has 787 career rebounds. Chalk's previous record was 778.

Hamilton broke the record in the second half and was presented the basketball at mid-court to an ovation from the 9,117 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

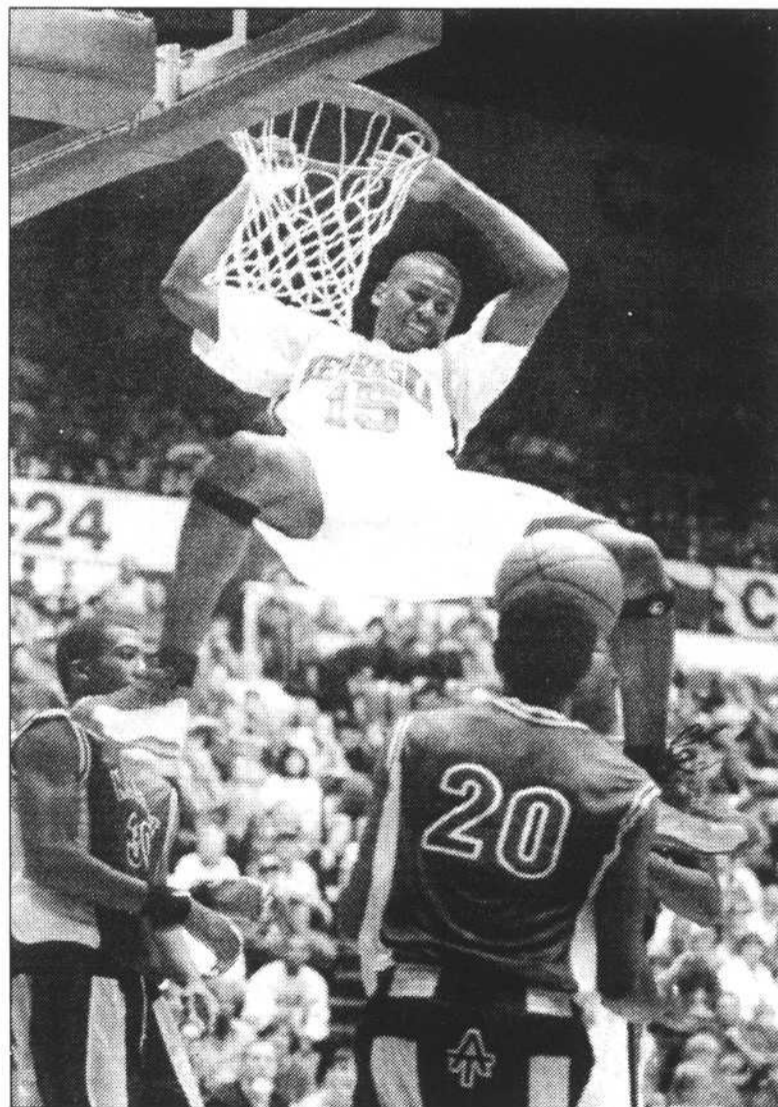
After the game, NU Coach Danny Nee had praise for Hamilton, but first turned his attention to his team's turnover woes, which left a 1-3 A&T squad trailing only 30-22 at halftime.

"We're getting turnovers so many different ways," Nee said. "We get them splurges - spurts. It's going to kill us against good teams. It's going to kill us."

The Huskers had 10 turnovers at halftime and squandered a 30-18 lead in the last 22 seconds. In the second half, NU had 11 turnovers, but took control with a 14-2 run to extend its lead to 44-24 and traded baskets from there.

The Huskers, who were handed a 78-41 dismantling by Wisconsin in the Top of World Classic, would take the ugly win - "It's better than a pretty loss," guard Cookie Belcher would say afterward. But with key games vs. Tulsa, Creighton and Minnesota coming in the next month, the players said the first order of business is eliminating turnovers.

"We had 21 turnovers against a team that doesn't play pressure defense," said NU forward Andy Markowski, who led all scorers with 15 points and added nine rebounds. "We



NEBRASKA FORWARD Chad Johnson dunks the ball during the second half against North Carolina A&T on Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Johnson finished with six points against the Aggies.

can't have it or we're not going to beat anybody."

Belcher added 13 points, while Hamilton chipped in 10 from taking only four shots. His low scoring output was overshadowed by his new record, which could reach 1,000 rebounds by the time the season is over.

"It motivates me a lot to put the record at a point where nobody can attempt to break it," Hamilton said. "Every day I go out there I try to work getting at least 12, 13 or 14 rebounds."

Nee said that Hamilton's record will be hard to eclipse because few have Hamilton's nose for the ball.

"He's got an instinct for the ball," Nee said. "He's going to get more than 1,000. Rebounding is a lost art. Venson

and Andy Markowski are both good rebounders."

NU out-rebounded A&T 41-31 for the game and the Aggies only shot 30.3 percent from the floor to NU's 52.2 percent. A&T was led by guards Bruce Jenkins are Jonathan Richmond, who had 13 and 12 points.

The Huskers next play Tuesday against Tulsa at the Sports Center. Nebraska then plays host to the Ameritas Classic on Friday and Saturday, playing Southwest Texas State in the first round. Hamilton said the upcoming games are critical.

"There's some big games, and hard ones, too," Hamilton said. "We've got to have a couple great practices and just play hard."

NU attacks KSU early, beats Wildcats in three

BY JAMES NICAS
Staff writer

MANHATTAN, Kan. - After playing their previous two matches on the opposing teams' senior night, the Nebraska volleyball team knew about

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| Nebraska | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Kansas St. | 3 | 12 | 7 |

the emotion Kansas State would have at its final home match.

The Cornhuskers made sure the emotion wouldn't be carried throughout the duration of their match.

Nebraska ran off 14 straight points in the first game to leave the No. 20 Wildcats in the dust of a 15-3, 15-12, 15-7 victory in front of 2,145 at the Ahearn Field House.

Nebraska finished the regular season 28-1 overall and 19-1 in the conference, while Kansas State ended 18-11 and 12-8.

With the victory, the No. 3 Huskers reclaimed the Big 12 title after Texas won it last year. It is also the 20th conference title in 22 years for NU.

"On the road, it is more important you are competitive in the first game," NU Coach Terry Pettit said. "You want to come out and become comfortable, if not take over a court. We played well, but KSU may have been thinking about other things."

The match was highlighted by sophomore outside hitter Nancy Meendering's 19 kills and .515 hitting percentage.

After losing the first point in game one, Meendering had five of her kills, and NU out-hit the Wildcats .350 to

.077 to take the first game.

For the match, the Huskers out hit KSU .350 to .052. It was the eighth time in 10 matches that Nebraska held their opponent under a .100 hitting percentage.

"They score points well, and they have a presence at the net. They have a great setter, and they just make things happen," Kansas State Coach Jim McLaughlin said. "I've seen most of the teams and I don't think anybody can match up with them."

Kansas State came back in the second game to take an 8-5 lead, but three straight Megan Korver aces tied the score.

Korver finished the match with eight kills, eight block assists, and a .727 hitting percentage.

NU finished out the game with three straight points on Denise Koziol's serves with the score tied at 12.

The victory ended a string for NU that had the Huskers facing eight ranked opponents in four weeks, with the last four contests on the road.

Last Wednesday, Nebraska came from behind in all three games to defeat No. 17 Colorado 15-10, 15-12, 15-12 in Boulder.

Meendering led the NU attack with 19 kills, while junior outside hitter Mandy Monson helped with 11 kills and a .550 hitting percentage.

With the road grind behind them and a Big 12 title in hand, Pettit said he was proud of the Huskers.

"When we dropped that match to Texas A&M, our backs were against the wall," Pettit said. "We've had three senior nights against three great teams in emotional atmospheres and we got the job done."

NU places 5th in Wahine Classic

From staff reports

A trip to Hawaii produced the first loss of the season for the No. 24 Nebraska women's basketball team.

It came in the form of a 85-67 setback to No.

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| Nebraska | 85 |
| UCLA | 67 |

12 UCLA in the first round of the Rainbow Wahine Classic Friday. But the Cornhuskers rebounded with two wins to finish fifth in the eight-team tournament.

NU defeated St. John's 85-66 on Saturday and then escaped with a 62-

61 victory Sunday over Louisville, a team the Huskers will likely play again in the Seelbach Tournament on Dec. 29 in Louisville, Ky.

The Bruins, who defeated No. 5 North Carolina on Saturday, outscored NU 46-9 in the frontcourt. The Huskers held an early 9-2 lead, but trailed 44-32 at halftime.

Against St. John's, NU had two players record double-doubles: guard Nicole Kubik had 11 points and 12 rebounds, while Monet Williams had 10 points and 13 rebounds. The win Sunday over Louisville improved NU's record to 4-1 this season.

The Cornhuskers next play Thursday at Drake.