

NU men expect up-tempo rematch with CU

BY ADAM KLINKER
Senior staff writer

Since their last meeting 10 days ago, the Colorado and Nebraska men's basketball teams both have acquired something the other team would love to have.

Not that NU would concede its 84-69 victory over Kansas to the Buffaloes, who lost to the Jayhawks 77-74 on Jan. 30. But the Cornhuskers would certainly be happy to own CU's 64-44 win against Iowa State, a team that beat NU 52-47 on Saturday.



Nee

But now, halfway through the Big 12 Conference season, NU (13-8 overall and 5-3 in the Big 12) knows not to expect any gifts from any team.

"Any loss sets us back," Husker Coach Danny Nee said. "February really decides the conference. We've got a clean slate now, and we've got to win as many as we can."

And win on the road, too. Following the trip to Boulder, Colo., where CU is 9-1 on its home floor, the Huskers' next road game will be at Kansas after a home game with No. 24 Missouri, a team NU suffered an 80-57 loss to Jan. 2.

But the rigorous schedule hasn't fazed the Huskers.

"We've had a pretty tough schedule so far," NU guard Cookie Belcher said. "All the nonconference games have prepared us for these games right here. We have enough strength

to take us down the stretch and finish out the season."

Colorado (11-10, 2-6), sandwiches Nebraska between its loss to KU and another game with the Jayhawks on Feb. 7. The Buffs' last meeting with the Huskers ended in a 72-55 NU win in Lincoln on Jan. 23.

However, Nee knows that playing CU at home this time will literally prove to be a whole new ballgame.

"They're really playing well," Nee said. "They're a solid athletic team and they're going to be in front of their fans. They're a little more focused and energized and they've got a competitive edge."

After the Nebraska loss, Colorado is shooting 47.4 percent from the field and averaging 70.5 points per game in their 20-point win over ISU and their near miss against Kansas.

"Both teams like to get up and run. We like to put points on the board and so do they."

COOKIE BELCHER
NU guard

Guards Jaquay Walls and Kenny Price and forward Carlton Carter are all averaging double-digit point totals in the last two games. Walls' season high 23 points against KU and Price's 23 against Iowa State led all scorers in those games.

Against conference foes, Price is averaging 13.7 points per game. In the first game with NU, Price led all scorers with 19 points.

"We've played them once; we've seen what they have," Belcher said. "We know they can play a lot better at

home. We've got to come out and be aggressive and try to get a road win."

And, in keeping with the frantic pace of the last game, in which transition points and breakaway dunks abounded, Belcher foresees no change in tempo when the Huskers meet CU in Boulder.

"Both teams like to get up and run," Belcher said. "We like to put points on the board, so do they. I expect a fast-paced game."

NU tips off with the Buffs tonight at 7:05 p.m. Central Standard Time.

Big 12 women gain recognition

BY JAY SAUNDERS
Staff writer

Not too many things that are 3 years old gain a great deal of respect.

Children are barely talking, wine hasn't aged and dogs may not be fully grown.

But in only three years of existence, the Big 12 Conference is making a name for itself in women's basketball.

"It is not a question - we are one of the top conferences in the country for women's basketball," Kansas Coach Marian Washington said. "I think we get a lot more respect now."

That respect did not come overnight for the Big 12. Two years ago, the conference sent five teams to the NCAA tournament.

In 1998, a case was made for a sixth to go to the Big Dance, but only four - Texas Tech, Iowa State, Kansas and Nebraska - represented the league in its second year.

"Last year was a real slap in the face," Washington said. "People have to give this conference credit."

This season, the Big 12 is looking for more respect as one of the country's "super conferences."

Already this year, 19 games have been on national or regional television. Conference teams can be seen nine more times this year, including the semifinals and the finals of the conference tournament March 4 and 6.

And this year, the statistics speak for themselves. Four teams have been ranked in the Associated Press Top 25. The Big 12 is the second best con-

ference according to yesterday's release of the Ratings Percentage Index. The only conference it trails is the Southeastern Conference, which is a traditional powerhouse and contains defending national champion Tennessee.

"In three years, we've made great strides," Iowa State Coach Bill Fennelly said.

Once again this season, coaches around the league say the Big 12 should place half of the conference in the NCAA tournament.

Eight teams in the conference have RPI rankings in the top 64. That group is led by Texas Tech, which is fifth in the latest rankings release.

But the problem for the Big 12 seems to be the parity of the league. Through the first half of the conference season, only two games separate the fourth-place team from the 12th-place team.

"We have eight games left and there is a big old logjam," Baylor Coach Sonja Hogg said. "But I would like to think we can get six in."

Helping the Big 12's cause is the success teams had in the nonconference season. The overall record against non-conference teams this season was 94-36. Big 12 teams won 13 games against top 25 teams.

"There are so many teams that are good teams in our conference that are beating each other up," Colorado Coach Ceal Berry said. "It doesn't matter where you are in the conference; you have to be ready to play every night."

"I hope the selection committee recognizes that."

If the Big 12 is to break through and qualify six teams for the tournament, Washington said the main reason for success will be coaching.

Four Big 12 coaches have been to the Final Four. Texas Tech's Marsha Sharp and Texas' Jody Conradt have each won national championships.

This season, Conradt won her 600th career game.

"It probably begins with coaching in the conference," Washington said. "We have unbelievable experience, and that says a lot that we are able to attract some of the best coaches."

Even with all the experience, these coaches have not figured out the formula for winning on the road.

This season, teams have won only 30 percent of games away from home. Nebraska, which has a 26-game home winning streak, has not won a conference game on the road.

Oklahoma is in a similar position, but the Sooners have taken it step further. OU is 0-7 overall on the road this season.

"This conference is brutal on the road and you have to hang on for dear life at home," Fennelly said. "This league is very competitive."

The coaches know the conference is competitive, and the fans around the league are starting to figure it out as well.

Seven Big 12 teams are in the top 30 in the nation for average attendance, including Texas Tech and Texas in the top 10.

"That is what I like about the Big 12," Sharp said. "Everyone has a great program."

Georgia Girls big part of Bulldogs' recruiting

While some argue hostesses are sex objects, girls argue they're really the 'ultimate fan.'

ATHENS, Ga. (AP) - They are known as the Georgia Girls, a group of some 70 "vivacious" female students who spend their winter weekends taking high school football recruits to dinner.

The program has been around at least 20 years, and is an important part of attracting some of the country's best players to the University of Georgia.

Some say the program is nothing more than a university-sponsored escort service.

"Just the fact that these hospitality teams are all female and the football players are all male sets up the expectation that what is being given out is sex appeal," said Victoria Davion, who teaches a feminist philosophy class. "They're selling sex appeal as an enticement to come."

Not so, says Dominique Holloman, a sophomore Georgia Girl.

"We're like hostesses," she said. "You could think of it as a tour guide."

Last season, Tennessee fans taunted Georgia Girls at a game, insinuating that they used sex to sign players.

Other schools with powerhouse football programs, mostly in the South, have similar organizations - the Bama Belles (Alabama), the Vol Hostesses (Tennessee), the Gator Guides (Florida), the Rebel Recruiters (Mississippi) and the Tiger PAWS (Clemson). The NCAA has no objec-

tion.

The Georgia Girls look for young women who are "vivacious, outgoing and informative," said Audra Towson, the 22-year-old president of the group.

But what recruits notice is their looks. Bulldog linebacker Adrian Hollingshed said recruits often talk about which school has the prettiest escorts. But he said the players don't expect relationships with the women.

The Georgia Girls acknowledge they flirt with some recruits, but say it never goes beyond that.

Towson said many of the women are in their 20s and wouldn't consider dating teen-agers. Although some Georgia Girls date current Bulldog players, Towson said she has never heard of any escort who had a physical relationship with a recruit.

Not that there are rules against it. Revealing clothes are frowned upon, but the only thing strictly forbidden is wearing anything other than the school colors, red and black.

The Georgia Girls' work really begins in January, when recruits visit the campus.

On Fridays, the women put on their best red-and-black outfits for dinner with the players. Each woman takes basic football lessons and studies up on her recruit - where he's from, his parents' names and his position - to keep the conversation flowing smoothly.

"We play a part in making them feel more comfortable at the school," says Haley Cagle, a senior and the program's vice president. "Sometimes they'll confide stuff in us that they don't tell the coaches."

The Georgia Girls will see the results of their work on Wednesday, college football's signing day, when the recruits' decisions on which school they will play for are announced.

"I feel like more than just a person in the stands," Holloman said. "I'm actually part of something, not just an onlooker. It's kind of like being the ultimate fan."

• Personal Training • Aerobics • Nautilus • Treadmills • Sauna • Free Weights •

• Open 24 Hours Everyday • Tanning • Raquetball Courts •

Does this remind you of your current workout facility?

Avoid the meat market!

Call or stop by Cottonwood Club for a tour and a Free trial visit

- Minutes from campus
- \$29.95 one month Tanning
- 3 month membership only \$89.95
- All fitness classes included: Kickboxing, Toning, Spinning, Yoga and more!
- Open 24 hours, 7 days a week

COTTONWOOD CLUB 475-3386
330 West "P" Street

• Lifecycles • Stairmasters • Whirlpool • Spinning • Elliptical Trainers • Nautilus •

• Open 24 Hours Everyday • Tanning • Raquetball Courts •

SWING DANCING EVERY THURSDAY

Doors open at 8 p.m.

Lessons begin at 8:30 p.m.

Lessons by Amy Castro of Dance Sport USA

The PLAMOR

Call 475-4030 for more info.

Davis will sign with NU today

DAVIS from page 9

Nebraska.

Daniel Waldrop, an offensive lineman from Wilmington, Calif., chose Washington State over Nebraska, Colorado, Washington and Arizona State, according to the Spokane Spokesman Review.

The Huskers are still awaiting decisions from Larry Croom, a defensive back from California, and BJ Ward, a defensive back out of Dallas Kimball High School. Ward had reduced his list to Florida State and Nebraska, according to his high school coach two weeks ago.

The Huskers are expected to sign at least 20 athletes to scholarships Wednesday.