

## Sports Opinion



**Sam McKewon**

## Nebraska has proven its mettle

We're sitting there, watching this upset thing unfold on a 13-inch Sylvania TV at the Daily Nebraskan. There we were, myself and Jeff Randall, a designer at the DN who knows where things stand when it comes to Nebraska: playing basketball in Kansas.

I knew it too. NU doesn't win in Kansas. Not at Allen Fieldhouse. Not now. Not ever. Because it's Nebraska. And it's Kansas. And hell hasn't frozen over yet.

And so NU's down 49-38, and I start speaking about nails in coffins and starting up the bus when another designer, Tim Karstens, who also knows where things stand, says two words, ones I thought to be true.

"Paper tigers," Tim says. "Paper tigers."

He's referring to Nebraska, of course, and the fact that when it's really mattered, when it seemed like Nebraska was finally going to make a statement, it didn't. It lost down the stretch. Or made a mistake. Or threw a stupid pass. Or gave up.

But not this time. No paper tigers here. NU found a soul in Lawrence on Wednesday, much like Kansas State found a soul when it beat Nebraska in football. The Huskers won when they least expected to, in a season where it never seemed like it could happen.

It matters little what happens from here. Danny Nee's proven it. So has Venson Hamilton. And Cary Cochran. And Cookie Belcher. And the rest of them. They proved that by hitting rock bottom, you can return to something you've never achieved.

People laughed at NU after the nonconference season. Tossed them up as joke. The "Fire Nee" chant started again. In midst of that, the Huskers have put together their best and most spirited run, well, ever.

Eight out of nine games the Huskers have won. They've beaten four ranked opponents. They've won on the road. They've won pretty and ugly. They've won every which way but loose.

Isn't it ironic, in a season when Nebraska football was less than glorious, that we might get this surprise? Nee said Monday he was a perfect fit to contrast NU's football program, and I'm beginning to think he's right.

So when Larry Florence made the icing free throws Wednesday and Tim, Jeff and I watched it happen, Jeff said, "They got it." And he's right. Maybe in more ways than one.

NU might in the Big 12 Conference. They could win a NCAA Tournament game. These Huskers, unlike the rest, give that feeling that this is *their* season, and they're not giving it up.

The victory in Lawrence made it official: Nebraska is a paper tiger no more.

**Sam McKewon is a junior news-editorial and political science major and a Daily Nebraskan senior editor.**

# Huskers rally to upset Kansas

*Win at Allen Fieldhouse first for a Nebraska team in 15 years*

BY DAVID WILSON  
Staff writer

Nebraska	64
Kansas	59

LAWRENCE, Kan. — They didn't panic. Surrounded by the deafening cry of 16,000 fans at Allen Fieldhouse and trailing by 11, it would have been easy for the Nebraska basketball team to fold against Kansas on Wednesday night.

They could have packed it up, licked their wounds and left Lawrence in similar fashion to the last 15 Cornhusker teams that played here.

But something went differently this time.

The KU run midway through the second half wasn't enough to put NU out of commission. It was Nebraska that struck back in Jayhawk fashion.

Using runs of 10-1 and 16-4, the

Huskers jettied from a double-digit deficit to their first win at Allen Fieldhouse since the 1982-83 season. With the 64-59 victory, NU improved to 16-8 overall and 8-3 in the Big 12 Conference — just one game out of first place.

"Kansas is famous for their runs," NU Coach Danny Nee said. "When they put the runs on us, they didn't take us out. Our kids never quit. We didn't win pretty, but we found a way to win."

Kansas, which dropped out of the Top 25 for the first time since 1991 with a loss in Lincoln last month, fell to 16-7 and 8-3. The Jayhawks had won 62 straight at home prior to a loss to Iowa earlier this season.

"It was kind of a David and Goliath

**"***When they put the runs on us, they didn't take us out. Our kids never quit. We didn't win pretty, but we found a way to win."***"**

DANNY NEE  
NU head coach

story," forward Andy Markowski said. "You always thought you could come down here and compete, then you get down by 11 and kind of give up."

"At the start of the season, to say we could sweep Kansas was probably a stretch. But with our heart, we fought to the end."

The Huskers used two Kansas turnovers and two airballs by Jayhawk guard Kenny Gregory to spark the 10-

1 run that put NU within two points with just over five minutes left in the game.

From there, the Jayhawks made just 3 of 9 attempts from the free-throw line, and a 3-pointer from NU guard Cary Cochran with 2:42 gave the Huskers the lead for good at 56-55.

But KU had its shots. With 1:17

Please see KANSAS on 10

## BU shocks Nebraska at home

**■ The Cornhuskers see a 27-game winning streak at the Devaney Center end as Baylor wins 59-53.**

BY JAY SAUNDERS  
Staff writer

All good things must come to an end. On Wednesday night, one of them did.

In front of a crowd of 4,662 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, the Baylor Bears ended the Nebraska women's basketball team's 27-game home court winning streak, shocking the Cornhuskers with a 59-53 victory.

"You have to give credit to Baylor," NU Coach Paul Sanderford said. "Evidently, we thought all we had to do was show up."

The Huskers (16-8 overall and 5-6 in the Big 12 Conference) showed up, but weren't able to score for the first five minutes and 12 seconds.

Five of Nebraska's first six possessions were turnovers, and the Bears (13-10 and 5-6) jumped out to a 9-0 lead.

Junior Nicole Kubik made the Huskers' first basket, but Baylor scored 6 more points to make the lead 15-4.

"The first 10 minutes is undoubtedly the worst we've ever played," Kubik said. "I don't think we've ever come out that flat."

Up 11 points, the Bears offense cooled off, NU was able to cut the lead to 20-19 during a six-minute stretch in which Baylor did not score.

NU went into halftime down by 3 and seemingly had momentum. But the beginning of the second half mimicked the opening stanza.

The Huskers took the lead 27-26, but 16 seconds later, Baylor retook the lead and did not relinquish it. Nebraska made a second-half run, but Baylor senior Laura Webb ended thoughts of another comeback win.

The 5-foot-10 senior didn't hit a field goal in the first half. But with 1:36 to play, Webb made a 3-pointer that pushed the Bears' lead to 55-51.

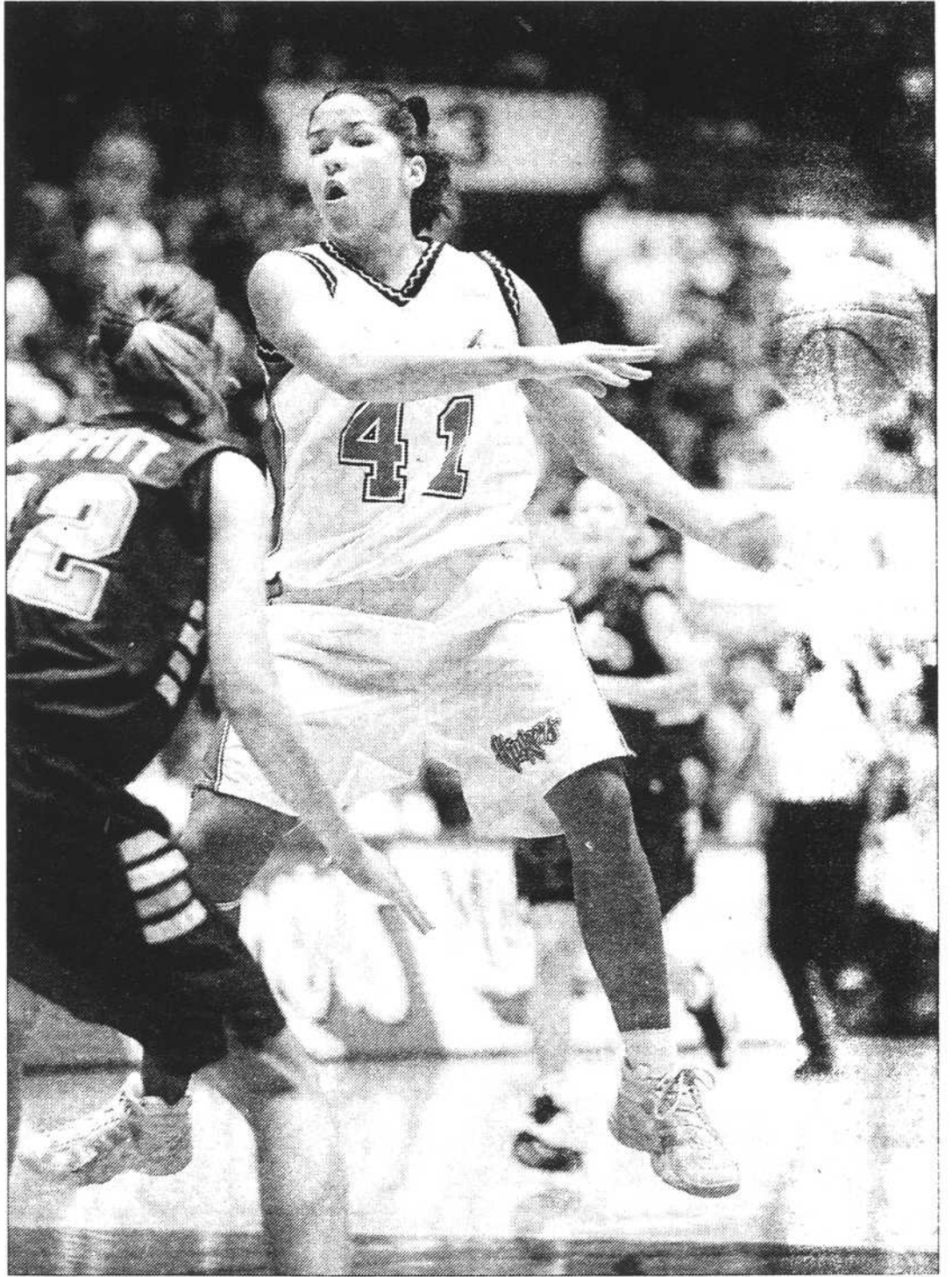
"I was very disappointed with our mental preparation," Sanderford said. "We came out early and chased the ball. We got down by 11 and had to fight back from that."

Baylor gave the Huskers a taste of their own medicine with a tenacious full-court trap. Nebraska had trouble setting up its half-court offense.

The Huskers were forced into 18 turnovers.

"They pressured the ball pretty well," Sanderford said. "We looked like we look on the road sometimes."

Kubik led Nebraska with 19 points. Her six steals



**CANDACE BLACKBIRD** dishes a no-look pass on a fast break during the first half of Wednesday night's game against the Baylor Bears. The Huskers lost 59-53, the first time Coach Paul Sanderford's team has lost at the Devaney Center.

gave her 106 this year, which is a single-season record. Cisco Gilmore added 13 points and 13 rebounds, giving her the first double-double of her career.

Gilmore didn't mention her individual honors after the game.

"(Losing at home) is embarrassing to me and my teammates," Gilmore said. "This is our home court, and there is no excuse for it."

The Huskers' home-court streak was the third longest in the nation. Baylor also ended Arkansas State's 40-game streak earlier this year.

After the game, the Baylor players were surprised to hear they had ended another streak. That's because

Bears' coach Sonja Hogg didn't tell them.

"I felt they didn't need any extra pressure," Hogg said. "They went out and played, and didn't have to worry about it."

The game puts both teams at 5-6 in the conference. The difference is Baylor next plays at home, and the Huskers must travel to Lawrence, Kan., for a game with No. 21 Kansas.

"The loss really hurts our basketball program," Sanderford said. "We've got to steal one where someone doesn't expect us to."

"We've got to see what kind of gut check time this is."