

Solid pitching helps Huskers net three-game sweep

BY DAVID WILSON
Staff writer

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Even Wisconsin-Milwaukee Baseball Coach Jerry Augustine, who pitched for the Milwaukee Brewers from 1975-83, was impressed with the three-man rotation Nebraska threw at the Panthers on Saturday and Sunday.

Two true freshmen and a junior college transfer — all newcomers to the Cornhusker baseball program last fall — combined to surrender eight earned runs in 19 2/3 innings as NU took three games from the UWM at Buck Beltzer Field.

"The kids that started against us all threw well," Augustine said. "And when you get good pitching and play good defense, you win ball games."

The Huskers' bats were clicking, too, as NU outscored Wisconsin-Milwaukee 31-16 in its home-opening weekend. Nebraska received support throughout the entire lineup — highlighted by second baseman John Cole's two-home runs in the second game of Sunday's doubleheader.

Cole, a freshman starting just his third game of the season, knocked a solo shot in the second inning before connecting on a two-run dinger to right center in the fourth.

"I had been struggling a little bit, and Coach kept on telling me to be patient and have confidence," said Cole, who hit ninth in the order Sunday. "It paid off, I guess. It was good to be able to help the team a little bit."

His second homer, and third hit of the season, was part of a four-run Husker fourth, which turned a one-run lead into a 9-4 advantage. NU won the game 10-5 in front of 978 fans.

Junior Scott Fries, one of three newcomers

to work his way into the starting rotation, earned his team-leading third win of the season in the final game, tossing seven innings and allowing three earned runs while striking out seven.

His mistakes, however, were costly, as Wisconsin-Milwaukee closed NU's lead to one run with two homers in the fourth inning. But after that, Fries didn't allow an earned run.

"Both the home runs that I gave up were fastballs that got up too high," Fries said. "I made a couple mistakes. You just try not to think about it and keep doing what we were doing."

And that's all Van Horn asks for.

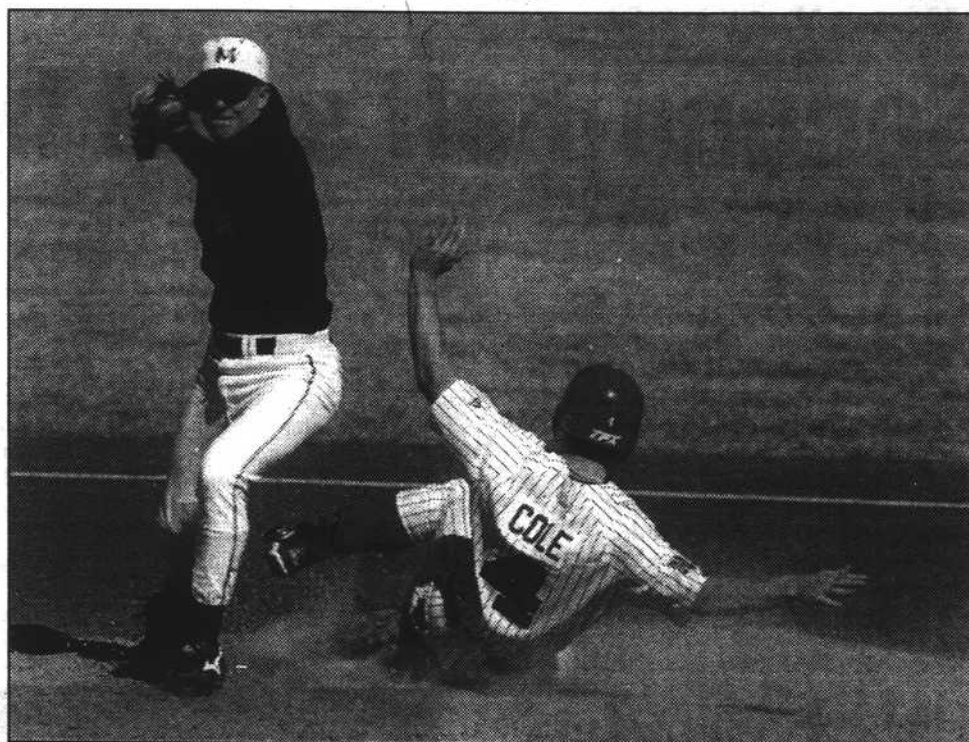
"Fries just did what he's been doing every outing," Van Horn said. "He made a couple of mistakes, and he paid, but he's just been outstanding. We put him on the mound and I can tell that our players just feel like we're going to have a chance to win."

Van Horn said he was also glad to see the offense strike back after the Panthers (0-5) closed NU's lead to one.

"When you jump out to a five-run lead and the next thing you know it's 5-4, it's kind of nerve-wracking," Van Horn said. "It seemed like we had it in hand, then here they come hitting the home runs. It was good to get through those middle innings and punch in some runs."

In the series opener Saturday, true freshman Steve Hale (2-2) earned the win while giving up three runs through 7 2/3 innings pitched. Hale struck out 10 Panthers as NU won 8-7.

Shane Komine, also a true freshman, worked five innings and gave up two earned runs in



NEBRASKA'S JOHN COLE slides into second base attempting to break up a double play, as Wisconsin-Milwaukee second baseman turns and throws to first, during the first game of a doubleheader Sunday. Nebraska swept Wisconsin-Milwaukee in three games.

MIKE WARREN/DN

Sunday's first game. Komine improved to 2-0 as the Huskers rolled to a 13-4 victory.

"Our starting pitching was outstanding all weekend," Van Horn said.

The three wins will also give Nebraska some momentum before beginning its Big 12 sched-

ule next week against Oklahoma in Norman, Okla.

"This is a big confidence-booster going to OU to play three tough games," Cole said. "I think we have some confidence up. Everybody is coming together and gelling as a team. I think

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NEW & USED COLLEGE TEXTBOOKS

NU softball finishes 2-3 at tourney

BY BRANDON SCHULTE
Staff writer

Up and down could be used to describe the Nebraska softball teams' trip to Georgia for the NFCA Lead Off Classic.

The Cornhuskers won two games while dropping three in the tournament, before being eliminated in the semi-final game of the Bronze bracket.

NU defeated No. 21 Florida State and Boston College, while dropping games to No. 10 Massachusetts, No. 11 DePaul and Colorado State.

The Huskers started off on a high note by winning a nail-biter against the Seminoles 1-0. Freshman Leigh Ann Walker struck out 15 in the one-hit shutout and Jennifer Lizama provided the offense with a solo shot in the fourth inning.

In the second game, All-American pitcher Jenny Voss picked up her first loss on the young season, dropping a 4-1 decision to DePaul. The turning point came in the sixth when Voss gave up a three-run homer to Karen Stewart that broke up a 1-1 tie.

Colorado State nipped Nebraska in the final game of pool play 3-2, to send the Huskers to the Bronze bracket. NU held a precarious 2-1 lead going into the bottom of the seventh, when CSU's Holly Schmillen singled two runs to win the game.

Nebraska came out with an offensive flurry in the first game of tournament play against Boston College. The Huskers used a 10-hit, 10-run barrage to win 10-2 in five innings.

Massachusetts ended Nebraska's trip south by whipping them 4-0. Massachusetts' All-American pitcher Danielle Henderson shutout NU on a one-hitter.

On the 2-3 performance at the Classic NU Coach Rhonda Revelle saw positives in the disappointing tournament.

"In all it wasn't a particularly good tournament," Revelle said. "But sometimes not winning gives you much more to work on."

The team will be in action next at the National Invitational Softball Tournament on March 11-14 in San Jose, Calif.