



MATT MILLER/DN  
BREE DORITY, left, and Arica Lamb goof around in a meet earlier this season. Dority, the Big 12 freshman of the year, and the rest of the Huskers are the No. 2 seed in the NCAA Regional Meet at the Bob Devaney Sports

## Michigan is top seed in regionals Saturday

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tough out a recent injury, a stomach muscle she tore Monday, and perform in all four events.

"She'll be a trooper," Kendig said. "Could we compete without her? If we had to. I just hope we don't have to."

But Kendig isn't immensely worried about having to replace Oxford if he had to. The Huskers, he said, are eight to nine gymnasts deep in every event, and the alternates waiting in the wings in case of an emergency will pick up the slack.

The Huskers' depth and current win streak, in which they've set the school record for team points at the Big 12 Championships, was not enough to garner the No. 1 seed in their six-team region. That title went to No. 4 Michigan, as the Huskers will be the second seed.

Here's a look at the other five teams:

■ **No. 1 - Michigan.** The Wolverines (19-4) are coming off their sixth Big Ten title in seven years and are ranked in the top eight nationally in all four events.

UM is 3-0 against the other regional teams and is led by Big Ten all-around champion Lisa Simes, Nikki Peters—who won the uneven bars with a perfect 10—and Grand Island native Sarah Cain.

"This will be an exciting event for Sarah to compete in front of her family and friends," Kendig said. "We are still sick that we were unable to recruit her."

■ **No. 3 - Oklahoma.** The Sooners (16-6), ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> nationally, are no strangers to the Huskers. Nebraska defeated them both Feb. 5 in Lincoln and at the Big 12s, where OU finished third.

They are led by junior Amber

## Husker gymnasts make goal NCAAs

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pretty darn good right now."

If this season's records mean anything, the Huskers, No. 7 Oklahoma and No. 11 Brigham Young—the only other team to beat NU this season (March 6 in Provo)—should be the shoe-ins for the NCAAs.

The Sooners, at 18-4-1, are led by senior Todd Bishop, who won the 1998 NCAA high bar championship. BYU,

McCracken, the Big 12 gymnast of the year and ninth-ranked gymnast in the nation.

"I don't think we should take them lightly," Kendig said. "They did not have a good meet at the Big 12s. Maybe that was best for them to get their bad meet out of the way so they'll be ready for this one."

■ **No. 4 - Arizona.** The Wildcats, ranked 25<sup>th</sup> nationally, will have the advantage of being the underdog spoilers.

Behind their 11-8-1 record and No. 4 seed is a three-straight 195-point performance and a shocking victory over No. 7 Arizona State on March 26.

They are led by junior all-arounder Maureen Kealey, ranked 24<sup>th</sup> nationally.

■ **No. 5 - Illinois-Chicago.** The Flames (18-5-1) make only their third NCAA regional appearance. Like NU and Michigan, they are coming off a conference title—the Midwestern Intercollegiate Championships on March 27.

The Huskers are the only team in the region to beat the Flames this year, on Feb. 13 at the Michigan State Invite.

■ **No. 6 - Illinois.** The Illini (10-7-1) are led by the Big 10 balance beam champion, sophomore Gina Wiechmann, the first UI gymnast since 1991 to win a conference title.

They'll have the toughest mountain to climb, considering their 0-4-1 record against other region teams this year.

Kendig said that despite the toughness of the region's competition, with three other top 25 teams, Nebraska will only be worrying about themselves.

"Like I've been saying all year," Kendig said. "If we hit our routines, we should be fine."

at 16-4-1 has the home floor advantage and are led by All-American Guard Young, who finished third behind Hardabura for the MPSF all-around title.

But that's why they hold the meet. No. 13 California, the two-time defending national champion, and No. 12 Stanford, who had its best performance of the season at the MPSFs, will try to spoil NU, OU and BYU's party.

# Baseball ready for OSU

BY ADAM KLINKER  
Senior staff writer

It's another big series, another home weekend.

The Nebraska baseball team will host another nationally ranked Big 12 Conference foe this weekend in Oklahoma State.

The series is a big one, not only for the Cornhuskers but for the Cowboys as well. OSU and NU are ranked 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> in the nation, respectively, and both are scrapping for position in the Big 12 race.

The Huskers are fifth in the conference with an 8-4 record and are 21-9 overall. Oklahoma State is a close sixth at 7-5 and 24-8 overall.

"I have a feeling it's going to be a dog fight," NU Coach Dave Van Horn said. "We need to play well and hold our ground to build up some momentum for the stretch run, and they're going to want to do the same."

And, Van Horn said, if the fight is to go Nebraska's way, the Huskers will have to start going on the offensive attack earlier than they have been.

In NU's last four games—a three-

game series lost at Texas A&M and a comeback home win over Creighton—Van Horn said the bats had waited until late in the game to come alive.

Contrary to the weekend sweep of Texas from March 26-28, when the Huskers put the heat on early and kept it on, save for one come-from-behind victory, the team has

struggled lately, but Van Horn said things should pick up after the win over CU.

"That was a good confidence-builder for us," Van Horn said. "We'd been in a bit of a funk there after A&M. It gets us back into that winning feeling and gives us some momentum into the weekend."

OSU will also be bringing its own momentum into Lincoln as the Cowboy offense boasts a starting lineup in which the lowest batting average is .301.

Led by Lamont Mathews, with an

average of .417, 15 home runs and 60 RBI, Oklahoma State is averaging .345 as a team while scoring almost 13 per contest.

The Cowboy pitching staff has also been on the ball, holding opposing hitters to a mark of .236 and allowing just under four runs per game.

"They're a very well-rounded team," NU shortstop Brandt Vlieger said. "They've got good pitching, and they've been swinging the bats lately. But we just need to relax, trust ourselves and know that we're going to put runs on the board too."

One thing the Huskers can trust for now is the home-field advantage. At Buck Beltzer Field this season, Nebraska is 11-0, including the sweep over UT and the NCAA record-setting performance in a 50-3 win over Chicago State.

Van Horn said he hoped the series would be a bigger one for NU, being at home, but is wary that the Cowboys are also trying to make their move as the halfway point of the conference season approaches.

"Both teams are in the same situation—we both need to have a big weekend," Van Horn said.

## Softball digs in for homestand

BY BRANDON SCHULTE  
Staff writer

The Nebraska softball team will have the advantage of playing in the friendly confines of the NU Softball Complex as it faces Oklahoma and Oklahoma State in the first double-header weekend of its 11-game homestand.

Starting last night with a 1-0 victory over Creighton, the team will have the opportunity to improve on its 18-11 overall and 2-2 conference marks during the extended home stay.

Currently sixth in the Big 12 Conference, a good showing could help NU jockey for position in its quest to defend last year's conference championship.

"To me, beginning with Creighton, this homestand is the critical part of the season because it's our only homestand," Coach Rhonda Revelle said.

There will be an increased level of urgency Saturday when the No. 11 Sooners come to town. Oklahoma boasts a 30-9 record and sits atop the Big 12 standings with a 3-0 record.

OU has a balanced attack led by pitcher Jennifer Stewart and first baseman Lynette Velazquez. Stewart has 12-2 record with a 1.56 earned-run average, while Velazquez is hitting .379 with 12 long balls and 39 RBIs.

Nevertheless, Husker pitcher Jenny Voss said the team expected to win.

“

*I think Oklahoma will come in feeling more pressure than we will.”*

JENNY VOSS  
pitcher

"I think Oklahoma will come in feeling more pressure than we will," Voss said. "They wanted to beat us so bad every time we met last year, and I think they have that pressure riding on their shoulders."

Oklahoma State enters the series at 14-15, 0-2, including a 3-2 win over Nebraska at the Capital Classic.

OSU gets it done at the plate with 8 players hitting at or above .300 for the year. Jaime Foutch has been a tough out this year, hitting at a .409 clip.

During an off week before the current homestand, Revelle made several tweaks for the stretch run.

The first was a the conscious effort to save Voss' arm. The past two seasons she pitched an incredible 635.2 innings compared to 92.0 this year.

With the emergence of freshman Leigh Ann Walker, NU has decided to have Walker start the first game of the doubleheader, with Voss ready to come on in relief and then to have Voss pitch the second game.

"I remember back to Voss' fresh-

man year when we played OU about the same time of year, and by the end of the day she was green because we'd thrown her so much," Revelle said. "She's in a much better situation going into the second half of the season than she ever has been, and I really think that will help us down the stretch."

The second move was to shift freshman Leigh Suhr to the ninth spot in the order to protect Jennifer Lizama.

"We were trying to get more spacing between our slappers," Revelle said. "We didn't have much to protect Lizama."

The strategy paid off against Creighton as Suhr delivered a game-winning RBI double against Creighton.

Suhr knows she and the rest of her teammates will have to come up big again this weekend.

"These series are huge," Suhr said. "This weekend could put us in a good spot in the Big 12. Our main goal is to win the Big 12, if we take care of business, I think we can come away with what we want."

## Track and field team heads for Texas

■ **The Huskers go into the meet in El Paso as the No. 2 squad in outdoor dual competition.**

BY JOSH CAMENZIND  
Staff writer

El Paso, Texas, will be the destination Saturday for the Nebraska men's and women's track and field teams.

NU will be competing in the Sierra-Providence Invitational while decathlete Casey Thom will be headed for Emporia, Kan., to compete in the decathlon at the Emporia State Multi-Events.

The Huskers travel to Texas ranked second nationally on both the men's and women's side for outdoor

dual competition.

Scott Warren will look to continue his dominance in the javelin, as he comes back from a week off due to illness. Warren has broken his own school record in every meet that he has competed in thus far. Junior Cory Lehman, who transferred from Hutchinson (Kan.) Community College, is quickly becoming a consistent scorer for the team. He has a season-best throw of 234 feet, 5 inches at the Jim Click Shootout that qualified him provisionally for Nationals.

In the high jump, Shane Lavy has been a solid performer, while freshman Shaun Kologinczak has been a pleasant surprise. Kologinczak jumped 6-11 ¾ at the Clemson Invitational last week for an NCAA provisional mark.

Stella Klassen is ranked third in the nation in the 400 meters with a time of 53.38 seconds. She is also part of the 4x400 meter relay team

that is ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the nation. Dalhia Ingram is ranked eighth in the nation in the triple jump after jumping 42-6 ¾.

The throwing events have been very successful for the Husker women as Cassi Morelock has automatically qualified in the javelin as well as Melissa Price in the hammer throw. Morelock threw 175-1 for her mark, and Price came through with a throw of 195-10. NU will look to improve on those marks this weekend as Becky Beachler and Erin Wibbels have both qualified provisionally in the shot put and hammer, respectively.

Sophomore sprinter Lesley Owusu has been honored as one of 300 participants in the third annual NCAA Foundation Leadership Conference. The Berkshire, England, native will travel to Lake Buena Vista, Fla., on May 31 to partake in the five-day event.