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Harvey lands with Kansas City in draft

BY DAVID WILSON
Staff writer

Just hours following his selection in the Major League Baseball Amateur Draft Wednesday, Ken Harvey slumped in a chair at the Nebraska Baseball Office, took a deep breath and released a little smile.

The day that had lingered in his mind all season had finally arrived and Harvey's immediate future became somewhat secure. Selected in the fifth round by the Kansas City Royals, Harvey learned that he will report to the Royals' short-season single-A club in Spokane, Wash., June 12.

"I kind of knew I was going to go somewhere - I just didn't know where," said Harvey, who led the nation with a .478 batting average this spring. "I had it in the back of my mind all year long. I'm just happy to get it over with and know where I'm going."

Harvey knocked in a school record 23 homers and added 86 RBI - numbers that made him one of three finalists for the 1999 Rotary R.E. "Bob" Smith Award, which is given to the top collegiate baseball player each season.

The Cornhuskers finished the season winning the Big 12 Tournament and qualified for their fourth-ever NCAA regional.

"I think I had the best season I could ask of myself," Harvey said, "and I'm just happy the team did well also."

"I had it in the back of my mind all year long. I'm just happy to get it over with and know where I'm going."

KEN HARVEY
fifth-round draft pick

Harvey said thoughts of leaving after his junior season entered his head while playing in a wood-bat Alaskan summer league last year.

But the idea didn't really hit him hard until he experienced success early on this spring, he said.

"I started getting all the hype and I was hitting for average and hitting for power," Harvey said. "I knew I had a chance to go and go pretty high. That's when I kind of knew that it was going to happen."

"In baseball, it's smart to leave as early as you possibly can. That's when you're going to get the most financial gain. Everyone knows if you stay your senior year - even if you do have a great year - you don't have that much negotiating power. I look at it like it was the right situation at me. There's nothing really else to accomplish in college."

The 6-foot-2, 250-pound first baseman, who finished his three-year Nebraska career batting .426, said he

planned to sign a contract within the next couple of weeks.

Until he reports, Harvey said, he'll be hanging out with his family in Los Angeles.

"I guess, maybe it hasn't hit me yet," Harvey said. "I'm not really nervous. I'm just happy that it's over with. I'm looking at it as another step for me to prove myself again and work my way up the ladder."

In other news:
Nebraska football recruit Carl Crawford was also selected in the Major League draft, as he was picked in the second round with 52nd pick

In other news:
Nebraska football recruit Carl Crawford was also selected in the Major League draft, as he was picked in the second round with 52nd pick by the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. As of last week, Crawford, who had expected to go in the first round, had not decided whether to sign a baseball contract or play football for NU.

NU softball is one game short of spot in Series

BY BRANDON SCHULTE
Staff writer

Entering the year an overwhelming sense of expectation was placed onto the 1999 Nebraska softball team.

A College World Series berth, coupled with a No. 8 preseason national ranking, had NU thinking title shot.

And just like the past three seasons the Huskers advanced to the NCAA Regional finals. It was a bumpy ride however.

NU had to battle through the losers bracket in the Regional. They overcame rain delays, suspended games and extra innings to survive to the final.

Arizona State defeated Nebraska in the second game of the tournament by a count of 1-0, but it wouldn't be the last time the two teams met.

In the losers bracket, Nebraska knocked off Notre Dame and Florida Atlantic, both in eight innings for the chance to rematch ASU.

NU's obstacles weren't lessened as

they had to beat ASU twice to advance to the College World Series.

The Huskers were up to the challenge, defeating the Sun Devils in the first game 2-1, but in the end the task was too steep as it was ASU that moved onto the World Series by virtue of a 4-2 win and closed NU's season at 35-21.

Despite expectations NU's appearance in the Regional wasn't easy either.

"No one predicted us to be where we were today," NU Coach Rhonda Revelle said. "We had an internal belief that we could be here and I tip my hat and give all the credit to this team for sticking together, for gelling and for rising to the occasion."

The reason Nebraska's end of the season run was so impressive was because it took so long for the team to come together.

After a 5-1 start, NU dropped eight of its next 17 games before rebounding in the Big 12 regular season.

The team finished fourth in the Big 12 conference standings before

making a run to the Big 12 title but came up just short in losing to Texas.

Revelle was proud of the way her team persevered all season.

"I'm very passionate about this group," Revelle said. "I feel very passionate about how they did because, against all odds and against what every one else said, coming off of the 1998 season, nobody even thought we would be even close to here."

Juniors Jennifer Lizama and Jenny Voss contributed heavily to the stretch drive.

Lizama was named as a First-Team All-American, thanks to a .387 average, 16 homers and 30 RBI's.

Voss won 23 games with a 1.13 ERA. It was the third time in three seasons she has won 20 or more games.

The trials of this year may have prepared NU for an even better run, next year.

"I think I will make a statement right now that you can expect us to back in the World Series," Voss said. "I don't think that the class of juniors and seniors-to-be is going to stand for anything less."