

SPORTS

PAGE 10

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Huskers remain undefeated in conference

■ With victories over two Texas powers, NU holds the inside track to a top tournament seed.

BY BRANDON SCHULTE
Staff writer

A 4-0 start in the Big 12 Conference puts No. 4 Nebraska (10-1-1 overall) in the driver's seat for the regular-season conference title.

With two wins on the road, a 1-0 win over eighth-ranked Texas A&M on Friday and a 3-0 win against Texas on Sunday, the Cornhuskers moved atop the conference standings. The wins also gave Nebraska the inside track to the No. 1 seed at the Big 12 Conference tournament in November.

NU Coach John Walker said the top mark in

the conference at this point is nice, but there is still lots of soccer to be played.

"(This weekend's wins) give us an advantage in the conference, but there still are a lot of quality teams left to play," Walker said. "The thing that I'm the most pleased with is that through 12 games, eight of them have been against NCAA tournament qualifiers last year. Our record shows that the team has shown a lot of character and has handled the tough schedule well."

Arguably, the most difficult road victory of all this season may have come Friday night at the Aggie Sports Complex in front of a school record crowd of 2,757.

But Walker said the crowd didn't factor into the game.

"It was just a big crowd," he said. "We just focused on the task at hand. Playing the great teams earlier in the season prepared us well."

The Aggies (10-2 and 3-1) are the only team besides the Huskers ever to win the Big 12 Conference Championship. Last year NU defeated them 3-2 in the conference semi-finals in three overtimes.

Junior goalkeeper Karina LeBlanc led the way against A&M as she recorded a season-high seven saves, with the most troublesome coming in the 35th minute when she made a diving save on a 15-yard shot by Jamie Marden.

Nebraska got the only goal of the match on a penalty kick by Jenny Benson. Benson placed the ball in the lower right hand corner of the goal past diving Aggie goalkeeper Melanie Wilson. The penalty kick resulted from Amy Walsh being dragged down in the 18-yard box.

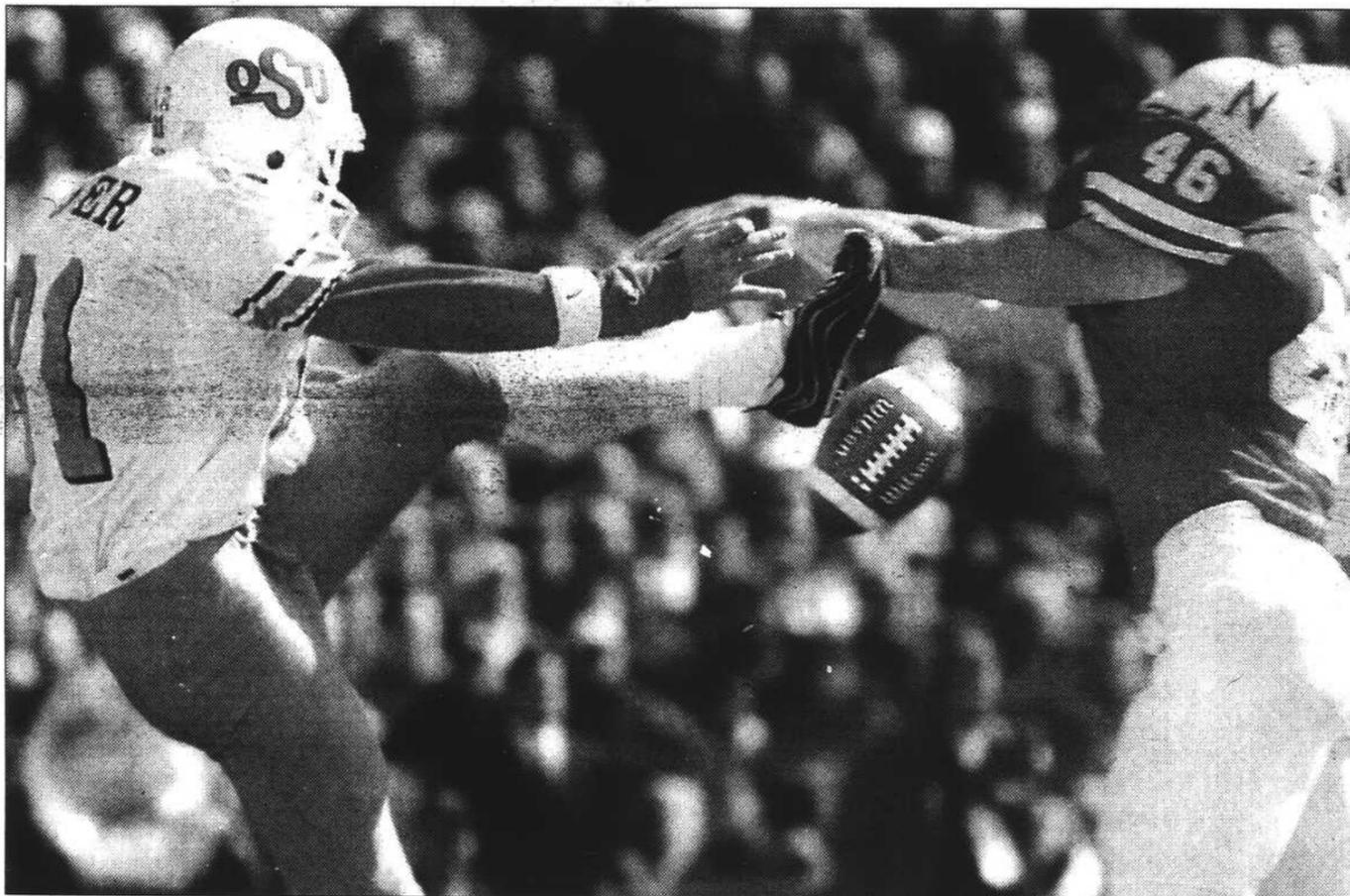
In Austin, Texas, against the Longhorns (5-5 and 2-3), Nebraska got two quick goals in the first 20 minutes of the match and cruised to an easy win in searing 100 degree heat.

The three goals came despite the absence of Husker striker Lindsay Eddleman, who was held out of the game after sustaining a sprained right knee against A&M.

All-American defender Isabelle Morneau scored in the fifth minute on a corner kick from fellow defender Sharolta Nonen. Forward Kelly Rheem added her fourth goal of the year at 19:08 for the early advantage, and Benson tacked on a goal in the second half on a penalty kick.

In conference play so far, the defense has been unyielding. Through four Big 12 Conference games, the Huskers have yet to give up a goal and have outscored their opponents 8-0.

"Our defenders have played well, as has Karina (LeBlanc)," Walker said. "We ask our strikers to apply pressure, too. We make marking a team thing."



MIKE WARREN/DN

NU LINEBACKER Brian Shaw blocks a punt in the first quarter against Oklahoma State on Saturday. The block was his second this season.

OSU gives NU a wake-up call

BY JOSHUA CAMENZIND
Staff writer

Nebraska Linebackers Coach Craig Bohl said that it is important to look at Saturday's game as a whole.

In a 38-14 win over Oklahoma State, the Cornhusker defense showed its best Jekyll-and-Hyde impression as it held the Cowboys to zero points in the first half and, at times, struggled in the second, surrendering 14 points.

Jamaal Fobbs scored from 1 yard out with one minute, 52 seconds remaining – the first rushing touchdown that the defense has surrendered all season long.

Bohl said the problems in the second half cannot be blamed on one player, nor one group of players.

"I venture to say that our defensive guys have high expectations of themselves," Bohl said. "And there are some things we could have done better in the second half. The other thing that you don't want to do is take away credit

from Oklahoma State."

Bohl said that the Cowboys came into the game with a plan similar to that of the game two years ago. OSU abandoned that plan in the second half and settled down to doing what it had been doing in its first couple of games.

"They really executed better in their base offense," Bohl said.

The Cowboys managed just 45 total yards in the first half, none of them coming through the air. It was a different story in the second, as they ended up with 273 total yards.

Bohl said it is good to get a wake-up call every now and then.

"I don't know if it is ever a good thing to stub your toe," Bohl said. "But I think it is good for our players to not feel complacent."

"We definitely did not execute as well in the second half as we did the first half."

The defense should get little rest as the No. 1 rushing attack in the nation visits now fourth-ranked Nebraska next Saturday. Iowa State is averaging 328.3 yards per game on the ground. NU is giving up only 67 yards per game, second

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CRAIG BOHL
NU linebackers coach

to Texas A&M in the Big 12 Conference.

Bohl spoke very highly of Cyclone running back Darren Davis.

"Davis is an excellent running back, and I think their offensive line is doing a good job," Bohl said. "I am sure they spread the ball around some."

"They seem to have a very solid philosophy of what they want to try and accomplish. I don't think they try to complicate what they do."

Aggies hand NU fourth league loss

BY JOHN GASKINS
Staff writer

Everything seems to be taking longer in the world of Nebraska volleyball.

The matches are longer, as opponents are taking the Cornhuskers – who swept 25 of their 34 opponents last year – to far more fourth and fifth sets than they've been accustomed to.

And the plane rides home must seem longer, especially after losses like the one eighth-ranked NU (9-4 and 2-2 in the Big 12 Conference) suffered Saturday night at No. 16 Texas A&M (12-2 and 3-1).

The Aggies rallied behind an 18-kill, seven-block performance from middle

blocker Amber Woolsey to knock off the Huskers 15-3, 13-15, 15-5, 13-15, 15-13. It was the second straight year that A&M – the only Big 12 team or regular season opponent to beat Nebraska last year – beat NU at College



Monson

Station.

And with four losses through 13 games for the first time in 21 years, the 1999 season is shaping up to be a very long one.

"We're very disappointed," senior Mandy Monson said. "Losing is something we're just not used to, and of course we didn't take it well on the ride home."

Nebraska Coach Terry Pettit's squad is now 0-3 in five-set matches this season. Pettit said before the match that other players besides his ace hitter, junior Nancy Meendering, would have to carry the team and have double-digit kills.

Sophomore middle blocker Jenny Kropp was the only Husker to do so, as she slammed a career-high 14 kills to go along with Meendering's game-high 31. It wasn't enough, as the NU offense managed a hitting percentage of just .215.

"We just made more unforced errors," Pettit said. "We had some nice individual performances. We're just waiting for players that have been playing for three to four years sitting on the bench because they are just not stepping up."

NU scored just eight total points between the first and third games. The three scored in the first were NU's lowest offensive output in 47 matches.

"It seems like we just came out timid," Monson said. "Against good teams like A&M, you can't play like that. They were going after things and making nice plays. We weren't aggressive enough."