

UNLV coach suspended from first game

LAS VEGAS (AP) — UNLV basketball coach Bill Bayno will miss his team's Mountain West Conference opener against BYU because he missed a mandatory conference coach's meeting.

The Mountain West suspended Bayno for the Jan. 10 game for failing to comply with league rules that required him to attend last week's

coaches meeting on basketball media day in Las Vegas.

Bayno will be allowed to attend the game but will not be permitted on the bench or within 100 feet of the locker room. Bayno said associate coach Glynn Cyprien would lead the team.

The executive committee of the conference management council voted 2-0 to suspend Bayno.

"The meeting was right there in the guy's town, so it was hard for the council to be sympathetic," league commissioner Craig Thompson said.

Bayno said he was not aware he had to be at the meeting, which was attended by the league's other coaches.

"I talk to my players about being on time," Bayno said. "This is a good lesson for them."

KU players upbeat, ready to win vs. NU

BY DARREN IVY
Senior staff writer

If it had lost last week against rival Missouri, unranked Kansas may have been a pushover for the No. 8/9 Cornhuskers this week in Lawrence.

But a 21-0 victory against the Tigers has the Jayhawks (3-5, 1-3 in the Big 12 Conference) feeling good about their chances against Nebraska.

"(The win) is going to be inspiration going into Nebraska," said KU junior fullback Moran Norris, who rushed for a career-high 106 yards against Missouri. "We are going in on a high feeling. We feel we can beat Nebraska."

The Jayhawks have history against the Huskers. NU has won 30-straight games against KU. To put it in perspective, Kansas Coach Terry Allen was 11 years old the last time the Jayhawks beat NU.

Despite the lopsided 81-21-3 advantage the Huskers hold over Kansas in the series, Norris said he and his teammates aren't intimidated.

"They put on their pants the exact same way we do," said Norris, a 6-2, 245-pounder who has scored touchdowns in KU's last three games. "We know they are beatable."

The Huskers will be the third-ranked team that the Jayhawks have met in their last four games. Saturday, nearly all the injured KU players that have sat out those games will be suited up and ready to play.

Although Norris wouldn't specifically say the injuries have contributed to five losses, he did admit that it has had an affect on team chemistry. However, as those injured players have returned, the team has grown closer, he said.

"We started coming together a little against Kansas State," Norris said. "Then it was even better against Texas

"Earlier in the year, the defense wasn't really in sync. Last week just gave us a ton of confidence."

DION RAYFORD
senior KU rush end

A&M. Last week, we came together as a team."

It was a total defensive and offensive effort against the Tigers that enabled them to record their first conference shutout since 1991, he said. The Jayhawks, who rank last in the Big 12 in defense and second to last in total offense, will need another complete game to have a chance Saturday.

The KU defense held the Tigers to 44 rushing yards and 217 total yards, which was well below the 411 yards a game the defense averages. Senior rush end Dion Rayford said KU is ready to have another game like that one against NU.

"Earlier in the year, the defense wasn't really in sync," Rayford said. "Last week just gave us a ton of confidence."

Offensively, the Jayhawks must score — something they haven't done in their last two meetings with the Huskers. From looking at tapes, Norris said he didn't see any weaknesses in the Husker defense. But he added that it would be the Jayhawks' responsibility to make a weakness.

"We have to go out and do a lot of the same things we did against Missouri," Norris said. "We have to believe that we can beat these guys."

Depth adds to runners' strength

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Brooks has to look no further than her own team to find great depth in talent.

Jeannette Zimmer, a sophomore out of Port Orchard, Washington, was Nebraska's top Big 12 finisher a year ago. She is still one of the top three runners on this year's squad.

"Jeannette was our number one runner last year," Coach Jay Dirksen said. "Obviously, she is pretty good."

Zimmer recently placed 15th at the Wolverine Invitational; she was the third NU runner to cross the finish line.

At the National Invitational, Zimmer followed behind Pauli, placing 11th in 17:57.

Zimmer is optimistic about how Nebraska could run this weekend.

"We can place pretty high," Zimmer said. "We have a lot of potential if we utilize our talents efficiently."

Dirksen expects his top three runners to run well, but in order to place high, the depth of his team must show up.

"This hasn't been the kind of year where it rests on the shoulder of just one person," Dirksen said. "We don't have to rely on just the top three runners; we've got nine pretty

good runners going into the meet."

Among the runners is Kathryn Handrup, a freshman out of Aurora. Handrup has been a surprise for the Huskers this season. She wasn't widely recruited because of a stress fracture she sustained while in high school.

"Kathryn has done a tremendous job with little training," Pauli said.

Dirksen knows his team will face its toughest challenge of the season this Saturday when they compete in the Big 12 championship in College Station, Texas.

"Chances of us winning is not great," Dirksen said, "but you can't count us out."

Allen aware of challenges Huskers pose

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"The key with Nebraska is believing that you can beat them. Because Nebraska is pretty good at winning the mental game."

The first step KU needs to take toward winning is putting points on the scoreboard, something Kansas hasn't done very well against Nebraska in recent history.

NU has outscored KU 76-0 in the last two meetings between the schools, and the score the past four years has been 180-10 in favor of the Cornhuskers.

Allen confirms that Sayers won't be in Kansas to help out the Jayhawks this weekend.

"I'd sure like to have him back," Allen said, jokingly. "Unfortunately, we won't have Gayle Sayers back this weekend. If we did we'd probably suit him up."


While he's not likely to record a 99-yard touchdown run like Sayers did against Nebraska in 1963, fullback Moran Norris ran well against Missouri. He rushed 18 times for 108 yards and two touchdowns in the game.

Quarterback Dylon Smith

appears to have improved each game he's played this year since he took over the starting job from Zac Wegner four games ago. The junior college transfer from Santa Monica Community College in California has passed for 1,051 yards and nine touchdowns this season.

Facing its third ranked opponent this month, Kansas hopes the third time is the charm, Allen said.

"One of the things about this league is you have a chance to play tough teams on television often," Allen said. "If we can get a victory, it will be a great stepping stone."

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Trick plays put spice into Husker offense

BY DAVID DIEHL
Staff writer

At times during Nebraska's game with Texas on Saturday, Coach Frank Solich uncovered a few new wrinkles in NU's usually straight-forward offense.

Trick plays — reverses, double passes and halfback passes — found their way into the Cornhuskers' play book, providing some relief from the vanilla, ground-based offense that NU is known for.

Solich said he was pleased with how the handful of gimmick plays worked.

"They were a big part of the big-play production that we had," Solich said.

He said the plays helped the team gain considerable yards, at times took players out of bad field position or put them in good field position and put them in four-down territory.

The Huskers scored more big plays than Texas did in the game — seven to the Longhorns' four. The coaching staff defines big plays as ones that go for 20 yards or more.

One play that stuck out was a double pass from Eric Crouch to Bobby Newcombe, which then moved to Matt Davison.

Crouch threw Newcombe a quick lateral on the play, and Newcombe promptly fired down field to Davison, who caught the second pass for a 33-yard gain.

"I think everyone in the United States who follows college football expected Bobby Newcombe to throw a pass at some point in time," Solich said. "Probably half the those people

thought he'd throw a pass in the Texas game."

Another play found quarterback Eric Crouch running a pass route looking for a pass from running back Correll Buckhalter.

The play ended as a short gain for Buckhalter when Crouch wasn't open.

Crouch said the two weeks the team had to prepare for the game aided in the implementation and execution of the plays.

"Any time that we put in a new play we expect it to be a big play, and there was a few times in the game when that happened," he said.

A lot of the plays, Crouch said, used the players who were in the game.

"When Bobby came in we ran some reverses, faked some reverses. That allowed Dan (Alexander) to have a big play," he said.

Alexander had a big play, a 27-yard run, and went for 137 yards on 21 carries for the game. He was the first back to rush for more than 100 yards vs. Texas this season.

Alexander said the team will keep running special plays, especially reverses and fake reverses, between him and Newcombe as long as defenses keep falling for it.

"(Running the fake reverse) looks exactly like the time when I give the ball to him," Alexander said. "So it's really hard for defenses to key on one or the other. It could be either one at either time. It's a really effective play"

Could fans possibly see Alexander hurl a pass down field like Buckhalter or Newcombe?

"You'll never see me throw a pass," Alexander said.