

## No can NU: Huskers fall short of Cyclones

■ **Nebraska forward**  
Larry Florence misses two shots in final six seconds.

By Joshua Camenzind

Staff writer

Iowa State came into the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Wednesday night and gave the Nebraska men's basketball team a typical, physical Big 12 game.

The Cornhuskers responded with physical play of their own, but in the end the Cyclones prevailed, 66-65 in front of 8,717 fans — the largest home crowd of the season.

NU Coach Danny Nee said the game with the 14-2 Cyclones, who moved to 2-0 in the conference, was just as he had expected.

"The game was kind of like I dreamt it," Nee said. "I knew it was going to be a hard-fought game, and

Iowa State was a very sound basketball team."

Husker and Cyclone players had to be separated several times throughout the game to be cooled down, but in the end, the contest came down to free throws and execution.

With 10 seconds remaining, Michael Nurse missed two free throws, and after NU center Kimani Ffriend rebounded the second miss, Nee opted to go for the win in transition without calling a time out.

"I did not want to call time out," Nee said. "I wanted to get something going to the basket so I wouldn't have to play against a set defense."

So Ffriend passed the ball up to guard Danny Walker, who then passed to Larry Florence on the left wing. Florence's baseline running shot rimmed out. After getting his own rebound, Florence missed a follow-up fade away jumper at the buzzer.

<b>CYCLONES</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>HUSKERS</b>	<b>65</b>

"I was kind of behind the backboard," Florence said. "It wasn't a good shot, but I was hoping that I could get the foul if I didn't get the shot."

Florence said losing the conference home opener hurt.

"It is discouraging, but we can also take something from it," said Florence, who led NU with 17 points on six of 18 shooting from the floor.

The Huskers, now 7-8 overall and 0-2 in the conference, hurt themselves with a lackluster finish to the first half. NU matched ISU's toughness early on, but after tying the game at 24-24, the Cyclones went on a 11-0 run. ISU led by eight at the half and the Huskers found themselves looking to adjust at halftime.

Nebraska opened the second half on a 8-2 run, which gave them

momentum to eventually gain a 44-44 tie with 11:41 to play.

"The only point that really bothered me was the first half," Nee said. "We just had guys not running the floor. That was the lead and the difference in the game."

"The second half, Nebraska played a very solid basketball game. We did a lot of things right; we just didn't make shots."

Marcus Fizer led ISU with 26 points and 11 rebounds while pounding down low with NU's Steffon Bradford and Ffriend. Fizer won the matchup for most of the night.

The Huskers were also hurt by poor outside shooting (3-13 on 3-pointers), part of which Walker contributed to the ISU defense.

"They switched a lot," said Walker, who shot 1 of 9 on the night. "They were getting in our face and trying to not let us get a good look at the shot."



Nate Wagner/DN  
HUSKER CENTER Kimani Ffriend releases a jump shot over ISU player Marcus Fizer during Wednesday night's game. The Cyclones won 66-65.

## New weight is a good fit for NU's McTorry

*After drastically shedding pounds last season, junior returns to form*

By David Diehl

Staff writer

It was an ugly 1998-99 season for Nebraska wrestler Charles McTorry. He had to lose weight every week off the mat. The losing carried over onto the mat, culminating in a disappointing 13-19 record.

Without a wrestler to compete at 174 pounds last season, McTorry, who naturally wrestles at 184, began a dismal season at the lower weight, which included dropping weight and wrestling fatigued.

"Trying to lose weight made it hard for me," McTorry said. "It affected me some. Then everything started rolling in the wrong direction."

But after a discouraging season last year, McTorry has busted onto the national wrestling scene in strong fashion.

It's a far cry from his showing last season. Without any energy or confidence, the season snowballed into a mountain of frustration.

Every week, McTorry would lose about 10 pounds the day of the meet, Assistant Coach Mark Cody said. And then he would gain it right back in a few days, weighing more than he did before he cut the weight.

And then he'd have to lose it again. Gain more back. Lose it again.

McTorry would run around in heavy sweats, losing about a pound an hour, Head Coach Tim Neumann said. It left the native of Nashville, Tenn., drained by match time.

"I had no energy," McTorry said. "The matches were seven minutes long, and I would wrestle for a minute and a half. I really didn't get spanked by anybody, but I didn't have enough energy to do anything except stand there."

Most of his losses were close last season, especially in the latter half of the season when six of his last eight losses were by three points or fewer.

Said Neumann: "He's an outstanding athlete. But he just had his heart taken away."

Sticking through last season was tough, McTorry said, but there was no way he could have made it without his teammates and coaches.

"Last year was bad for me," McTorry said. "But I could never imagine abandoning those guys because they supported me so much. It's an individual sport, but out of all the sports I've ever done, this team is tighter than any other team I've been on. It's like a bunch of brothers on this team."

The beginning of this season didn't start much better for McTorry. His first match was a one-point loss.

McTorry might have been a little afraid to believe he could have high goals or expectations at the beginning of this year, Neumann said, which probably helped lead to that opening loss.

"I swear to God that was only a hangover from last year," Neumann said. "It was lack of confidence, and he was in familiar territory. I think he took it for granted that he was going to get tired again."

But since then, McTorry has been on fire on the mat.

Wrestling at his natural weight, 184, McTorry, who began the year unranked, has compiled a 14-4 record and shot up to No. 5 in the National Wrestling Coaches Association rankings.

"My expectation this year was to forget about last year," McTorry said. "Forget about the bad. There's positives that you can break out of anything. Look forward instead of back. I expected to do well, and I was looking forward to being able to enjoy wrestling again."



Sharon Kolbet/DN  
Putting last season's frustrations behind him, wrestler Charles McTorry is now establishing himself on the national scene. McTorry began the year unranked but has since risen to the No. 5 spot on the National Wrestling Coaches Association rankings.

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