

Reserves power Husker win over Tigers

By John Gaskins

Staff writer

Few things hurt worse than having your go-to players get in early foul trouble and get taken out, especially in a must-win game at home.

Few things ease the pain better than having the reserves step in and dominate like veterans.

With senior guards Nicole Kubik and Brooke Schwartz on the bench for large parts of the game, a heap of Nebraska backups sparked a 17-2 run late in the first half that helped put away Missouri 80-63 in front of 3,840 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Keying the surge was junior guard Amanda Went and freshman forward Paige Sutton. Both had career highs in points and rebounds in relief of the foul-plagued starting guard tandem. Went had 17 points and six rebounds, while Sutton had 11 points and seven rebounds.

"It's hard when your starters get into foul trouble; I know what it feels like," said NU center Casey Leonhardt, who had 15 points and seven rebounds. "But we have the people to come in and step up. They did an excellent job and gave us spark. We never dropped off."

Said Went: "I don't think I ever would have doubted that we would have won."

The win broke the Huskers' tie in the standings with the Tigers (11-4, 1-3 in the Big 12) and opened up a three-game homestand by avenging a road loss at No. 8 Iowa State Saturday. NU improved to 8-7 on the season and 2-2 in league play with home games against cellar-dwellers Texas A&M and Colorado on the horizon.

All of those signs fare well for NU Coach Paul Sanderford, whose team faced conference leaders Texas, Kansas and ISU to start the Big 12 slate.

"We got over the hump," Sanderford said. "Now my wife can rest easy."

Things were pretty restless in a first half full of fouls, intense board battles and basket-trading. But after Schwartz committed her third foul with eight minutes left and MU forward Amanda Lassiter hit a lay-up with 7:24 left to put the Tigers up 26-25, the NU reserves took over.

Sutton started the run with a steal and lay-up. Fellow freshman Shahidrah Roberts promptly stole the in-bounds pass, which led to her making two free throws. Went then capped a 10-0 run by hitting

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Amanda Went
Nebraska guard

HUSKERS	80
TIGERS	63

a 3-pointer with 4:35 left to put NU up 35-26.

A minute-and-a-half later, Roberts made a lay-up, picked up a steal and fed to Went, who capped off the 17-2 run with a three-point play as NU went up 41-28 at the 2:42 mark.

Nebraska extended a 43-33 halftime lead to as much as 20 in the second half, as MU never drew closer than 11.

"Nebraska just outplayed us tonight," Mizzou Coach Cindy Stein said.

"They throw a lot of people at you and have a lot of weapons. We didn't want to get physical with them."

Sanderford was pleased with the Huskers' defensive poise and work on the boards, despite the fact NU was outrebounded 41-40.

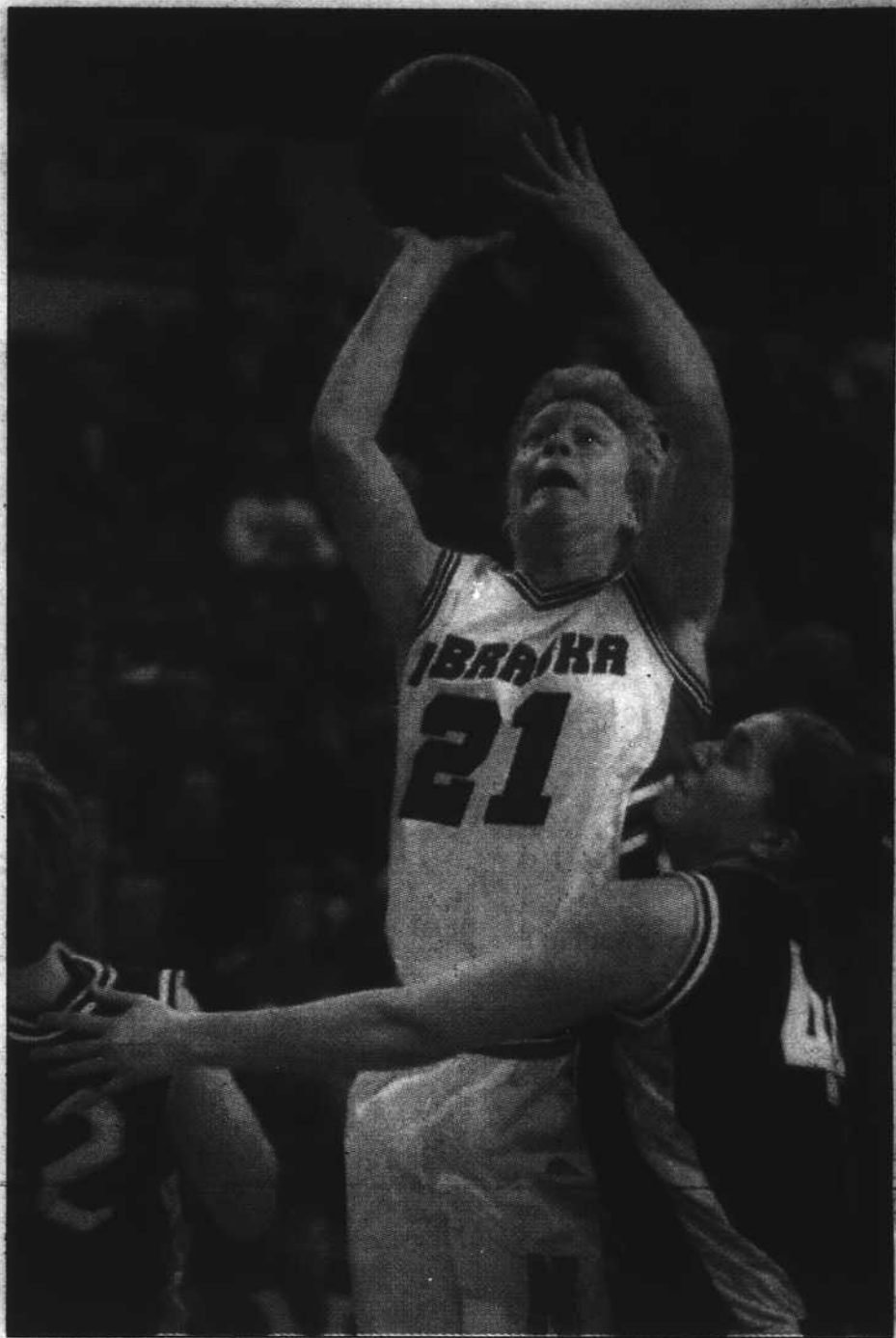
What might have really made him salivate was NU forcing 28 turnovers while committing just 18 of its own. It also had seven more steals (16-9) and seven more blocks (9-2) than MU, No. 1 and No. 2 in the Big 12 in those respective categories.

"If we have to make it look ugly, we'll make it look ugly," Sanderford said. "If they said we were physical, that's good. We have to be physical to get things done. (Earlier this season) we were waving at teams as they went by."

"It was a long December, but January's getting better already."

Josh Wolfe/DN

BROOKE SCHWARTZ goes for a jump shot over Missouri's Julie Heim in the first half. Saddled with foul trouble, Schwartz got help from NU's bench.



Huskies look to Tech for win

Nebraska hopes to avoid 0-4 start in Big 12 Conference play

By Joshua Camenzind

Staff writer

On Wednesday night the Nebraska men's basketball team will begin a two-game stretch that is crucial to its plans to getting back on the winning track.

NU's opponent, Texas Tech (9-4, 0-2 in the Big 12 Conference), will also be looking for its first win of the conference season. The Cornhuskers may be looking for revenge after last year's defeat in Lubbock, Texas, that might have cost them an NCAA berth.

Nebraska center Kimani Ffriend said at this point in the season, the Huskers cannot afford to take anyone lightly. "Right now we just can't put down anybody," Ffriend said. "We have to give everybody respect. We are 0-3 now, and we can't afford to lose anymore."

Kimani Ffriend
NU center

Tech comes into the game with its senior guard, Rayford Young, leading the team in scoring with 17.7 points per game. Young is one of four Red Raiders who are averaging in double figures.

Center Andy Ellis, only a sophomore, is second on the team in scoring with a 17.4 average, while grabbing 9.2 rebounds per game.

"Andy Ellis might be one of the best young, big men in the league," Nee said. "He is just developing quickly, and he is a force inside."

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— SPORTS OPINION —

KU game is proof: time is now for NU's Ffriend



Joshua Camenzind

Kimani Ffriend admits that at times this season, he's just wanted to cry.

"I knew it was going to be rough," Ffriend said. "But I didn't expect to lose so many games in such a short amount of time. It is frustrating when you go out there and give it your all and come out with an 'L.'"

Ffriend is the starting center of the Nebraska basketball team that is 7-9 overall and hasn't won a game in the Big 12 Conference.

Losing is coming hard for the 6-foot-11 Kingston, Jamaica native, just as it would for any other player who came from a junior college that lost fewer games in two seasons than he already has in 16 games here at NU.

Ffriend said the transition was hard at first because there was a lack of communication between him and some teammates. He said he was not used to people opening up the way they did and said that right now he is just beginning to open up himself.

Two early run-ins with teammate Steffon Bradford and problems with coach Danny Nee were because of a cultural difference and are 100 percent better now, Ffriend says.

That cultural difference means that Ffriend has a whole nation rooting for him. He said some Husker games are televised in his home country, which has made him something of a national figure.

"I have all of Jamaica watching me," he said. "I am like a celebrity there now. They are looking for me to do good things and make them proud of me and represent my country well."

"There is a lot of pressure. You don't even know how much pressure I have on me."

Losing may affect Ffriend's confidence level, but not his desire to play hard and hustle on every play.

His emotional play and attitude are a direct result of what lies ahead in the future — uncertainty.

Ffriend approaches every game as if it could be his last. He wants to leave no regrets on the court, like he did in his junior college days.

He also attributes his style of play to the mindset of his native Jamaica.

"(Jamaicans) take things seriously," Ffriend said, "and I take it as more than a game."

It is that fire and intensity that has made him an attention-grabber at the Devaney Center, as well as at visiting arenas.

Against Kansas on Saturday night, Ffriend had a breakout game with 23 points and 14 rebounds, while showing a quickness to the hoop that fully displays his potential. Time and time again, he took Jayhawk defenders to the basket and either drew a foul

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NU recruit: I'll be getting a Blackshirt

By Sean Callahan

Staff Writer

Adrian Mayes has never seen a Blackshirt, but that doesn't stop him from thinking he'll be putting one on right away when he becomes member of the Nebraska football team next fall.

Mayes, a 6-foot-2 200 pound strong safety out of Forest Brook High School in Houston, became the Cornhuskers 21st overall commitment when he gave word to the Husker coaches on Tuesday.

Mayes said he wants people to know he is for real.

"I'm going in there for the Blackshirt," Mayes said. "I want to prove that I am one of the best players that is on that field and that I deserve a shot at it. I'm going to fight for a position."

Many high school recruiting publications rank Mayes in the top 10 at his position. He possesses a tremendous amount of speed and strength for his size. Mayes runs his forty yard dash in 4.5 seconds electronically, bench presses 335 pounds and squats 555 pounds.

According to his coach Ron Holmes, Mayes can back up his words.

"He's a complete athlete," Holmes said. "He will compete for

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