

Longhorns run rampant

Texas guards are too much for NU in big conference loss

By Matthew Hansen

Staff writer

Things looked promising for the Nebraska basketball team after five minutes of play in a Big 12 road contest against No. 14 Texas. The Cornhuskers held a 12-5 lead.

Then the roof caved in.

The next 35 minutes were a succession of one Longhorn run after another, as Texas quickly caught up and pulled away from NU in a big way. By game's end the Huskers were on the losing end of a lopsided 82-55 score.

NEBRASKA	55
TEXAS	82

Down by seven with 15:39 left in the first half, Texas embarked on a 16-2 run. From then on, the gap widened. By the four-minute mark in the first half, the Longhorns led by 17, and by halftime, the deficit was 22 at 46-24.

After scoring those 12 points in the first five minutes, the Huskers, 9-10 overall and 2-4 in Big 12 Conference, only managed to match that total in the next 15 minutes.

And it didn't stop there. The lead reached 35 midway through the second half and was still 30 with only seconds left in the game before Cary Cochran's steal and 3-pointer as time expired. It was the Huskers' worst Big 12 regular season loss and their worst regular season conference defeat since a 93-53 Big Eight loss to Oklahoma State during the 1994-95 season.

Texas (13-5 and 5-1) used balanced scoring to bury the Huskers in front of 11,242 fans at the Frank Erwin Center. All-American Center Chris Mihm and Lawrence Williams both scored 14 for the 'Horns, while Gabe Muoneke contributed a double-double with 12 points and 14 rebounds.

Nebraska did have three frontcourt players in double figures, with Steffon Bradford leading the team with 13 points and Kimani Ffriend and Larry Florence following with 12 and 10, respectively. Ffriend also added eight rebounds and blocked five Texas shots.

The play of the guards was a different story. No Husker guard scored until Danny Walker hit a 3 with only eight minutes remaining in the game. The backcourt quartet of Walker, Cochran, Rodney Fields and Matt Davison played a combined 80 minutes but managed just 10 points on 4-14 shooting.

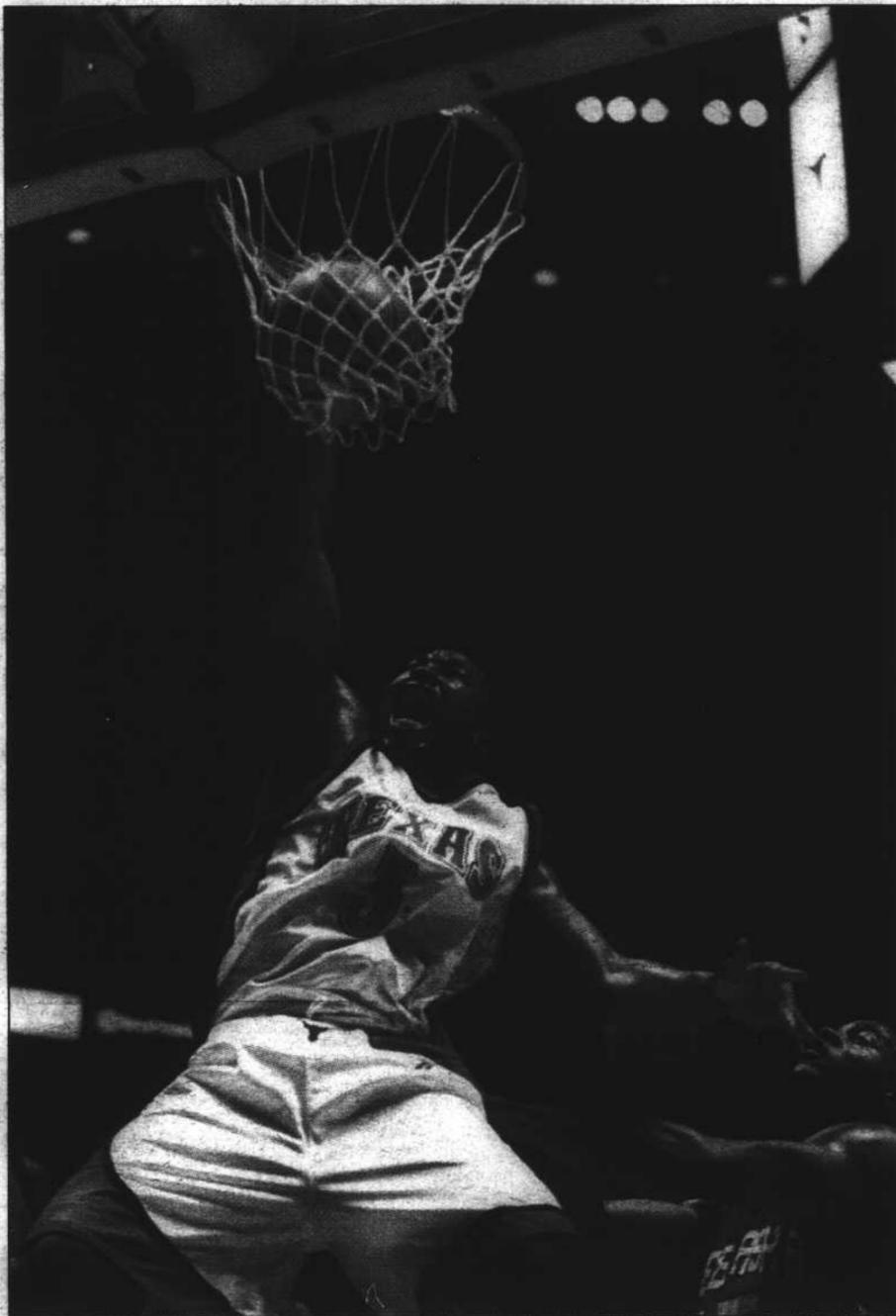


Photo Courtesy of Nathan Lambrecht/Daily Texan
TEXAS FORWARD Gabe Muoneke dunks over the Nebraska defense at the Frank Erwin Center in Austin, Texas, Tuesday night.

Meyerscough waits for board ruling

■ NU shot-putter tested positive for steroids in November, coaches say; case is on appeal with IAAF.

By Matthew Hansen

Staff writer

Carl Meyerscough, a Nebraska freshman shot-putter from England, was suspended by the International Amateur Athletics Federation last November for an alleged positive steroid test, Husker coaches said Tuesday.

The suspension, which he revealed to Nebraska personnel in December, does not affect his status with the Huskers. But, with possible further disciplinary action forthcoming when the IAAF rules on his case, Meyerscough may be banned from international competition for his native United Kingdom.

Coach Gary Pepin said Meyerscough, who nearly broke the school shot put record in his first collegiate meet last Saturday, would continue to compete for NU. For Meyerscough's sake, though, Pepin hopes the freshman will be cleared of any wrongdoing.

"With an athlete of his caliber, they look forward to international competition like the Olympics," he said. "I hope that when the IAAF hears the case, he is well-represented and is cleared."

Meyerscough, who maintains his innocence, faces stiff penalties from UK Athletics and the British Olympic Association if convicted by the IAAF. The British Olympic Association's policy is a lifetime ban for anyone convicted of drug use.

David Moorcroft, chief executive of UK Athletics, said the shot-putter's continued participation at NU could possibly hurt his status with the IAAF. But Nebraska Throwing Coach Mark Colligan denied this and explained

Please see **APPEAL** on 14

Leonhardt provides large target in the NU paint

By John Gaskins

Staff writer

Casey Leonhardt is a walking contradiction.

At 6-foot-5, she's almost always the tallest, biggest and most noticeable player on a basketball court. Naturally, she's going to tower over everybody and move people out of the way. The Nebraska center's appearance alone intimidates the opponent before tipoff.

But talk to Leonhardt for about 10 seconds or talk to anyone who knows her well for about five, and you'll find out she's not a giant off the court. She's been described as shy, unassuming, introverted, kind, quietly funny and extremely astute.

These qualities are fine and dandy to Nebraska Coach Paul Sanderford.

He just wishes they would change once she hits the floor.

"The term 'gentle giant' is pretty applicable to Casey," Sanderford said. "I just wish we could feed her mean tablets, make her meaner. She has to be more aggressive. She takes more than she dishes out right now."

Not that what she's dished out hasn't propelled this once power-depleted offense into a major force in the post. Her 11.4-point, 7.4-rebound, 1.7-block per game average proves it.

Opposing coaches have expressed their frustrations about the beating their team took by trying to handle Leonhardt. Her own teammates express their appreciation of her.

"Casey is just a presence," NU forward

Charlie Rogers said. The 6-2 and much smaller Rogers can thank Leonhardt for taking over for her duties at center.

"She's allowed me to step away from the basket a little bit more than I did last year. It takes some of the defensive pressure off of me, as well. I used to have to guard the biggest player. She does now."

After Leonhardt transferred to NU from Illinois last year, Sanderford and his players knew their prayers for size and strength inside had been answered. They didn't have to rely on Nicole Kubik and Brooke Schwartz to run a guard-oriented offense anymore.

But at 9-7, the season has been far from bliss for a team billed with great expectations. The guards have fed to Leonhardt, and she's posted up for a fair share of what appear to be easy, point-blank shots. Problem is, she's missed a fair share.

"She does miss easy shots," Sanderford said. "It's like the fumbling situation with the football team this year. Her biggest problem is she lacks confidence in her own abilities. At times, it seems like she's her worst enemy out there. She's harder on herself than the coaches are."

Said Leonhardt: "It's not as easy as it looks. People tend to think because you are taller than everybody that you are going to dominate. It's not like I'm standing there with nobody around. There is defense. You have to work hard to get the ball."

At the very least, Leonhardt is getting the ball. Sanderford wants her to have it. That's more than Leonhardt can say about her days at Illinois.

"I don't regret anything I've done. I think I've improved from earlier this year."

Casey Leonhardt
NU center

"We had problems there," Leonhardt said. "I wasn't happy with my situation. My position was not something that was used to my strengths in the post. The offense was geared toward two guards driving to the basket, and I just stood on the outside."

Leonhardt, along with seven other players, jettied from a program that won a Big 10 title and made it to the Sweet 16 both years she was there. She found her niche at Nebraska in a system that needed her as much as she needed it.

"I don't regret anything I've done," Leonhardt said. "I think I've improved from earlier this year. I'm starting to fix my bad habits. I know I can do more."

It's that kind of conviction Sanderford would like to see more of.

"She hasn't scratched the surface with what she can do yet," Sanderford said. "She's going to bust a 30-pointer one of those nights. Casey is a player who is capable of truly dominating a game."



Josh Wolfe/DN

NU CENTER CASEY Leonhardt has provided the size and power the Cornhuskers lacked up front last season. The 6-foot-4 junior transfer from Illinois is averaging 11.4 points, 7.4 rebounds and 1.7 blocks per game.