

Baseball team goes 1-2

By Jason Merrihew
Staff Writer

The Marriot Loup Rice Classic proved to be harsh on the 39th-ranked Nebraska baseball team. The Huskers ended the tournament with one victory and two heartbreaking losses.

The Cornhuskers were able to pick up their first victory of the 2000 season, whipping Arkansas State 10-3.

NU was able to pounce on ASU early in the game, scoring four runs in the first inning and five runs in the second.

The Huskers were able to produce nine runs off their first nine hits. The 10th run came off the bat of junior first baseman Dan Wright. Wright's solo homerun was the first

of the season for Nebraska.

Chad Wiles started and earned his first victory of the season for NU. In six innings of work, Wiles struck out six, while giving up three runs off 11 hits.

The Cornhuskers were shocked during their opening game of the season when Northwestern State (La.) rallied to score three runs in the top of the ninth to beat Nebraska 8-6.

The Demons, who faced their former coach in current Nebraska Coach Dave Van Horn, jumped on the Huskers early, knocking NU starter senior Scott Fries out of the game after 2.1 innings.

NU also dropped a game to No. 7 Rice, 2-1.

The 1-2 Huskers will play this Thursday when they travel to Texas to play at the Texas-Arlington Tournament.

Softball team slips out of gate

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska softball team kicked off its 2000 campaign in the wrong direction at the Fiesta Bowl Tournament in Phoenix.

After opening play with a 5-4 win against Wisconsin, the Cornhuskers dropped their final five games of the weekend to finish 1-5.

On Thursday, the Huskers fell behind 6-1 against Nevada Las Vegas. NU fought back to get within one run but would get no closer. Nebraska lost to the Rebels 7-6.

Senior Jennifer Lizama was three-for-six with two homers, and freshman Amber Burgess was five-for-eight to lead NU on Thursday.

On Saturday, the Huskers faced their toughest challenge of the tournament with games against No. 3 Fresno State and No. 9 Arizona State.

NU would go on to lose to the Bulldogs 5-3 and the Sun Devils 7-1.

In the tournament's final day, Nebraska gave up 15 runs in its two losses.

Against Cal State-Fullerton the Huskers were blanked 8-0.

In NU's final game, No. 21 Stanford defeated NU 7-2.

Senior pitcher Jenny Voss took the loss to the Cardinals to drop her season record to 0-3.

The 13th-ranked Huskers will travel to Las Vegas next weekend for the UNLV Classic.

Cyclone coach estatic over run

By Joshua Camenzind

Staff writer

Iowa State Coach Larry Eustachy knew the time was coming for a let-down.

And he had Saturday night's matchup against Nebraska circled on the schedule.

"This is a game that really worried me," Eustachy said. "They are very talented and capable of coming into this building and beating us."

With his team's first place conference standing and eight-game winning streak on the line, Eustachy watched as his team looked to be cruising early with a 14-2 lead. Hilton Coliseum and the more than 14,000 in attendance were looking to explode after back-to-back 3-pointers by Kantrail Horton and Michael Nurse.

But even after extending the lead to 15 at 20-5, Eustachy was still wary.

"We had a little falseness to the game at the beginning," Eustachy said. "We had a huge lead at the beginning, and that creates problems at times."

Nebraska was able to battle back to take the lead at 26-25 at the 5:18 mark on a 3-pointer by Louis Truscott. The Huskers and Cyclones battled back and forth, and ISU entered the locker room with a four-point lead at 38-34.

As bad as ISU played in the final 10 minutes of the first half, the second half took a 180-degree turn. Poor shooting that plagued the Cyclones during NU's run was lifted by an assortment of dunks, layups and 3-point bombs that ignited the home crowd.

The Huskers hung with Iowa State for the first three minutes, and then came the run.

A 32-7 run at that. The run ended at the 11:05 mark with a Marcus Fizer foul and subsequent free throws by Steffon Bradford. Fizer, who led ISU with 23 points on nine-of-10 shooting, would leave the game and never return.

NU wilts during 2nd half drought

HUSKERS from page 20

down," Nee said. "But that run in the second half did us in."

Indeed, Nebraska was feisty in the first half, erasing an 18-3 deficit, silencing the crowd with three consecutive 3-pointers to take a 26-25 lead after a Louis Truscott shot.

However, Iowa State combated the Huskers with the inside and outside combination of Fizer and guard Michael Nurse, who hit four shots from behind the arc on his way to 19 points.

"They have so many weapons and how they go about it. They can hit the three-pointer with Nurse, and they can kill you inside physically," Nee said.

Then there are the bench weapons of the Cyclones, as Iowa State reserve Brandon Hawkins chalked up three baskets in the late minutes of the first half to gain ISU a four-point lead at intermission, making the score 38-34 after trailing briefly by a point.

"We knew if we played in the second half like we did in the first half, we weren't going to come out with a victory, so we turned it up," Fizer said.

Despite the Cyclones' added intensity and customary trips to the free-throw line (ISU ended with 31

attempts on the game compared with the Huskers' 10), the game still hung in the balance when Danny Walker banged home a 3 to bring the score back to 45-41 early in the second half.

Then the gas tank hit empty for the Huskers.

"They're a top-20 team," guard Cary Cochran said. "You spend so much energy coming back against a team like that, and they've still got their guns cocked."

The gunshots all came from Nurse, Fizer and senior Stevie Johnson, who scored all the Cyclones' points during the 25-2 run.

Along the path, Iowa State scored 17 consecutive points, making it a 27-point game at 70-43 before Steffon Bradford finally stopped the bleeding with two free throws.

It was another lesson learned in a season of lessons for Nebraska.

"We need to take that way we played in the first half and play that way for 35 to 40 minutes to play against ranked competition," junior guard Rodney Fields said, after coming off the bench to score 11 points.

The Huskers have little time to contemplate their woes, as they welcome the Sooners to town this evening.

"It's time to go back to the lab and find a new formula," Fields said.

triggered everything."

Iowa State also was helped by a better performance from its two starting guards. Jamaal Tinsley and Michael Nurse shot a combined one-for-14 in the first half but were able to hit six-of-nine in the second on their way to a combined 28 points.

Fizer said the second-half run might have been the best basketball that ISU has played all season.

"We made a lot of big plays," Fizer said. "But we also made a lot of mistakes in the first half. We knew that if we played like we did in the end of the first half, we weren't going to come out of here with a victory."

Kansas angry after close loss to NU

By John Gaskins

Staff writer

Of all teams that could have been the ideal candidate to drive a stake through Nebraska's heart this season, No. 23 Kansas on Sunday would have been the front-runner.

And until the final 20 seconds, it was playing the role perfectly.

The Jayhawks were riding a five-game winning streak and thirsting for revenge from NU's 81-69 dismantling of them last month. They didn't want to become the first KU team since 1988 to get swept by NU.

The Jayhawks also were looking to take advantage of a disgruntled Cornhusker team that had everything going wrong for it during its recent three-game losing streak, including its slimming NCAA Tournament hopes.

Throughout the game, KU came

back from several five-plus-point Husker leads - including a 70-63 NU edge with 1:44 left - to find itself tied at 72 with 33 seconds left.

But the Jayhawks failed to put the stake in NU. They failed at the beginning, when they found themselves down 23-11, and they failed at the end, when they couldn't get a shot off with six seconds left.

"It's a tough loss," KU Coach Marian Washington said. "If we were to spot when we lost it, I'd say it was in the first half when we gave up 17 turnovers. I am encouraged our team fought back and got ourselves in a position to win."

Washington credited forward Lynn Pride, an All-American candidate, with giving KU the boost it needed to come back several times. Pride finished with 18 points.

But it was guard Suzi Rayman, who led the Jayhawks with 20 points, that

could have been the Huskers' latest heartbreaker. She hit the 3-pointer that tied the game and had a wide open look at another one with KU down 74-72 with eight seconds left.

Raymant missed the shot. NU's Charlie Rogers was fouled on the rebound but missed the second of her free throws, giving the Hawks one last shot. Guard Jennifer Jackson couldn't get the last-ditch shot off in time.

After the game, an "emotionally drained" Raymant covered her face and fought back tears. She tried to explain why KU - not NU - ended up the heart-broken team.

"That last shot I took, I was wide open. I just rushed it," Rayman said.

"We felt like we were going to come back the whole time. There were some mental errors we made at the end that really let us down, and that was hard to come back from."

Kubik's big day helps Huskers snap streak

WOMEN from page 20

"Our goal this game was not to let it bother us. It looked like it was happening again today, but we huddled up and said, 'Forget about it; don't talk to the referees, just keep on playing.'"

After KU tied the game at 72 on a 3-pointer by Suzi Raymant with 33 seconds left, Kansas made a costly error. Miscommunication between Jayhawk Coach Marian Washington and guard Jennifer Jackson led to an intentional foul of Nebraska's Amanda Went with 20.1 seconds left in the contest.

Went made both foul shots to give NU a two-point cushion, and Raymant's rushed 3-point attempt with six seconds remaining and another free throw from

NU went awry to seal KU's fate.

Even though Nebraska swept Kansas for the first time since 1988, Husker Coach Paul Sanderford commended the Jayhawks for coming back to tie the game.

"You got to give Kansas credit, down the stretch, on the road in a hostile environment, I thought they played like a top-10 basketball team. They made every play, and they executed."

NU was forced to play a majority of the game with four guards because illness limited NU Center Casey Leonhardt to six minutes of action.

The small lineup created matchup problems for the more Jayhawks.

Nebraska was able to stick to its game plan of dribble-drive penetration,

as it scored nine lay ups by attacking the basket, and it passed off for two key 3-pointers by Went and Melody Peterson in the second half.

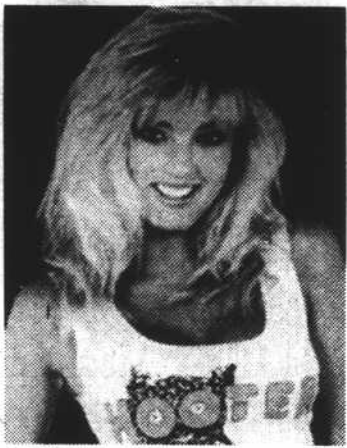
Defensively, NU forced KU to commit 27 turnovers for the game, including 17 in the first half.

Sanderford said he was proud of the way his team responded Sunday to end its three-game losing streak.

"Today we responded like a basketball team that's not through," Sanderford said. "I've told reporters for two or three days now that we're not through. We're going to make some noise in the Big 12 Conference and beat some people before the year is out."

"And I think you saw evidence of that today. We're not dead."

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