

Huskers finish third in Big 12 meet

Texas reigns again as champion, NU's Johnson gets time for NCAA meet

“Winning a Big 12 title is always great. But it's always better to go for your best time, and I still have NAAs to do that.”

Shandra Johnson
NU swimmer

From staff reports

Nebraska went into the Big 12 Women's Swimming and Diving Championships at College Station, Texas, with a planned script that had Nebraska taking back its throne as queen of the conference.

The Longhorns gave Nebraska a very unsatisfactory welcome, ripping up the script and stomping on it for good measure. The Longhorns became conference champs for the second-straight year on Saturday.

UT cruised to first place, setting five conference records while accumulating 914.50 points, tying Nebraska's two conference titles since the formation of the Big 12.

“The Big 12 has gotten considerably better,” Nebraska Coach Cal Bentz

said. “There are a lot of people turning it up a notch, and we're happy to see that.”

Texas A&M is one team that turned it up a notch, knocking Nebraska down to third place in the final standings, finishing with 735.50 points to NU's 634.

The third-place finish is the Huskers' lowest since joining the Big 12, and lowest since a fifth-place finish at the 1981 Big Eight Conference Championship.

Even though Texas won 16 of 21 events, NU junior Shandra Johnson did cap a successful weekend, taking home her eighth individual gold medal with a 1:59.05 time in the 200-yard backstroke.

The time was perhaps the most important factor to Johnson, who made the required cut for an NCAA provi-

sional qualifying time.

“Winning a Big 12 title is always great,” Johnson said. “But it's always better to go for your best time, and I still have NAAs to do that.”

Nebraska freshman Elvira Fischer also did well, winning two gold medals in the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke events.

After a come-from-behind victory in the 100-yard breaststroke on Friday night, Fischer dominated the field in the 200-yard breaststroke with an NCAA automatic qualifying time of 2:13.71 on Saturday, winning by more than three seconds.

“Winning the 100 was a surprise, but I had the fastest speed time in the 200, so I expected it of myself,” Fischer said. “I wanted to go under the NAAs automatic qualifying mark, and I was

able to do that.”

Nebraska senior Helene Muller was not able to bring home an individual gold medal. She finished fifth in the 100-yard freestyle after earning second place in the 50- and 200-yard freestyles.

Texas' Colleen Lanne earned outstanding swimmer of the meet, winning the 50-, 100- and 200-yard freestyle events. She put the icing on the cake with a Big 12 meet record time of 49.03.

Longhorn domination was apparent in the awards following the meet. All five outstanding awards given to players and coaches were taken home by the athletes in the burnt orange.

“Texas and Texas A&M have done a great job, but we're certainly pleased with the way our team competed,” Bentz said.

Huskers absorb pounding from Cowboys

By Matthew Hansen

Staff Writer

STILLWATER, Okla. — Matt Davison showered and dressed quickly in the minutes following Oklahoma State's 94-55 rout of the Cornhuskers.

The NU guard surveyed a locker room-full of teammates still sitting somberly in full uniform.

“Let's get out of here, guys,” he said.

Davison's desire to escape Stillwater shouldn't surprise many. The 39-point loss handed to NU (10-15 overall, 3-9 in the Big 12 Conference) by the Cowboys was its worst defeat since the 1994-95 season and the 10th-worst in school history.

Coach Danny Nee gave credit to No. 8 OSU (21-3, 10-2), which secured a first-place tie in the Big 12 with Iowa State and Texas.

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“They're good, they are really good,” he said. “I don't see any weaknesses in their game. We got beat by a very good basketball team. They played like the eighth-place team in the country.”

Both teams started slow offensively, and the Cowboys led by only five, 12-7, after seven minutes of play.

But the rest of the game amounted to one big OSU run, as the Huskers could do little to stop the momentum of the home team and 6,289 fans at Gallagher-Iba arena.

After stretching its lead to 22 in the first half, Oklahoma State took a 47-29 lead into the locker room.

Then, OSU came out and widened it even more. After a free throw by Kimani Ffriend in the opening moments of the second half, OSU scored 17 unanswered points, which increased the margin to 30. The Huskers failed to score for eight minutes, 30 seconds during the run.

The Cowboy players and Coach Eddie Sutton left the court more than satisfied with their performance. Six OSU players reached double figures as the team shot 57 percent from the floor.

“I wish all our games were that easy,” Sutton said. “That is easily one of the best games we've played this season. We might have played a little over our heads tonight.”

The Cowboys were led by Brian Montonati, who scored a career-high 22 points and added 12 rebounds. Glendon Alexander scored all 18 of his points behind the 3-point line.

Louis Truscott scored 14 points to pace the Huskers, while Cary Cochran poured in four second-half treys for 12 points.

The lopsided loss was the Huskers' fifth straight, the team's longest losing streak since the 1995-96 season. NU also fell to 0-7 on the road this year.

Nee said the 39-point loss indicated just how good the Cowboys were, and how much work the Huskers have left to do.

“Where we are and where they are is this score,” he said. “It's very obvious.”

Williams: Win a bittersweet NU reunion

By Joshua Camenzind

Staff writer

STILLWATER, Okla. — Inside the games that men play are hidden battles.

Saturday night's match between Nebraska and Oklahoma State proved to hold many of those battles.

Former Cornhusker and current Cowboy Assistant Coach Jimmy Williams faced his former team for the first time and ended up on the winning side.

The game, which OSU won handily, 94-55, was a moment when Williams felt torn between past and current feelings.

“It was kind of a mixed feeling,” Williams said. “You feel an attachment to players that you have recruited and coached.

“It was tough. I wanted to win the game, but I didn't want to beat them the way we did. I just told those guys to hang in there and keep their heads up.”

OSU senior Brian Montonati, who led the Cowboys with 22 points and 12 rebounds, said Williams was “fired up.”

“Coach Williams had about an hour scouting report,” Montonati said. “We were sitting there at the pregame meal, and we were thinking 20 to 25 minutes, and Coach just kept going on and on and on.

“He recruited all their players, and he is familiar with their offense. He knew exactly what plays they were doing and what gum their coaches were chewing.”

Williams' coaching had a direct effect on the game as the Cowboys implemented the defense “Red 11” in the second half. The 1-1-3 zone defense helped spark a 17-0 run shortly after the second half began to put the game away.

“We went to our Red 11 zone defense, and that held them down a little bit because we were worried about the board's defensive play,” OSU guard Glendon Alexander said.

While Williams helped OSU get the win on the court, his mind off the court was on past allies and friends.

“I feel sorry for everyone involved, including the fans and the whole thing,” Williams said. “You hate to see things turn this way, but it happens in this business.”

NU Coach Danny Nee has come under fire lately because he blamed some of the Huskers' troubles on bad recruiting.

Williams, who was in charge of the majority of recruiting while at NU, doesn't agree with Nee.

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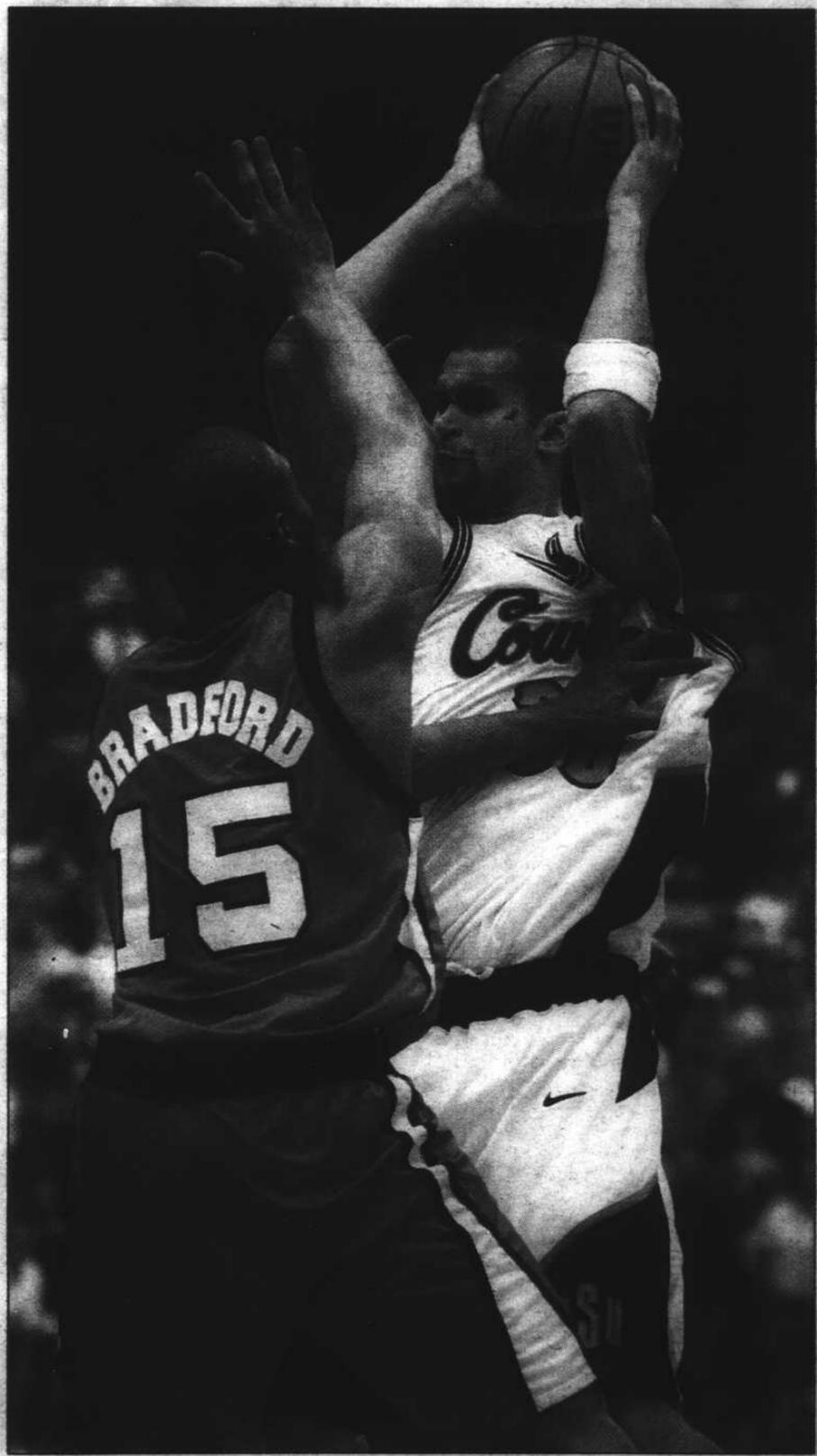


Photo Courtesy of Paul Rutherford/The Daily O'Collegian
STEFFON BRADFORD tries to defend against No. 8 Oklahoma State's **Brian Montonati** on Saturday night in Stillwater, Okla. Montonati finished with 22 points and 12 rebounds, while five other Cowboys scored in double figures, defeating the Huskers 94-55, their worst defeat since the '94-'95 season.