

Dority retires to sidelines after knee surgery

Coach Kendig redshirts sophomore gymnast

By Jason Merrihew
Staff Writer

As she sat along the sideline against Iowa State last week with her leg propped up, sophomore Bree Dority cheered on her teammates on what was a magical night for the women's gymnastic team.

"I wish I was out there," Dority said. "Especially at a meet where everybody is jumping around."

Dority, who on Feb. 12 had her knee scoped to repair a strained retinaculum patella tendon, was injured during a preseason dismount off the uneven bars on Dec. 29.

Despite the pain and discomfort, Dority tried to battle through her injury in hope of competing and contributing for the team this season.

After sitting out the first three road meets, Dority was allowed by Coach Dan Kendig to compete against Missouri in Nebraska's first home meet on Jan. 29.

Kendig penciled-in Dority in the lineup on the uneven bars, her favorite event, to try to wean the

1999 Big 12 newcomer of the year back into the all-around competition. Dority was able to finish the event with a score of 9.275.

But the pain and discomfort that was felt when dismounting proved to be the main deciding factor when it was time to opt for the season-ending surgery. After the surgery, Coach Kendig redshirted one of his main components from last year's Big 12 championship team.

Although this year's team is loaded with talent, the loss of a gymnast who finished 17th overall in the all-around at nationals could prove to be hurtful when it comes to the postseason.

"Without Bree, it is going to be hard," senior All-American Heather Brink said. "She is just a key asset to the team."

"She has done so well in the past, and she could definitely contribute on all of the events."

Last year, Dority did contribute to the Huskers' success, scoring a season-high 39.175 at nationals, a

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NEBRASKA GYMNAST Bree Dority stretches her leg out alongside teammate Jess Wertz during practice Monday. Dority, an all-around gymnastics competitor, said she would most likely be out for the next year but would continue working to heal her knee injury.

Lydia S. Gonzales/DN

NU beats OSU in overtime close call

By John Gaskins
Staff writer

With no safety net beneath them, the Nebraska women's basketball team nearly fell off the tight rope they had been walking all season Tuesday night.

But with the weight of dying NCAA Tournament possibilities and a bitter end to their careers weighing on their shoulders, the Husker seniors found a way to stay on for another game.

It was a balancing act they've become quite accustomed to.

Playing out-of-hand, trailing most of the game and down by eight points with under six minutes left in regulation play, NU gutted out a 75-71 overtime win to stay on the NCAA Tournament selection committee's radar screen.

The Huskers improved to 14-11 overall and 8-6 in the Big 12 conference, a half-game behind fifth-place Texas with two regular season games and the Big 12 tournament remaining.

If the significance of the victory could not be felt from the volume of the 3,589 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, it was expressed by the players afterward.

"I acted like we had won the national championship," said NU senior guard Brooke Schwartz, who scored seven of her 19 points in overtime and made the winning steal and free throws for NU.

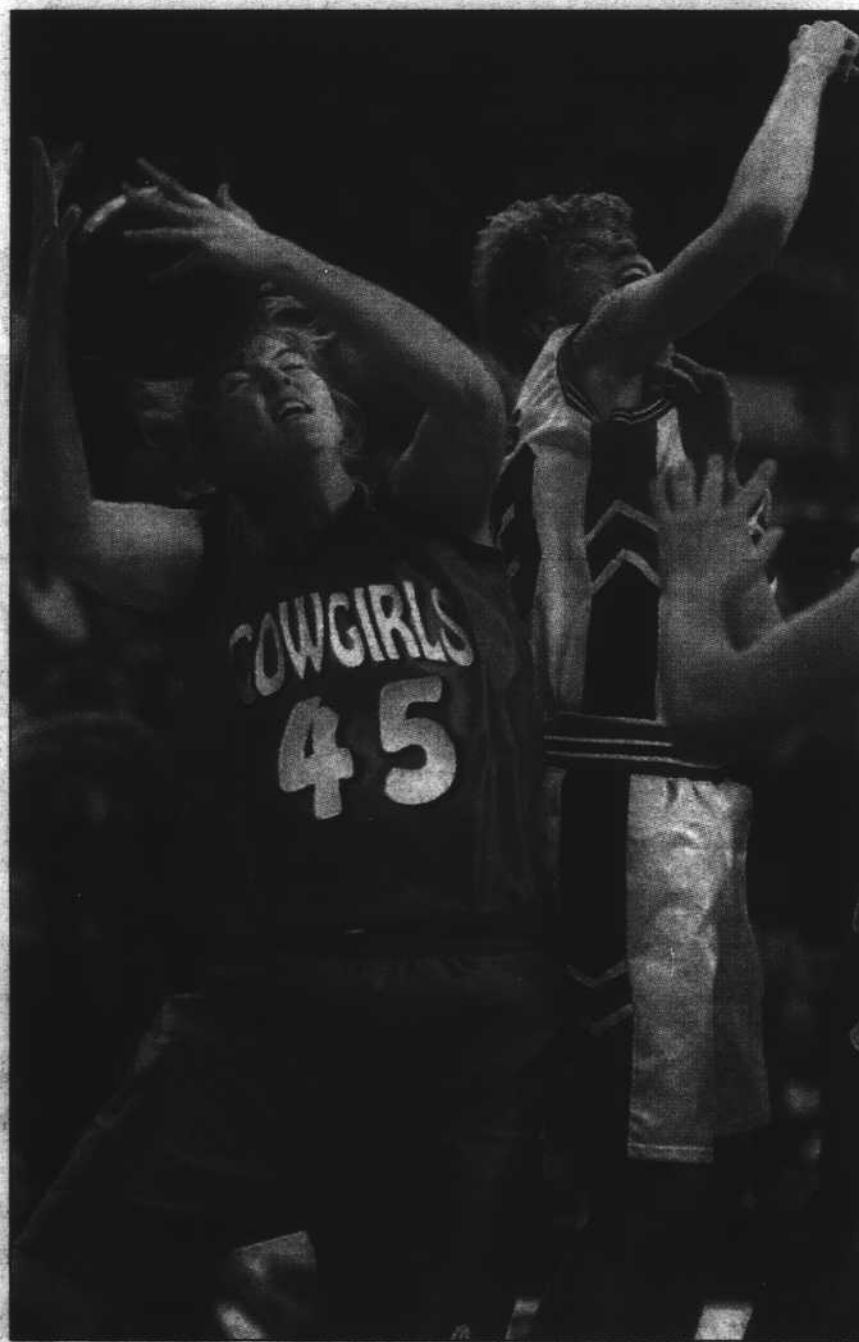
After freshman Isha Kelley's jumper gave NU a 72-71 lead with 49 seconds remaining, Cowgirl forward Toya Releford missed the put-back off teammate Mandy Struber's missed 3-pointer.

Schwartz grabbed the rebound and was fouled by OSU's Chantoya Hawkins. Schwartz then hit one of two free throws to put NU up 73-71 with 17.8 seconds left.

But the Gering native made possibly the biggest life-saving play of her career on the ensuing play. After freshmen Shahidrah Roberts and Isha Kelley's full-court press trap suffocated OSU guard Hawkins off the in-bounds pass, Hawkins threw the ball to Struber.

Schwartz stripped the ball and forced Struber to foul with five seconds left.

"I knew she didn't want to dribble it," Schwartz said. "She had it out in front of her, put it out in front of me, and I was right there. I've been watching Nicole (Kubik)



Charlie Rogers battles with Oklahoma State's Devon Magness for control of a rebound during the first half. The Huskers came back from being nine points behind at the half to win 75-71 in overtime.

Josh Wolfe/DN

too much."

Kubik, who is 15th on the all-time NCAA steals list, was a good model for Schwartz to follow in carrying the team.

Schwartz had to do just that after Kubik fouled out with 1:07 to play, finishing with a team-high 24 points.

Prior to that, Kubik showed the same tenacity she showed with NU's backs against the wall before last season's NCAA Tournament appearance.

Down 57-49 with 5:44 left, the Huskers gave up on continuity and watched Kubik drive for every point or foul she could force up. In the next 39 seconds, Kubik made seven free throws off of three different OSU fouls to cut the lead to 59-56.

The Cowgirls held on to their once comfortable lead until the 2:22 mark. That's when Kubik's 3-pointer gave NU its first

lead since midway through the first half, 64-62.

"When we got up by nine or 10 there late in the game, that's when Kubik got them back in it," OSU Coach Dick Halterman said. "She got herself to the foul line on that 3-pointer. Then she had two or three nice drives to the basket. That's where the ball game was won - when she took over."

Kubik committed her fifth foul when she ran into OSU guard Jennifer Crow with 1:07 left. Crow made the two free throws to tie the game at 64.

NU Coach Paul Sanderford, who called Kubik's final foul "silly" and uncharacteristic for a senior leader, had to really sweat when junior Melody Peterson foul out by fouling Crow with just two seconds remain-

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Nee: NU won't make light of Kansas attack

By Joshua Camenzind
Staff writer

While many are counting out the Kansas Jayhawks this season, don't count Nebraska basketball Coach Danny Nee among them.

"The standard is so high for them that when they lose a couple of games or (are) not in first place, everyone says they are down," Nee said. "Anyone who counts Kansas out and doesn't think they have a good basketball team is mistaken."

Nee's team will meet KU at 8 p.m. on Wednesday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The Jayhawks have lacked the invincibility they have shown in years past on their way to a 19-7 overall record.

But they took care of the Cornhuskers back in January with ease and are coming off a 53-50 win against Oklahoma.

Both the Jayhawks and the Huskers are supposedly having down years, but the difference between the two can be shown by looking at their conference records. NU is 3-9 with one win coming against Baylor and the other two against the bottom two teams of the Big 12 Conference.

KU, on the other hand, is 8-4 with two losses to Iowa State and road losses at Missouri and Oklahoma State.

Kansas Coach Roy Williams said his team, which has been starting three freshman as of late, has seen the best shots of every team it has faced this season.

"I don't think there is any doubt they smell blood a little bit," Williams said.

Williams said it is a "flattering situation because it means we have been winning a lot."

January's 15-point loss to KU does give Nee hope.

"We are selling the positives," Nee said. He said he will show his team the previous Kansas game tape instead of the Oklahoma State tape.

Nee said the game, much like many of NU's losses this season, have been solid performances with lapses that lead to big opponent runs.

Runs that have been devastating on the road have been scarce at home.

"It's a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," Nee said. "Obviously, we play way better at home. I think our chances of winning at home are way better than on the road. Why is that? I can't tell you. But that is just a fact."

"We have been way more competitive with the good teams at home than we were on the road."

The Huskers have lost by an average of 19 points on the road, but in the friendly confines of the Devaney Center, NU sports almost a two-point advantage over opponents.

Despite NU's playing better at home than on the road, point guard Danny Walker said a closer game because of the venue is not a given.

"It don't go like that," Walker said. "We have to come out and play, you know, get the crowd in the game and get some energy going in the arena so we can have that mentality to go ahead and finish the game in the end. We have been lacking that on the road."