



JOE HENSON, a 149-pounder from Nebraska, tries to gain control of Oklahoma wrestler Jared Frayer for a takedown in the semi-final match of the Big 12 Conference wrestling tournament. Henson defeated Frayer 3-2 to advance to the finals.

Mike Warren/DN

NU wrestlers finish fourth

■ For third time this year, NU wrestler Vering loses to No. 2 Oklahoma wrestler.

By David Diehl

Staff writer

There's a continuing pattern in Brad Vering's wrestling matches with Mark Munoz, and it's beginning to get to him.

For the third time this year, the top-ranked Husker lost to No. 2 Munoz of Oklahoma State in the last 10 seconds. The loss came this time in the finals of the 197-pound Big 12 conference finals when Munoz earned a two-point reversal in the second sudden-death overtime.

Vering was one of four Cornhusker wrestlers in the Big 12 Conference tournament finals Sunday. Despite gutsy efforts, NU crowned only one conference champion, 157-pound Bryan Snyder, and couldn't keep pace with champion Oklahoma State. With 49.5 team points, the Huskers finished fourth behind the Cowboys (84 points), Oklahoma (68) and Iowa State (65). Missouri finished last with 14.5 points.

Vering, who is now 3-6 against Munoz in his career, started the third period down 1-0 but evened the score with an escape early in the period. No more points were scored in regulation.

After a scoreless first overtime, Munoz won the flip and chose to start in the down position. With an escape or a reversal, Munoz would win the match, but if Vering rode him for the 30-second period, he'd be crowned champion.

With the hometown crowd on its feet, Vering rode Munoz for 28 seconds but couldn't hold on for the last two.

"You're real slippery at that time of the match," Coach Tim Neumann said, "that makes it so hard to hold onto."

"Being fourth in this conference pisses me off."

Tim Neumann

UNL wrestling coach

Vering, now 34-3 with all losses coming to Munoz, was reluctant to speak after the match but eventually warned that he's going to come back strong.

"It's going to light the fire," the team captain said. "You know what happened last time I lost to him. It's going to be ugly the next time I get on the mat."

After Vering's 6-5 loss to Munoz Feb. 6, he destroyed Michigan State's then-No. 1 Nick Muzashavili the next day 17-4.

Munoz said he didn't think he had Vering's number, and he always expects a dogfight with him.

"Whenever he and I wrestle, it's going to be a hard-fought match," he said. "I knew that if I kept my intensity, and if I stayed mentally tough, I'd have a chance at winning."

Vering's gutsy performance served as a microcosm for the Huskers' entire day. Most put up valiant fights but couldn't grasp victory.

165-pounder Tony Denke was leading top-seeded and No. 1-ranked Joe Heskett 6-3 but couldn't hold on to the upset bid and lost 10-6 in the semifinals.

125-pounder Paul Gomez, wrestling for the last time at home as a senior, went into overtime with eventual champion Jeff Ragan but couldn't man-

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ISU's brothers make powerful on-mat trio

By Brian Christopherson

Staff writer

Steve Sanderson is the proud papa in this story.

Cael, Cody and Cole Sanderson are the players.

The Iowa State Sanderson wrestling team, or rather, the Cyclones wrestling team, are the fortunate beneficiaries.

The Sandersons are quite good at what they do and make the story unusual.

The youngest, biggest brute of the family, Cael Sanderson, is 73-0 in his young sophomore career, with one national championship.

He claimed his second Big 12 Conference Championship yesterday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, making it obvious to all that flipping 184-pound giants on their backs is just as easy for him as chewing gum.

After disposing Witt Durden of Oklahoma 17-7 in his first match, the youngest Sanderson was calm enough to talk at length about majoring in art and his love for drawing cartoons.

"I'm thinking about starting up my own cartoon, and every day I just get out a piece of paper and write them down wherever I am," Cael Sanderson said.

Time out. Cartoons? Somebody finally reminded the champion that he had just advanced to the conference

"... I just go down there to win and improve."

Cael Sanderson

Iowa state wrestler

finals, and then Cael Sanderson humbly gave credit to Durden for putting up a fight.

"I've wrestled him seven times, and this was the best he's been against me," he said, making it sound like the match was somewhat in doubt.

An unknowing observer would have no idea that this quiet man, as a freshman, was named "Most Outstanding Wrestler" at the NCAA Championships last year.

There's no bragging or worrying about an undefeated career for Cael Sanderson.

"I don't worry about that very much, and I just go out there to win and improve," he said. "It's not the end of the world if I lose."

Cael Sanderson is the king of the brothers on the mat, but Cody Sanderson was the key.

God smiled on ISU coach Bobby Douglas when he signed Cody Sanderson four years ago.

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Swimming team gets second

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska men's swimming and diving team did everything it set out to do at the Big 12 Championship meet over the weekend in College Station, Texas.

The Huskers knew Texas would be nearly impossible to knock off, and after a second place finish behind the Longhorns, Nebraska Coach Cal Bentz was satisfied.

"We are really happy to get second place," Bentz said. "We are ready to move on to the NCAAs. I am glad

that we were able to beat such good teams."

Texas ran away with the meet with 1,007 points to second place Nebraska's 649.

Iowa State edged Texas A&M for third with 564 points to A&M's 563.

UT won all six events on Saturday, with Jon Younghouse defeating NU's Michael Windisch in the 1,650-yard freestyle event, despite a personal record and NCAA qualifying time of 15:17.19 for Windisch. Younghouse posted a 15:07.90 mark.

Husker top finishers were Adam Pine, with a fourth-place swim in the 200-yard butterfly with a time of 1:47.17, and Carlos Oliva, who placed third in the 200-yard breaststroke with a time of 2:01.26.

The 400-yard freestyle team of Nebraska (Pine, Javier Botello, Peter Fry and Anthony Rogis) finished second.

The diving board was also dominated by UT, with Troy Dumais taking the title on the platform. NU's Charlie Law finished highest out of the Huskers in fourth place.

Baseball team has ugliest loss of year

From Staff Reports

After winning its first game against Oklahoma State on Saturday, the Cornhusker baseball team's weekend went on the decline.

The first of the three games was rained out Friday but was rescheduled as part of a double-header on Saturday.

The Huskers jumped out to a 10-0 lead, pounding OSU's ace pitcher, Mark Smith.

Freshman Jamie Rodrigue (2-1) held the Cowboys to one hit over six scoreless innings and earned the win.

Freshman Steve Hale, who carried a nine-inning scoreless streak into the game, entered the game in the seventh inning with runners on first and second. OSU pounded Hale, scoring eight runs in the seventh, but the Huskers held on

for the win.

Brandt Vlieger, John Cole and Will Bolt all had home runs in the game for Nebraska. Cole finished 4-for-6 with four RBIs.

The Husker offense recorded 12 hits in the game, but it would manage only 14 during the rest of the weekend.

In Saturday's second game, Husker pitcher Shane Komine (2-1) suffered his first loss of the season as OSU downed Nebraska 4-2.

Komine allowed just five hits and three earned runs over 6 and two-thirds innings, but the Husker bats went cold, recording just five hits and two runs scored in the eighth inning.

Nebraska Coach Dave Van Horn said his team let him down in the second game.

"I was a little disappointed because I

thought we would be able to score six or seven runs in the second game," Van Horn said. "We didn't take advantage of some opportunities and it cost us."

"I thought the guys played hard, but I think they may have let up a little after winning that first game."

Sunday, the Huskers suffered their worst defeat of the season, an ugly 8-2 loss.

Chad Wiles (2-1) suffered his first defeat of the season, leaving the game trailing 4-1 in the fifth inning.

Justin Cowan provided the lone bright spot for the Huskers by hitting his third home run of the season, a solo shot in the third inning.

The Huskers (7-5) will open up their home schedule Tuesday against the University of Nebraska-Omaha at 2 p.m.