

NU bench sees action in easy victory

By Brian Christopherson

Staff writer

The Nebraska baseball team was seeing double Tuesday afternoon.

Two baggers were plenty for the Cornhusker baseball team as they improved to an 18-7 record with a 12-2 victory over North Dakota State (9-2) at Buck Beltzer Stadium.

Six NU doubles and six Bison errors helped erase a 2-0 first inning deficit.

NU's Thom Ott (1-0) picked up the win by pitching three innings of one-hit ball in relief of starter Brian Rodaway, who lasted only an inning,

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giving up three hits and two runs.

Senior Justin Cowan went 4-5 at the plate with two doubles as the designated hitter. The extra base hits pushed Cowan's career double total to 36, tying him for 10th on the NU career charts in that category.

"[Cowan's] been real consistent since we moved him to the three spot about three weeks ago," Nebraska Coach Dave Van Horn said. "If the wind isn't blowing in, those two doubles are out."

Cowan is stepping up at a critical stage for the Huskers.

"I am getting the pitches to hit, and lately I have been driving balls more. Earlier, I was topping pitches off," Cowan said.

It wasn't only a good day for Cowan but also was a good day for Nebraska's bench to gain some experience, Van Horn said.

"This game gave us the chance to play a lot of young guys and let them get experience," Van Horn said. "It's good to get some guys to the plate in game situations for down the road."

NU pounded out 14 hits, doubling up the seven base knocks by North Dakota State.

Now, the attention turns to a weekend trip to Waco, Texas, to face the Baylor Bears in a three-



FRESHMAN CATCHER Aaron Gozart tries to tag a North Dakota State player at the plate in the top of the second inning Tuesday at Buck Beltzer Field. The Huskers won the game 12-2 after the Bisons had six errors. Josh Wolfe/DN

game series that is critical to the Big 12 standings.

"This game helps get us ready for Baylor, and that is huge, especially since we're playing there," Cowan said.

Van Horn backed his hard-hitting second baseman's thoughts, hoping his Huskers improve on their 5-3 conference mark.

"Baylor's a big series for us," Van Horn said.

"If we can win the series or all three games, it's going to help us confidence-wise."

"It also might send a message to the rest of the conference."

Missouri's mission: find a quarterback

Tigers hope new offense helps production

By Brian Christopherson

Staff writer

Missouri Coach Larry Smith and his football team know all too well what a difference a year can make.

It was just two years ago when the Tigers were sending fans of Ohio State, Nebraska and Kansas State to the medicine cabinet for some Advil, losing to all three teams in hard fought four-quarter slug fests.

But graduation was unkind to Missouri after the 1998 season as quarterback Corby Jones and his option abilities were clearly missed as MU plummeted to a 4-7 overall record, with a 1-7 Big 12 record in 1999. It ended with an embarrassing 66-0 loss to Kansas State.

The Tigers have brought in new blood at the coaching positions to offer an answer.

New Offensive Coordinator Bill Cubbit was plucked by Smith from Western Michigan to revive a mediocre offensive football team from last season.

Cubbit would like to rediscover a running game like the one Mizzou featured two and three years ago, while also opening it up more in the air.

So far, the team's been horrible.

During the first scrimmage last Saturday, MU quarterbacks were wiping grass marks from their teeth all day long, after being sacked 12 times.

"You're putting in a whole new offense, and it's going to be slow," Cubbit said. "We just couldn't put everything together. Once we do that, we will be fine."

One reason for such staggering statistics in the first scrimmage was because of the play of junior defensive end Justin Smith and his three sacks.

"You're playing against the best defen-

M in review
MISSOURI

COACH: Larry Smith
RECORD: 4 - 7 overall, 1 - 7 Big 12
OFFENSE: Passing
DEFENSE: 4 - 3
OUTLOOK: No team was worse than MU in the Big 12 at the end of the season, to the point of comedy. Tigers need an offense, and right now, there's no quarterback in the system capable of throwing the ball as many times as Missouri wants to.

sive end in the country," Cubbit said. "The best thing is you're playing against that kid all the time. It's going to get easier for them."

Missouri will look desperately to plug the hole of departed senior All-American center Rob Riti.

The Tigers also are trying to figure out who will take the majority of the snaps.

Junior Jim Dougherty brings the most experience to the job, but MU operated by committee throughout most of last season, with sophomores Kirk Farmer and Justin Gage also taking turns.

Dougherty and Farmer appear to be the favorites for the job, although the basketball player Gage also will be in consideration after stepping in and starting the Kansas State game to end last season.

Farmer is back from a broken leg he suffered mid-season in 1999, and says the potential on offense already can be seen, with the Tigers filling the sky with more footballs this year.

"It's totally new and it's working," Farmer said. "At the end of the scrimmage, it started to turn around for us. But we've still got a long ways to go."

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Husker bats finally get hot in doubleheader sweep

By Sean Callahan

Staff writer

After game one of the Nebraska softball team's 1-0 five-hit victory over Colorado State, NU Coach Rhonda Revelle thought she would do something a little bit different.

On a cold March night, Revelle decided to put her players' bats into the heated dug-out bathroom.

"We really just tried to change our focus," Revelle said. "I thought we came out a little flat in the first game."

CSU put Revelle's idea to test right away by building a 3-0 lead.

The Cornhuskers responded to Colorado State's first-inning charge by amassing eight runs off four hits and one error.

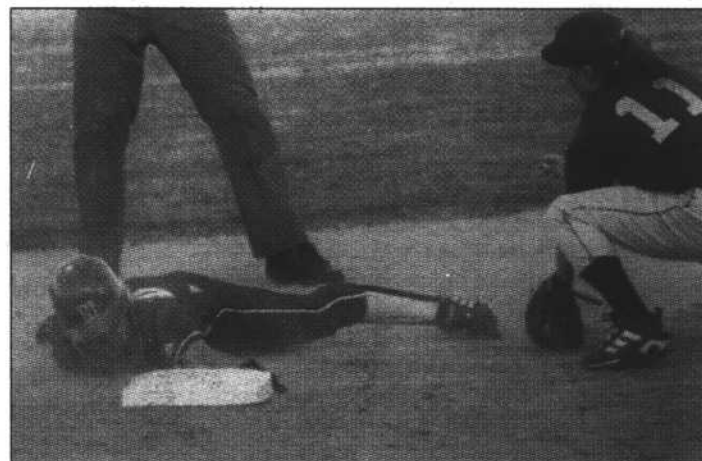
The Huskers (22-15) went on to post a 12-4 victory over 8-16 Colorado State in the fifth inning to complete the sweep. The win helped Nebraska push their season-long win streak to nine games.

"In the first game to get that one run and just sit on it was really nerveing," Revelle said. "To come away with that victory was nice and to really open it up offensively in that second game let me breathe a little bit easier."

In game one, NU got its only run from senior Ginger Taylor's RBI single that knocked in freshman Kim Ogee.

The Huskers sat behind a strong pitching performance from junior Penny Cope.

Cope, a transfer from



HUSKER OUTFIELDER Kim Ogee slides past Colorado State's Holly Schmillen during the first game of their double header Tuesday night. The Huskers will finish their three-game battle against the Buffaloes Wednesday at 1 p.m. Nate Wagner/DN

Alabama received the win after posting a shut-out and a career-high 10 strikeouts to up her season record to 5-5.

"Penny threw an excellent game," Revelle said. "I thought she had real good command of her pitches."

Sophomore Leigh Ann Walker received the save by bailing Cope out of a last-inning scare, which had two runners on with no outs.

Cope said she would have liked to finish the game but was completely confident that Walker would close the deal.

"I think as a pitcher you have to be able to thrive under pressure," Cope said. "I love the combination of Leigh Ann and I

because we are such different pitchers. I knew that was it when she came into the game."

Offensively the Huskers were led by freshmen Amanda Buchholz, Ogee and junior Jamie Fuente. The trio combined for 9 of the 15 Nebraska hits in the series.

Buchholz, the newest member of the Husker softball squad, had four RBIs and two doubles to pace NU.

"I think we're having a good home stand right now with all the injured players," Buchholz said. "We're coming out hard and doing real well playing at home."

Nebraska closes out its three game series against Colorado State this afternoon with a 1 p.m. scheduled start time.