



The Nebraska women's swimming team placed first in the Husker Shootout while the men finished in second place after a close competition with UNLV that came down to the last event on Sunday.

Men lose by .27 seconds

BY TOBY BURGER

The difference between victory and defeat for the Nebraska men's swimming and diving team in last weekend's Husker Shootout was .27 seconds.

Entering the final event of the three-day meet Sunday, the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and Nebraska stood tied at 328 points.

The 400-yard free-style relay would determine the title. But the Husker men finished second (3:01.43) in the event and for the meet. UNLV's .27-second margin of victory (3:01.16) provided a win in the event and the men's team title.

But that loss may be the only downside to Nebraska's first home meet of the season. The NU women's team won both the three-day, four session Husker Shootout and Saturday evening's Sprint Classic, composed of 10 sprint events. Even though the men didn't win the Husker Shootout title, they did walk away with the Sprint Classic title.

Interim Coach Paul Nelsen said his teams performed well.

"We did what we had to do and what we could have done," Nelsen said. "We were competitive the whole way, and we should have been. I expected them to be."

The NU women won the Shootout title with a 363 score while the University of Nevada followed a distant second (325) followed by UNLV (306).

Drury University (260) and Kenyon College (231) rounded out the field.

The women also won the Sprint Classic in similar form, winning five of 10 events and finishing with a team total 63 as UNLV stood a distant second with 53.

Senior All-American Beth Karaica led the way for the women's team winning the 50-yard free, 100-yard free and 100-yard fly individual events. She also helped in winning 200-yard free relay, 200-yard medley relay and the 400-yard medley relay at the Shootout.

Her winning continued at the Classic as she staked out a win in the 40-yard free and was part of the winning 200-yard medley relay.

"I felt pretty good this weekend," Karaica said. "It was a long meet, and everybody swam really well."

In addition to Karaica's leadership, Nelsen said sophomore All-American Lindsey Highstrom also guided the team in the weekend's two meets.

"They've (Karaica and Highstrom) proved to be leaders in the pool and outside of the pool, and you need that," Nelsen said.

While the women swept the weekend competition, the men's narrow Shootout loss to UNLV wasn't disheartening, at least to sophomore Raymond Brush.

"It wasn't disappointing at all,"

"That 400-free relay was a great time. Everybody swam well. There wasn't a weak leg on that relay."

Raymond Brush
NU swimmer

Brush said. "That 400-free relay was a great time. Everybody swam well. There wasn't a weak leg on that relay."

NU finished a narrow four points behind UNLV's winning 344 point total. The University of Washington placed third (290), Kenyon College fourth (270) and Drury University (243) in the fifth and final spot.

As for the Sprint Classic, the men took home the title by claiming six of the 10 events. The six events gave the Husker men a team total of 75 points followed by UNLV's 63 points.

Brush led the way winning the 50-yard backstroke and 100-yard individual medley at the Sprint Classic. He also assisted in the winning 200-yard medley relay.

"Everyone is just taking that next step forward," Brush said, "and we're just coming out of nowhere surprising everyone."

NU next travels to the Texas Invitational. The meet runs Dec. 1-3.

NU closes in on perfect season

Nebraska sweeps Baylor behind strong performances by Pilakowski and Kropp.

BY SEAN CALLAHAN

John Cook has begun the countdown.

After Saturday's 15-5, 15-10, 15-10 victory over Baylor, the top-ranked Nebraska volleyball team is now eight wins away from winning a national championship, Cook said.

The win over the Bears (14-14, 7-12) sets up the Cornhuskers (26-0, 18-0 for their final two regular season matches this week against Texas Tech and Kansas State before beginning the round of 64.

Husker Coach Cook said there are always things you can work on, but overall the first-year coach was pleased with this team's three-game road victory over BU. "I thought we played well,"

Cook said. "Baylor was really inspired and came out and played us competitive."

NU was led by sophomore Amber Holmquist who had 10 kills and 12 blocks.

Sophomore Laura Pilakowski and junior Jenny Kropp each added 8 kills.

Nebraska outblocked the Bears by 16.

"Statistically we dominated them," Cook said. "Jenny and Amber played really on the attack side. Greichaly (Cepero) did a nice job of setting them up."

The 3-0 victory over Baylor was the Husker's 11th three-game sweep over BU in as many tries.

With two regular season matches remaining, Kropp said the one thing she feels the team needs to work on before the post-season is coming together all at one time.

"Their will be times when someone's playing perfect and

Nebraska 15 15 15
Baylor 5 10 10

then somebody else will be," Kropp said. "It's just not all happening at once. We all need to start playing our best at the same time."

"We really need to go out strong, so we can boost our confidence and host a regional. That would be a major advantage."

NU will undoubtedly host a regional if they remain undefeated by beating Texas Tech and Kansas State.

If they lose one or both of the contests, they may drop to a No. 2 seed, Cook said.

"We always have things that we need to improve," Cook said. "This week we'll play two quality opponents to get us ready for the NCAA's."

"Were looking at it as we've got eight matches left to win the national championship."

No. 25 UCSB no match for Huskers

WOMEN from page 10

always has their hands in our face and denying us on in-bounds passes," said UCSB center Nicole Greathouse (15 points).

Freshman Margaret Richards - who tied center Casey Leonhardt for a team-high 14 points - won the tournament's MVP award despite committing eight turnovers in 20 minutes, which prompted Sanderford to call her hyper and colorblind.

"Maybe in practice this week

we should work on helping her figure out who the white team is," Sanderford said.

Leonhardt was another Husker with both an upside and downside Sunday. Despite carrying over her missed-chip-shot syndrome from last year by clanking 10 of 14 shots, Leonhardt dominated the lane with a 10 rebounds and a career-record five blocks. Her double-double made NU 7-0.

And although Sanderford criticized his young squad for playing

tight and "like they don't know how to win close games yet" in the last 10 minutes, the Huskers never lost their composure against a team that beat them by nine in Santa Barbara last year.

"They put on their pants just like we do," Sanderford said. "We've just gotta take the attitude that if people want to slug it out with us, they better bring their hard hat. Isn't that what I said a week ago? I believe in these kids. I don't think very many teams will want to have us in March."

Collier era opens on sour note for NU

BASKETBALL from page 10

charity stripe for the game and putting NU away for good.

Collier said his team's lack of defensive awareness in the second half, combined with ORU's hot shooting, led to NU's demise. The Golden Eagles shot 17 for 27 in the second half, led by guards Josh Atkinson and Luke Spencer-Gardner. Both had career-highs of 19 points on 7 of 12 combined shooting from beyond the arc.

"I think our problem lied in the fact that we couldn't sustain our defensive intensity as long as we needed too," Collier said.

Lack of execution on the offensive side was not a major concern of Collier, who saw

Steffon Bradford score a career-high 26 points on 11 of 13 shooting. The 6-foot-5 Bradford, who was guarded most of the game by players that stood 7-0, 6-11 and 6-8, added 14 boards, helping NU out-rebound ORU 35-22.

Despite logging 37 minutes apiece because of the absence of Ffriend and Fields in the final game of their suspensions, Belcher and Bradford weren't offering any excuses for the loss.

"Right now, those players aren't with us," said Bradford. "Right now, this is our team. So we take full responsibility for our loss."

Collier said Nebraska's lineup on Tuesday against Eastern Illinois will probably change

with both Ffriend and Fields eligible to play. Point guard Kevin Augustine, who has an injured back, won't play against Eastern Illinois, who lost 90-73 to Collier's former team Butler on Saturday.

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Wrestling dominates in cramped Coliseum

Vering reaches a milestone with the 100th win of his career as NU easily defeat Wyoming.

BY VINCE KUPPIG

Todd Beckerman captured his third pin of the year in just as many tries, and Brad Vering pulled in his 100th career victory as the Nebraska wrestling team routed Wyoming, 31-7, in the team's home opener at the NU Coliseum on Friday night.

With the win, the sixth-ranked Cornhuskers improved their dual record to 3-0.

Beckerman, a senior All-American at 133 pounds, pinned Kelly McConville in 4:07. With the victory, the second-ranked Beckerman improved to 3-0, with a pin in each match.

The crowd of 930 erupted as Beckerman brought McConville to his back to receive a pin.

Nebraska was wrestling a dual at the Coliseum, which seats 4,200, for the first time since the 1996-97 season. The Huskers normally wrestle at the spacious 13,500-seat Bob Devaney Sports Center, which was unavailable because of an NU women's basketball game.

Husker wrestlers and coaches loved the atmosphere of the smaller Coliseum.

"The place was awesome," Beckerman said. "It was the best home match I've had at Nebraska my five years here. It was like they were right on top of you. The crowd was so loud. It was great."

National Champion Brad Vering brought the crowd to its feet with his 100th career victory, defeating Wyoming's Craig Rumsey, 13-6, at 1:57 pounds.

Vering said it was a great honor to be a part of that milestone at a program of Nebraska's stature. Vering is now tied for 12th on Nebraska's all-time career victory list.

Despite earning the win, Vering said he was a little disappointed with his performance. In last year's match against Rumsey, Vering pinned him.

While Vering couldn't get a pin in his 100th career victory, redshirt



Nebraska freshman Matt Fletcher frees himself from Wyoming's Kevin Kesner in a wrestling match on Friday night at the NU Coliseum. The Huskers easily defeated Wyoming 31-7.

freshman Jason Powell earned a pin in just his second career victory. Powell improved to 2-1, with both wins by fall and his only loss a one-point set back to the nation's 10th-ranked wrestler.

In Friday's match, the 125-pound Powell pinned John Faczak in just 1:42.

"He's an entertainer," Coach Mark Manning said. "He's got that little spark about him that people are really going to like. He's scrappy and wrestles all over the mat. He's dangerous."

Despite winning eight of 10 matches on the night, including the two pins and a major decision by junior All-American Bryan Snyder at 157 pounds, Manning was critical about the team's performance.

"Our team is sporadic about hustling," Manning said. "We want our guys hustling more. Some of our guys don't quite understand how to hustle. You got to hustle back always."

Manning took blame for some of that.

He said his coaching staff had worked the team hard during the

week before the match, causing the team to look a little worn out.

The Huskers now have two

weeks off to prepare for their next meet at the Las Vegas Invitational on Dec. 1-2.

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