

Go West: California tourney calls NU

BY JOHN GASKINS

For 25 years, the Nebraska volleyball program has battled to prove that the championship volleyball radar extends beyond the sport's roots on the West Coast.

The Huskers did it in 1995 and last December by winning national titles. Only NU and two other schools in the 20-year history of the NCAA Tournament - Texas in 1988 and Penn State in 1999 - have come from outside California and Hawaii to claim the title.

In 2001, the defending champs might get three chances to invade the Golden State and maintain their swagger.

The ultimate trip, NU hopes, will be to San Diego for the Final Four at the end of the season. To start the season, Nebraska will play powerhouses in California two weeks in a row.

The Huskers recently accepted an invitation to play in the State Farm Women's Volleyball Classic in Stockton, Calif., on Friday, Aug. 24 and Saturday, Aug. 25. Other teams invited were 2000 NCAA runner-up Wisconsin and No. 3 Hawaii - the two teams NU beat in the Final Four. The four-team field and pairings won't be announced for several weeks.

"Going out to California where there is such a craze for volleyball will be good for us," junior-to-be All-American outside hitter Laura Pilakowski said.

"We don't really think about where we're from a lot, but it'll be good to show them that there's other people besides Californians that can play," she said.

It will be the Huskers' record-setting fourth appearance in the seven-year history of the premier event. NU hosted the tournament in 1995 and 1999. The 2001 host team will be Pacific, a two-time national champion.

NU Coach John Cook, who went 34-0 in his first year and beat the likes of three-time NCAA champ Hawaii and three-time champ UCLA, said playing two extra quality matches to start the season can only help the Huskers' mettle against top teams come NCAA tournament time.

Pilakowski agreed. "We've looked at our schedule, and it's going to be really tough this year," Pilakowski said. "It's really good for us to start out that way. We always start out with great competition, and that just helps in the long run and in the tournament at the end."

The very next week, the Huskers hit the coast again to play three-time champ Long Beach State and UC-Santa Barbara - the school that gave NU its last loss in the Sweet 16 round of the 1999 NCAA tournament.

As a result of such scheduling, NU called off its match with four-time champ Stanford - who won back-to-back titles in 1996 and '97 - to spare taking yet another California trip.

But that doesn't mean the rest of the schedule won't be tough. NU will open its home season Sept. 7-9 by hosting

Please see SLATE on 9

Huskers get revenge on Mizzou

BY BRIAN CHRISTOPHERSON

There was just too much Jamaican for the Missouri basketball team to account for on Wednesday night.

Nebraska senior center Kimani Ffriend led a rebounding assault against the Tigers (12-6, 3-2), and the Cornhuskers (9-9, 2-3) used its board dominance to overcome a second half deficit and beat MU 85-79 before 10,471 fans at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

NU owned the interior, matching Missouri's 24 total team rebounds with 24 rebounds on the offensive end alone. The Huskers collected 44 total for the game, with 16 of those rebounds belonging to Ffriend.

Nebraska senior forward Steffon Bradford also got in the act, claiming 13 points, with a share of those coming on offensive putbacks.

"That's the way it ought to be," Nebraska Coach Barry Collier said.

Ffriend was inclined to agree with his coach.

"I need to hustle like this every night...I have to have that consistency," said Ffriend, who led the Husker attack with 20 points with 10 of 13 foul shooting. "I know that if I play to my potential, nobody is



NU forward Steffon Bradford reaches for an offensive rebound on Wednesday night against Missouri. Bradford scored 13 points and grabbed seven rebounds in the Huskers' 85-79 win.

going to stop me."

The Huskers needed the inside game to counter the hot shooting of Missouri, who hit 51 percent from the floor for the game.

The Tigers seemed poised to take over the game, bolstering a

36-32 halftime lead into a 55-44 advantage with 12:21 remaining, led by junior guard Clarence Gilbert's 25 points and sophomore forward Kareem Rush's 21 points.

"Honestly, I thought we were in a lot of trouble," Nebraska sen-

ior guard Cookie Belcher said about the 11 point deficit.

Less than five minutes later, the despair was gone and the home floor was rocking when a Ffriend dunk and added free-

Please see WIN on 9

Gilbert's game can't help Tigers

BY JOSHUA CAMENZIND

Energy is something Missouri guard Clarence Gilbert just doesn't lack.

But even Gilbert was drained after his Tigers lost to Nebraska 85-79 on Wednesday night.

The junior, when he doesn't channel that energy into his game, has been known to put it to use in his trash-talking and fun-gunning style. Gilbert's mouth and in-your-face approach usually drives his game. But he said very few words on the court Wednesday. And even less off of it afterwards.

"This one hurts," was all Gilbert could muster after a one-on-one meeting outside the locker room with MU Coach Quin Snyder after the game.

Snyder said Gilbert took this loss hard, but was clearly not

Please see GILBERT on 9

Burke to send another to NU

BY DAVID DIEHL

By looking at Barry Collier's latest grab in the recruiting game, it looks as if he's not only staying in-state, but he's focusing on the same school.

Jason Dourisseau, a 6-foot-4, 170-pound guard from Omaha Burke High School, verbally committed to Collier's 2002-03 recruiting class Monday night. He is the second recruit from the Bulldogs to give an oral commitment to the Huskers.

Dourisseau's teammate, 6-foot-9, 240-pound center Roy Enright, committed to NU this past April in what is believed to be the earliest commitment Nebraska has ever received from a basketball recruit. The pair has helped lead Burke to a 9-3 record in the Metro Conference.

"I didn't think I had anything to wait for," Dourisseau said about his choice to commit to a school during his junior season. "Nebraska is where I wanted to be."

Dourisseau, who has started as a sophomore and a junior, is averaging 16.3 points and eight rebounds a game for Burke. Dourisseau said Iowa State and Creighton were other schools that have showed interest in his talent.

He said he was especially pleased with the academic support system Nebraska had for its athletes. Plus the coaches and the people within the program made it attractive, too.

"I just thought it would be the best fit for me as far as the atmosphere," he said.

As the second player from Burke to accept an offer from NU, Dourisseau said Enright played a big role in his commitment.

"When I told him they offered me on Saturday, he told me I should commit," Dourisseau said. "I would like to play with Roy a little longer, too."

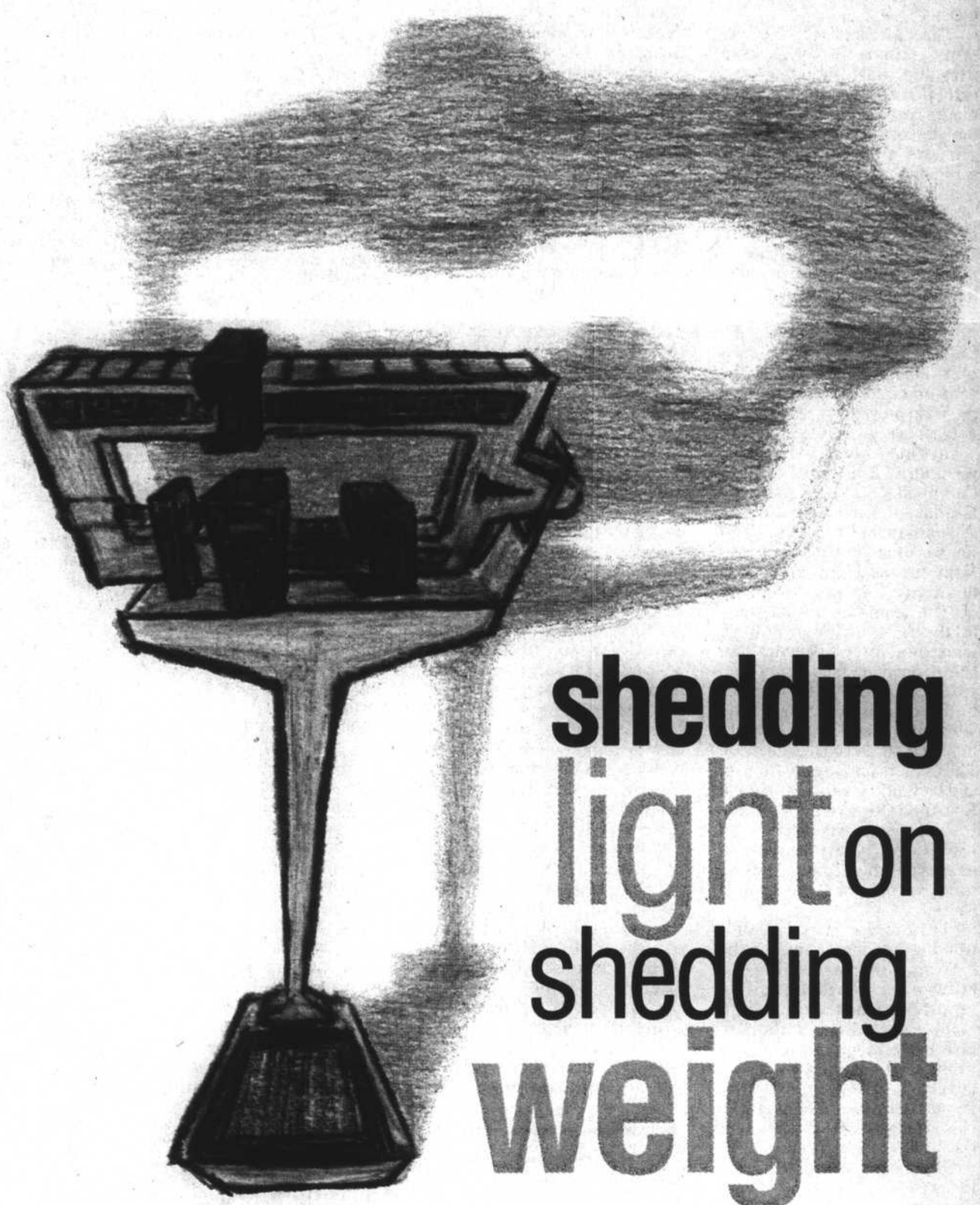
Dourisseau has played at all five positions on the floor for Burke Coach Gary Graner, but he said his spot would be at the point guard, shooting guard or maybe even some small forward for NU.

Dourisseau admitted that he is going to work on his size, as his current 170-pound frame is undersized for Division I guards. He does have another year and a half to work on it.

"We talked about starting a weight program this summer," Dourisseau said.

While Collier is actively pursuing high-school underclassmen, he has also signed four players for next season. Corey Simms, a shooting guard from St. Louis, Mo., Brennan Clemons, a point guard from Olney (Ill.) Junior College, Dan Heimos, a center from Waterloo, Ill., and Lincoln Southeast shooting guard Jake Mulheisen make up Collier's current 2001-2002 recruiting class.

Collier has two scholarships open over the next two years. He loses five seniors this year in Kimani Ffriend, Steffon Bradford, Cookie Belcher, Rodney Fields and Craig Wortmann.



Megan Cody/DN

Wrestling battles weight cutting reputation

BY DAVID DIEHL

The sport of wrestling at the high school and college levels has been saddled with uneasy images of wrestlers unhealthily testing their bodies' limits, trying to eschew every ounce of unnecessary weight in order to perform at a peak.

It is an image the NCAA and its wrestling teams are trying to escape because it's harmful and, with the advent of new rules, incorrect.

The idea behind weight cutting was for wrestlers to be the biggest within the constraints of their respective weight classes, but at the same time to have the leanest body possible and perform at the body's highest level of efficiency.

Therefore, any extra baggage just gets thrown off the train. Today, however, the trains aren't dropping as much baggage as they used to.

Through education, new rules and three tragic deaths, the practice that put the sport of wrestling in a bad light is not a factor in college or high school wrestling today.

Nebraska Coach Mark Manning realizes the way wrestling is perceived because of weight cutting in the past, but it shouldn't be so now, he said.

"There really is no such thing as weight cutting anymore in wrestling," Manning said. "It's because of the rules."

But the rules have done little to smash the miscon-

ceptions of wrestlers.

Outside of the immediate sphere of wrestling, little is known about the sport that demands so much physically out of its competitors. When this ignorance combines with perceptions of dropping weight, the result has been a black eye for the sport for years.

Misconceptions of wrestlers not eating for long periods of time and undertaking rigorous workouts fly around in the minds of those not familiar with wrestling, Manning said. But for anyone to maintain such practices isn't possible, he said.

"They can't do that," said Manning, who has been

Please see WEIGHT on 9

"The weight management issue had been a black eye for the sport for a long time. We knew though that we wouldn't be able to change the culture just by rules. It would need rules and education."

Mike Moyer
Director of the National Wrestling Coaches' Association

Losing string at Buffs hits 16

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The curse at Colorado continues.

Nebraska (9-10, 1-5) was unable to put anything together in the second half when they were within striking distance of No. 25 Colorado (14-3, 5-1), and the Buffaloes eventually pulled away for an 87-69 victory.

The loss was the 16th straight for NU at the Coors Events Center. It also extended the Cornhuskers' losing skid to four straight. The string is the longest losing streak in Paul Sanderford's four years at Nebraska.

Colorado 87
Nebraska 69

History wasn't on NU's side going into the contest, as the last time it defeated CU was in 1985 with a final score of 85-60.

But times looked like they had a possi-

bility of changing in the second half. With Nebraska only down by three points with 14:18 remaining, it seemed as though the Buffaloes were in for trouble.

However, in the blink of an eye, the reasonable three-point deficit turned into nine.

The Huskers were never able to recover as the deficit just kept getting bigger and bigger.

CU's depth helped them out in the second half of play. The Buffs were led by junior Jenny Roulier, who came off the bench to score 20 points.

During the first half of play, Nebraska relied on senior center Casey Leonhardt, who was six for seven from the field and made all four of her free-throw attempts to score 16 points. With the effort, Nebraska only trailed by five at halftime, having no other players score more than six points.