



Freshman guard Shannon Howell and the Nebraska Cornhuskers will look to end the team's four-game losing streak Saturday against the Missouri Tigers. DN File Photo

NU women to battle Mizzou

FROM STAFF REPORTS

At long last, the women's basketball team finally gets to face an opponent without a number in front of its title.

After losing to No. 7 Iowa State, No. 9 Texas Tech, No. 17 Texas and No. 25 Colorado, Nebraska (9-10, 1-5 Big 12) will face unranked Missouri (12-5, 3-3 Big 12) at 7:05 p.m. at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The Cornhuskers appear to have a good chance to break their losing streak against Mizzou. NU is 7-1 at home this year and has dominated the Tigers over the past 10 years. Since 1991, the Huskers hold a 21-1 advantage over MU.

The game will feature a

dominant inside game as NU's Casey Leonhardt will face Missouri's star forwards Amanda Lassiter and Marlena Williams.

Leonhardt has been the lone constant in Nebraska's offense. The senior center is averaging 13.5 points per game, coming off with a career high 25 points against Colorado.

To match Leonhardt, the Tigers have senior Lassiter and senior Williams in the post. Lassiter leads the team in scoring with 20.1 points per game. She also tops both teams with 3.2 steals and 3.9 blocked shots per game. Williams averages 12.3 points per contest.

The game will be televised on NETV, channel 12.

Basketball gains more fans

SANDERFORD from page 10

practice, every game," Clausen said. "The athletic department saw we had a big-time coach that we have an opportunity to cash in on."

According to Claussen, season ticket sales rose 368 percent that year.

Now that he's got people's attention, Sanderford wants more: regularly packed houses, top 10 teams and a Tennessee-like empire.

That ultimate dream may be far away. The young Huskers are 9-10 and have lost four in a row. Fans at home games are getting almost as harsh as they get when the men's team struggles.

But despite the least,

Sanderford is proud they are coming and watching. He may be the clown, but he believes women's basketball is no longer a joke.

"One of the things I've tried really hard with it," Sanderson said, "is to change the perception of women's basketball at Nebraska. It used to not be socially acceptable to go see the women play."

"I think the public, the state of Nebraska and the city of Lincoln have really embraced us."

"We've had fairly good success and fairly good acceptance. My perception is people are saying, 'These people are working at it. They want to be good.' The kids play hard. I think that perception overall is good for the program."

Cornhuskers welcome KU, MU for swim meet

BY TOBY BURGER

For the Nebraska men's and women's swimming and diving teams, the hope is that the saying, "there's no place like home," holds true.

After more than two months of away meets and duals, both teams return for a pair of duals with Kansas and Missouri this weekend.

Kansas enters tonight for a 7 p.m. start. The KU men enter with a dismal 0-7 record, while the women stand with a 6-4 mark Saturday, Missouri comes to

town with both the men's and women's squads posting identical 5-2 records. Currently, the NU men are 4-2, while the women are 5-3.

Interim Coach Paul Nelsen said the focus continues to be self-improvement rather than the quality of their opponents.

"They need to polish up their events," Nelsen said. "If they haven't already become conscious of the small things, the behaviors they need to do all the time to achieve their goals, then this is their last chance."

The Huskers made their way back home after a string of road competitions that started in Texas, with meets in Florida and Iowa, before returning to Texas to close out the string of meets.

As for this weekend's home duals, they will conclude NU's conference schedule, but that only adds to the enthusiasm of the team, Nelsen said.

"I think they're excited. I think they're ready to do something. I think they want to get there (Big 12 Championships) and do this," he said.

Saturday's dual against Missouri also marks the last home conference action for five seniors. In a pre-meet ceremony, seniors Beth Karaica, Joe Burgard, Peter Fry, Charlie Law and Bert Locklin will be recognized for their accomplishments and contributions to the team.

Next weekend will conclude Nebraska's home schedule before heading off for Big 12 Championships. The women will host Georgia, while the men will host Georgia as well as Northwestern.

Huskers ready for Oklahoma

SOONERS from page 10

in Norman, Okla., Belcher sees a similar situation for the Huskers to take advantage of.

"We need to get something going," said Belcher of his 9-9 squad. "It's like the same situation in that we weren't playing particularly well, and we knew we had a chance to go on a streak in the next couple of games."

NU's next two come on the road, which, despite four wins in a row at Miami and San Juan, Puerto Rico, on neutral courts, hasn't been kind to the Huskers in 17 games.

Steffon Bradford and Kimani Ffriend both said now was as good as time as ever to hit the road again after two strong performances at home.

"We are ready for the road," Bradford said. "Every time we get on the road, we play real good. We just fall short in the end, except Kansas."

Ffriend said the Missouri win should give the Huskers the needed confidence to end the road losing streak.

"This team is ready and we are going to give a good showing down there," he said.

Husker Notes: Junior guard Cary Cochran is questionable for the game after coming out against Mizzou with his eye bleeding after being poked by Clarence Gilbert.

Cochran, who had laser eye surgery this summer, did not practice on Thursday and shot around with protective glasses on, but team doctors were worried about the effects of a fast heart rate on the bleeding eye.

Two friends reverse roles

SWIM from page 10

brand new, and they've been training a whole season.

"It's just hard being where I am."

Karaica still feels the effects of Epstein Barr a year after missing the entire swimming season because of the virus. She said that her illness was "such a fluke" that she would feel fine one day and not the next. Currently, Karaica said she wasn't at her form before her year off, but she was sure she would become Big 12 championships time.

Johnson is looking forward to coming back next season. In contrast to Karaica, Johnson said her back felt 100 percent better than before the surgery, and the

biggest struggle was not getting overzealous in her return.

"When you are first allowed to get back in," Johnson said, "you just want to get back in and go as hard as you can because you were sitting out for so long you just want to go and do it."

Johnson and Karaica each have been in the other's shoes and have come to gain a better understanding of each other and common obstacles.

"Every other obstacle you face and get over only makes you stronger," said Karaica.

Johnson took it from there.

"And when you are out for a certain amount of time," she said, "it just makes you more motivated when you get going again."



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