

Lack of offense dooms Huskers again

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have to worry about Leonhardt—who was four inches taller than the Tigers' tallest player. That would be Lassiter, who finished with a career-high and Devaney Center record six blocks. Her team finished with 12 stuffs.

"I think with Casey out, we could attack the middle more," said Mizzou Coach Cindy Stein, who led the Tigers to their first win in Lincoln in 11 years and second win over NU in their last 23 tries.

"Nebraska started off extremely well. I thought they were very confident coming in

and had the swagger in them. As the game went on, they weren't hitting their shots, and they started losing their confidence. They weren't sure who wanted to take shots at times."

NU shot 9 for 34 (27 percent) in the first half and 29.7 percent for the game, its second-worst outing of the season and 18 turnovers compared to 10 assists.

Leonhardt led NU with 11 points, and Amanda Went was the only other Husker to score in double digits with 10. It was the ninth time in 10 games that two Huskers or fewer scored in double figures, and the eighth time

this year NU failed to score 60 points.

But what burned Sanderford the most was the Huskers showed signs of a team that finally might pick itself up—like the early second half run—only to fall back down.

"For six or seven minutes, we played really hard, very unselfish, we moved the basketball, then all of a sudden, it's like hitting a door," Sanderford said.

"The kids are trying hard. They're not writing this year off. They're busting it. I could see it on their faces in the second half. But we're struggling each night out."

Recruit game full of folly

RECRUITING from page 10

the first time. They lie to please. They get a whiff of their own celebrity and misuse it. Jones' little show-and-tell act seems foofy and childish, but it also speaks to his own self-importance, which could hurt him in college. At the press conference, he basically said he wanted to follow in Michael Vick's footsteps. Sure. I don't believe anything the kid says.

On this particular Web site, Jones said three separate times he'd wait until signing day—Feb. 7—to announce. One day he had Tennessee dropped off his list, the next day they were on. One day his father says the Big East is too easy for his son, the next it is not. One day he says he'll have a press conference the next day for a decision; it doesn't happen for a week. Getting the picture?

And yet, I don't begrudge the sites their success. They've filled a void in the market—not entirely unlike the dot.com revolution of the late 1990s. No sport competes with college football because the best high school players in other sports go straight to the pros. At best, a college basketball recruiting class is six guys, two of which are JUCO or foreign goons. Won't stack up to 22 smiling faces.

Nothing does, really. Like the game, there may arrive a day when recruiting overshadows actual victory, like a coach's job offer overshadows the actual coaching job. We're all free agents. Sports is transitory. Youth rules.

So the whims of Kevin Jones matter until Feb. 8. Then he is 17 again. Then he must go to Virginia Tech. Then he must play college football. Then we'll know what "Game" he's got.

Tracksters use invite to better NCAA hopes

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Nebraska track teams took a step toward improvement Saturday at the Northern Iowa Invitational.

The Huskers won 13 event titles and had four athletes record NCAA provisional marks.

NU was led on the women's side by Lesley Owusu. The senior sprinter captured the 60 meters and 200 meters. Her 24.44 in the 200 is a provisional time.

Kristina Kovesi set personal-bests in the long jump (19' 8") and triple jump (40' 10 1/2"), while Na'Tassia Vice claimed the high jump with a provisional qualifying leap of 5' 9 3/4" while performing in only her second collegiate meet.

"It was a good meet for us," said Husker Coach Gary Pepin. "We had a lot of seasonal bests and we had some solid provisional marks."

Sheldon Hutchinson, a junior All-American, set a provisional mark in the triple jump with a leap of 52' 2". The men also got a strong performance from sophomore transfer David Davis, who set a personal-best in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 7.86. The time was the second fastest in NU history and is a provisional mark.

The Nebraska women also claimed wins in the 60 meters from Shelley-Ann Brown and in the 1600-meter relay. Ann Gaffigan won the 3,000 meters with a personal-best time of 9:54.18. Field event winners included Emily Duran in the shot put and Erin Wibbels in the 20-pound weight throw.

Kyle Odvody, a Malmo native,

won the high jump with an indoor personal-best leap of 6'11".

"Right now, the men look good," said Pepin. "On the women's side, we're going to have to get considerably better if we're going to compete for a conference championship. We have an awful lot of freshmen on the women's side."

The Husker men anticipate the return of previously injured All-American sprinter Chris Chandler for this weekend's home meet against Kansas State and Abilene Christian.



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Men's effort falls short

OKLAHOMA from page 10

the way I'm capable of playing," said Raymond, who had his third-straight 20-point game.

But as is the Husker way this season, NU never said die.

Raymond cooled off in the second half, and OU let up just enough to let Nebraska back in the game. With 4:03 remaining, Rodney Fields hit a 3-pointer that cut the Sooners lead to five. NU again cut it to five with 3:11 left on a Kimani Ffriend jumper.

OU's Nolan Johnson took over from there and scored six points to put the Sooners up 10 and lock up the win.

"It's a nice feeling to have a three-game winning streak right now," Sampson said. "A week ago, we had lost two straight and now our kids are playing better and improving, and that is my main focus."

NU's too-little, too-late effort hinged on missing its foul shots.

The team hit only 12 of 27 in the game, including only six of 18 in the second half.

Steffon Bradford pitched in 15 points for the Huskers and Ffriend added nine. Raymond led Oklahoma with 25, and Aaron McGhee and Johnson scored 20 and 11, respectively.

Raymond's bombs send OU to huge first-half lead

BY BRIAN CHRISTOPHERSON

NORMAN, Okla. — Oklahoma junior guard J.R. Raymond posed behind the three-point line, broad smile on his face, shooting hand extended to the basket.

He wanted Cornhusker players to see the picture-perfect stroke that was killing them in pause mode.

"All day long," he mouthed to despondent Nebraska senior guard Cookie Belcher after one of his three-point bombs.

Maybe not all day long, but for the first half of Oklahoma's 77-66 win over Nebraska on Saturday, Raymond was the difference-maker and deserving of some post-shot gloating.

The OU guard knocked home 20 of his game-high 25 points in the first half. He scored 18 of those points from behind the arc, hitting six of eight shots from behind the three-point line.

"For the first time in a long time, I finally played the way I'm capable of playing," Raymond said. "I felt like everything I put up was going in."

Raymond had been especially hot of late, upping a 8.2 scoring average with hot shooting, scor-

ing 25, 21 and 25 points in his last three games against Kansas State, Texas and Nebraska, respectively.

And oddly enough, Raymond's scoring success has unexplainably come after moving from shooting guard to the usually low-scoring position of point guard.

"I like to be at the point, so that I can be in control of the offense," Raymond said. "I'm looking for my shot when I throw it inside. I know he's going to kick it out to me, and I am out there licking my chops."

OU's inside-outside offense proved too much for Nebraska early, with Raymond's shooting and junior forward Aaron McGhee's dominance giving the Sooners an insurmountable 16-point lead at intermission.

Raymond was not able to duplicate his first half performance in the second stanza, scoring only five points from the free-throw line to ice the game.

"It wasn't what J.R. wasn't doing. You can't expect him to do the same thing in the second half," Oklahoma Coach Kelvin Sampson said. "He had one of those first halves that you dream about."

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