

Kansas power too much for Colorado

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Nick Collison had a career-high 26 points and Kenny Gregory added 20 as Kansas overcame foul trouble and near-perfect foul shooting by Colorado for a 91-79 victory Wednesday night.

It was the Jayhawks' 24th straight victory over the Buffaloes. Kansas (20-5, 9-4 Big 12), which hasn't lost to Colorado in 10 years, overcame foul trouble and 21-of-22 foul shooting by the Buffaloes.

Eric Chenoweth fouled out with 2:25 left, while Collison played the last few minutes with four fouls. Point guard Kirk Hinrich had three for Kansas. The Jayhawks, favored by 15

points, appeared to be pulling away early in the second half when Hinrich's three-pointer and a pair of free throws by Chenoweth put their lead at 52-36.

But the Buffaloes (15-12, 5-9), who made their first 19 free throws, whittled away until Jamahl Mosely's bucket climaxed a 7-1 run and made it 76-70 with 5:41 left.

Then Hinrich stole a pass and drove in for a layup, got fouled and made the free throw. A moment later Hinrich's two free throws put Kansas on top 83-72.

Chenoweth had 17 points and nine rebounds for Kansas, which avoided its first three-game losing streak in seven years. Hinrich had 15 points and eight assists.

Last-second mistakes doom NU's NIT hopes

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and took a 38-36 halftime lead.

Nebraska opened the second half as poorly as it opened the first, and the Huskers soon found themselves down 50-43 in the second stanza.

"I was disappointed in our play in stretches," Collier said. "But we'd substitute guys, and things were worse if not the same."

The Huskers kept the game close with the inside presence of senior center Kimani Ffriend and senior forward Steffon Bradford, who scored 14 and 12 points, respectively.

The Huskers went on a 7-0 run to take a 58-57 lead on a Ffriend basket but fell behind again 63-60 with 3:30 left.

Senior guard Cookie Belcher only scored seven points in the game but scored four from the free-throw line in a 13-second span that gave NU the 64-63 lead with 54 seconds left.

But Nebraska's inability to close the deal made it a long flight home.

"We need to study this game on tape and see what plays we need to make that we didn't," said Collier, whose team hosts perennial power Kansas on Sunday. "This game is a good teaching opportunity if we are willing to use it and learn from it."

Bolt electrifies NU team

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between the Ken Harveys and Matt Hoppers. Bolt missed just one game in 1999 and only five in 2000 while picking up honorable all-conference honors from league coaches. He raised his batting average 72 points from 1999 to 2000; he's currently batting .348 going into the weekend.

All this while trying to shuffle three positions defensively. Bolt has played at second and short this season and spent time last year at third. The quick arrival of Jeff Blevins' bat (he leads the Big 12 in batting average with a .524 clip) forces the lineup to stay fresh. If Blevins stays hot, he could go to third, with Josh Hesse

moving to second and Bolt assuming Brendan Eymann's shortstop position. Or it could go another way. Or another.

"There's a lot of different combinations in practice," Bolt said.

For reserve Willie Jones, it has meant more infield work.

"It's not so much more ground balls as more ground balls at different positions," Jones said.

And to see them, it gets hard to pick out who's who. Bolt looks like Hesse and sometimes like second baseman John Cole and if his head weren't shaved in the mugshot, a little like Blevins.

It's the type of team, Stern said, that fits a player like Bolt perfectly. It's still a team that has a prove-something factor attached

Hardabura ready to win

GYMNAST from page 10

1995 World Championships in Germany, when Hardabura, still with the Canadian national team, was introduced to NU Coach Francis Allen.

The two personalities instantly clicked. Allen brought up Hardabura's situation in Canada, a situation the two agreed wasn't allowing the gymnast to reach his full potential.

Nebraska's coach offered him an education and a chance to enjoy gymnastics again.

"I had to ask myself if I wanted to continue to do gymnastics in Canada and to pretty much go nowhere and have no education," Hardabura said, "or go to the United States, get an education and enjoy the sport again."

Hardabura didn't answer that question right away. Instead, he took a year off competition to spend time rock climbing and skiing with a tight niche of friends.

"I'd still go to the gym every once in a while for fun, but I pretty much did what I wanted to do when I wanted to do it," Hardabura said.

He also spent time considering Allen's proposal, and finally decided to try collegiate sports. After recruiting trips to Penn State, Ohio State and Utah, Hardabura found a home at Nebraska.

"I signed the second I got home," Hardabura said. "Francis Allen added a dimension to the program that wasn't just about winning national championships. He also wants to create gentlemen and have us experience things that we wouldn't otherwise experience if we weren't in school, and I found that really attractive."

The move to Nebraska was exactly what the 22-year-old freshman needed to rejuvenate his career. In his first year at NU, he earned the second-highest-ever all-around total of 57.975 as

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Jason Hardabura
All-American gymnast

well as All-American honors.

His 1998 season proved just a prelude to his monster sophomore year. Hardabura ended that season on top by winning the NCAA all-around title.

However, disappointment hit Hardabura again his junior year after he tore tendons and muscles in his arm and shoulder, a season-ending injury.

"It was extremely frustrating for myself," Hardabura said. "It's tough sitting on the bench."

The Huskers also lost senior All-Americans Marshal Nelson and Blake Bukacek to torn anterior cruciate ligaments.

"I can say with complete confidence that we could have won the national championship last year," Hardabura said. "We had the most depth and experience of any team, but the wheels sort of fell off as the season went on with everyone getting hurt."

However, Hardabura's frustration from last year has proved to be motivation for his senior season.

"Over the summer, I decided to put two seasons into one this year and give it everything I got," Hardabura said.

After winning the all-around in the first two meets this season, it is obvious he is doing exactly that.

The motivation for Hardabura this season may also come from his young group of hard-working teammates.

"I can't say we are going to win a national championship this year or break any records,"

Hardabura said. "But this is the hardest working team I've ever been on. They give their heart and soul every single day."

And so does Hardabura. After a career with as much disappointment as success, Hardabura has regained the appreciation for gymnastics that inspired him to be a gymnast. He even wants to continue to stay involved in gymnastics after this season as he plans to compete in a competition for alumni gymnasts. He also will serve as a volunteer assistant for NU gymnastics next year.

It's a long way from 1996, when Hardabura wanted nothing to do with the sport.

"Francis Allen gave me the opportunity to find personal satisfaction in gymnastics again," he said.



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Suhr brings ability back to softball

SUHR from page 10

ery is not complete.

"She's a half step behind," Revelle said. "She's wearing a (ankle) brace that's pretty cumbersome."

Because of the injury, Suhr was confined to playing designated hitter in the first tournament, in which she was held hitless but made good contact and had a couple balls caught at the fence.

Now that the hits are starting to fall in, Suhr appears ready to become the dominating player she has provided glimpses of in the past two seasons.

"I've had high expectations," Suhr said. "Right now, I feel that I'm doing what I need to be doing for everyone else."

Suhr and the rest of the Huskers travel to Columbus, Ga., this weekend for the NFCA Leadoff Classic, Feb. 23-25.

Nebraska will once again face highly ranked opponents, with games against No. 7 California (7-0) and No. 1 UCLA (14-0). Both teams have already defeated NU this season. The top-ranked Bruins handed NU a 6-1 loss, while Cal edged the Huskers 6-5.

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