

# Shockers at home present worthy foe

**SHOCKER** from page 10

the Midwest. Under Coach Gene Stephenson, WSU has gone 1,268-381 in 23 seasons and has produced 14 straight appearances in the NCAA postseason, including seven trips to the College World Series.

The Huskers look to take their third straight against the Shockers today at 5 p.m. The game will be played in Wichita, where the Huskers haven't won a game since 1986.

Hopper, who is batting .402 and leads the team with 33 RBIs, said he expected a rowdy crowd.

"We're not treating it really as a midweek game," Hopper said. "It's going to be like a Friday night game on the road."

The Shockers have brought at least 2,000 to Eck Stadium in each of their seven home games this year, including more than 3,000 fans in each of their last four games. Eck Stadium has a capacity of 7,808.

But WSU has yet to host a team

the caliber of the Cornhuskers (16-4), who moved up to fourth in the latest Baseball America poll.

Revenge will be a motivating factor for the Shockers when they get an opportunity to face the Huskers at home.

Earlier this season, NU pulled off an 8-7 win over WSU on Feb. 25 at the Louisiana-Lafayette Tournament. Last year, the Huskers ended the Shockers' season with an 8-1 win at the NCAA Regionals.

"I know a couple guys on the team," Hopper said. "They can't even wait to get an opportunity to beat us."

The Huskers will once again send Jamie Rodrigue (2-1, 4.93 ERA) to the mound - somebody WSU has not been able to figure out. Rodrigue picked up wins over the Shockers in the two previous meetings.

Earlier this year against WSU, Rodrigue came on in relief to capture the win while giving up two earned in seven innings with a career-high 10 strikeouts.

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**Matt Hopper**  
Nebraska designated hitter

In Rodrigue's last outing, he pitched a complete game in a 13-2 win over Louisiana Tech a week ago.

Looking to spoil Rodrigue's plans will be Wichita State's outfielder Justin McCarty. McCarty was named a "Louisville Slugger's" National Player of the Week by Collegiate Baseball with four home runs and 13 RBIs in five games last week while going 13 for 25 at the plate.

Offensively, the Huskers have been fueled by Jeff Leise recently. Leise, who hit only .211 last season, rides a 18-game hitting streak into tonight's game and is batting .408 with four home runs with a team-leading 29 runs.

Countering the Husker

offense is an impressive Shocker pitching staff that sports an impressive 3.64 earned run average this season.

First baseman Dan Johnson, who is leading the team with a .433 batting average and seven home runs, said the Huskers were not taking the 10-8 Shockers lightly.

"We got to look at this as like a Friday night game," he said. "We have to be focused and ready to come after a very good team."

But Johnson and Huskers know they are supposed to win the game.

"We expect to win this game," he said. "If we lost, we'd be disappointed. If we won, we'd probably take it business-like and get on the bus and come back home."

# Five Big 12 teams bid adieu to Dance

**JAYHAWKS** from page 10

"Indiana State did, and we didn't."

By the time Kansas took the court Friday night, Missouri was the only Big 12 team left standing. Top-seeded Duke later sent the Tigers home in the second round.

Williams was relieved his team could advance and carry the torch for the conference. The Jayhawks hadn't made it to the second week since 1997.

"I told the guys I was tired of answering dadgum questions about second round losses," Williams said.

Kansas's easy weekend was a bit of a surprise. The Jayhawks came into the NCAAs searching to find the game that had made them into a top-five team throughout much of December and January. Injuries, coupled with a series of upset losses, left KU with a fourth seed. Kansas had lost five of their last 12 coming into the tournament.

*"I told the guys I was tired of answering dadgum questions about second round losses."*

**Roy Williams**  
Kansas men's basketball coach

Now, the tide seems to have turned for Williams' team. Kansas dominated Syracuse, out-rebounding the Orangemen by a staggering 56-23 margin.

Williams entered the press room after the Sunday win and pulled a stuffed monkey out of a bag, claiming that the monkey was finally off his back.

The first two rounds found a barrage of upsets that hit more than just the Big 12. The Big East also has only one team left in the tournament.

The Pacific 10 leads the way with four teams left competing this weekend.

# Shoulder, throwing don't worry Crouch

**CROUCH** from page 10

leading rushing quarterback, said he believed he would need to be the leader of this year's offense, no matter if he was the lone skill position starter back.

"If I just be myself and be a leader out there, a lot of those things will fall into place," Crouch said.

Crouch said that, despite the injured shoulder, he had been honing his game to be the leader of NU's offense once again. Reading coverage and passing patterns and fine tuning his mechanics as far as footwork in the option and passing games are concerned are all things Crouch said he had worked on.

The quarterback's passing game has been a point of criticism from fans and media alike the past year. The less-than-eye-popping numbers may have been the result of his twice-repaired right shoulder.

"I don't know if he's been 100 percent since he's been here playing," Gill said. "Maybe early in his redshirt year."

*"The priority is to get Eric healthy as possible for our football team. So yes, we'd like to have him out here, but we know the best situation is get him healthy."*

**Turner Gill**  
NU quarterbacks coach

Last season Crouch completed 75-156 passes for 1,101 yards, but Nebraska's 110 yards per game in the air was the worst average it has put up since 1992, Tommie Frazier's freshman year.

Gill said no question resided in his mind about Crouch's passing potential. A "high 50 percent range completion percentage" is realistic, Gill said.

"He's an accurate passer, and he's done a tremendous job under the circumstances," Gill said.

# Knight, Texas Tech union all about selling tickets

**KNIGHT** from page 10

United Spirit Arena.

After all, Dickey wasn't a money maker. He doesn't have that Knight personality that seems to flicker interest within people.

Dickey choked back the tears and said, "I dunno. ... I just want the best situation for the kids."

Apparently, Tech officials think Bobby Knight is the answer, and he sort of is. Because even college sports

today are all about the dollar signs, and people are going to turn out in hopes of seeing Bobby throw a chair across the floor.

Here's a news flash. Bobby doesn't throw many chairs onto floors these days, and chances

are that he won't magically turn Tech into a winner. Bobby hasn't been a winner for a long time.

Only a jerk.

And in some sort of twisted way, to fill the seats, Bobby will land the Tech job just because of that.

# Spring football full of movement

**SPRING** from page 10

scrimmages, and you've got to make sure that you make the most of those. They understand that, and they'll do everything they can in 15 practices to try to certainly show their best."

Offensively, Solich said he wanted to stress technique, mental toughness and teamwork through repetition of drills.

On the defensive side of the ball, Bohl said that replacing Carlos Polk at middle linebacker and rover Joe Walker would be priorities for the Blackshirts.

"They are definitely positions we need to find starters at," Bohl said. "I thought we had a good effort and great athletes at those spots."

To remedy a defense that was prone to giving up untimely big plays last season, Bohl said he hoped to improve tackling this spring.

"At each position, we are doing some drills that are going to be specific (for tackling)," Bohl

*"Everyone that is out here is running our offense and our defense. They are all getting reps on our system, so that is how you can evaluate who's one, who's two, and who's three on the depth chart."*

**Frank Solich**  
NU football coach

said. "We won't be able to do some of those until we get into pads, but we have a whole battery of tackling drills."

Given good weather, the Huskers plan to continue working out in Memorial Stadium this week. The spring session ends on Saturday, April 14, with the annual Red-White Game.

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