

NU can almost feel the madness

By Larry Pritchett

Past PCHS activities director

This past week was a busy one.

It was loaded with basketball, so busy was also a fun type of busy. Like many weeks in a person's life, I hadn't really planned on it being like it was but in the end busy was fine.

I saw a lot of University of Nebraska men's basketball, some Creighton and KU basketball on TV, and some PCS basketball here at home. Most of the live games came from Thursday through Sunday and then throw a little snow and bad roads in there and you have a full week.

Thursday morning I drove to Lincoln to watch the Huskers play Penn State. Never did I ever think at the beginning of the season that the Penn State and the Husker game would be a very important game and maybe be a win that could help Nebraska get into a post-season tournament. But here it was and it was an important game for the Huskers, a must-win game.

The Huskers put a big lump on the Nittany Lions and sent them home. I watched the Huskers play great defense. They forced Penn State into rushed shots at the end of the shot clock and a couple of times watched as Penn State was still looking for a shot when the shot clock ran out.

I saw Walter Pitchford drain the first three-pointer for the Huskers to get them on the scoreboard.

I watched Shavon Shields score and rebound and Terran Petteway play like a possible All-Big Ten player should play.

After the game I stopped at one of the local watering holes and watched the Duke and North Carolina game. It was a good day.

Thankfully, I had gotten a room at the Troy Pritchett Comfort Inn where the rates are reasonable most of the time. My busy part started on Friday.

I had promised Coach Wells that I would run the clock for the high school game on Friday forgetting that I was going to Lincoln on Thursday. So, Friday I am back on the road to Grant for the Perkins County and Hershey game trying to remember 'just how does that clock running thing work?'

I got back in time to check on the clock at school and refresh my memory and then reported for the game.

The clock running went really well because Ross Kurkowski got there just in time and offered to get me off the hook and run the clock. That did take some stress off me at the time.

So now I got the high school side of things covered and Saturday morning, Marlene and I are on the road to Lincoln to get some visiting done with our boys, our daughter-in-law and the grandsons and the Huskers and Purdue game on Sunday afternoon.

Now each Nebraska game is noteworthy. They are in the NCAA talk. Not in the tournament yet, but almost able to control their own destiny.

Purdue hasn't had a great season, but they are usually well coached and they have talent. This game, like all that the Huskers have left, is a must-win game.

At first I had my doubts. Both teams couldn't hit the ocean if they were standing in a boat, but the Huskers started putting together little runs and then they got some separation and at one time had run the lead to 27.

Nebraska can play defense. They have people who can play well individually and they are molding into a pretty good team defensively. David Rivers does a great job on defense.

Saturday the smallest guy on the team, Benny Parker, created 5'8" of fury at times, plus he scored once and even if it was only two points, it gave the team a lift.

You realize that in college if a player is listed at 5'8 he is probably 5'6 but Parker plays hard.

The Huskers held the Boilermakers to 30.2 percent shooting from the field. It is the fifth straight team that Nebraska has held to under 40 percent shooting from the field.

Terran Petteway scored 29 points. He started slow and then picked up speed as the game progressed.

He got better as the game went along. He can hit from three, he is a good free throw shooter, he can slice to the basket AND he can play defense.

Petteway got help from Shavon Shields who had 18 points and 10 rebounds. That is a good day's work.

Walter Pitchford showed no ill effects from an injury that he got on Thursday and hit some big baskets.

It was another great crowd at the Pinnacle Bank Arena and again the Huskers defended the Vault. You can play the "If" game a little now, because the Huskers should have beaten Michigan at PBA, they lost to Northwestern after leading most of the way and then the loss at Penn State is hard to understand after coming off a couple of big wins.

The good thing is that all the games left are winnable. They have won five in a row and need to keep that streak alive.

The basketball week ended well. The drive home on Sunday was exciting also. Thanks to some great weather reporting from Grant by our local science teacher Deanne Bishop we had a good idea what we were coming home to.

From our reporters on the road, Doug and Janet Beck, who were ahead of us after being in Kearney, we had a heads-up where to look for snow packed roads, etc.

Last but certainly not least this week the wrestling season came to an end with the state tournament in Omaha. Perkins County wrestler Garrett Toner came home with a fifth place medal in the 138-pound weight class.

Congratulations to Garrett for his fine effort in Omaha.