

UNL swimmer trains hard for splash at Olympic trials

By Jeff Korbellek

For most people in Nebraska, the only chance to go swimming is in the summer. But for people like Emily Ricketts, a swimming pool serves as second home all year.

Ricketts is training for the 1984 Olympic trials at the end of June in Indianapolis, In. She will try for one of two spots on the U.S. team in both the 200 and 400-meter freestyle.

"I have about as good a chance as anybody else," the sophomore from California said.

Has it been her dream to compete in the Olympics?

"Yeah, it has, I think every athlete has it in the back of their mind if not in the front," Ricketts said.

Ricketts will be taking some impressive credentials to the trials after helping the Huskers to second-place in the Big Eight. She won the Big Eight 200 freestyle, finished second in the 1650 freestyle, fourth in the 500 freestyle and seventh in the 200 individual medley.

She didn't fair as well in the NCAA championships. She explained her loss as the result of a long taper (giving the body a chance to store energy). As a distance swimmer, she

said she doesn't need as much of a taper as she had before the NCAA tournament.

Ricketts is in post-season training with her other teammates. She and teammate Dana Powers, another qualifier, are working on a more intense training program consisting of weight-lifting and a lot of swimming.

After final exams, Ricketts will return to California and train with the Irvine Novaquatics, a club she has been associated with since the age of 12. Ricketts will be swimming for her club during the trials.

Ricketts has been swimming since he was 10 years old. When she graduated from high school, colleges and universities from all over the country recruited her, including UCLA.

"I like the program, the people I meet, and the support athletes get here," Ricketts said about Nebraska. "The people are a lot different and the pace is a lot different. At UCLA, you are just a number."

"In California, the competition is really great and the times are so fast," Ricketts said. "I may not have been able to swim my best events and get some competition."

Nebraska's women's swimming coach Ray Huppert said the level of competition in the Midwest is as good as anywhere else. He said the difference is in the number of good swimmers.

By competing in both California and Nebraska, Ricketts has been able to swim against most of her competition at one time or another.

Huppert said Ricketts' disadvantage in swimming in Nebraska right now is that she is unable to swim and train in a 50-meter facility.

"Right now we are getting her in a conditioning phase," he said. "She will have a month and a half to swim (in the proper facilities)."

"If I were to put odds on it, they would probably be a 100 to 1," Huppert said. "But every now and then those horses come in. The long shots have just as great a chance as everybody else."



Shorts

Nebraska's men's tennis team won its first Big Eight conference match of the season Wednesday and now looks to improve its 1-3 conference record this weekend against Kansas State and Kansas in Lincoln.

The Huskers whipped Iowa State in Ames Wednesday, 8-1.

No. 1 singles player Craig Johnson raised his season record to 10-9 with 6-3, 6-2 victory against Rick Ambrosini.

Ridge Smidt, Brian Edwards and Jim Carson also won singles matches for the Huskers. Smidt is now 13-8 and Carson is 12-8 for the season.

Kansas State enters the Friday match against the Huskers with a 3-13 record. The Wildcats are 0-3 in the Big Eight and have lost 9-0 to Colorado, Kansas and Oklahoma.

Kansas is 11-8 overall and 3-1 in the conference. The Jayhawks lost a narrow 5-4 decision to nationally fifth-ranked Wichita State this past week.

Junior captain Charles Stearns and Freshman Mike Wolf lead the Jayhawks. Stearns is 16-4 in singles play this season while Wolf is 16-3.

UNL's softball team, fresh off a double-header sweep of Kearney State Wednesday, will be in Manhattan, Kan., this weekend to play Oklaho-

ma State and Kansas State. The Huskers are tied for the league lead with Oklahoma State at 6.2.

*** Pole vaulter Glen

Loontjer leads Nebraska's track team in the Kansas relays in Lawrence Friday and Saturday. Loontjer will compete in the international pole vault Saturday afternoon.

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