

Sports

Huskers ready for Classic; will play Big Ten powers

By Rich Cooper
Staff Reporter

Nebraska's volleyball team will try to extend its winning streak to six games when it travels to Chicago for the Mid America Classic to take on Big Ten powerhouses Illinois and Purdue, Purdue.

The No. 10 Huskers are coming off a big week, Coach Terry Pettit said. The Huskers, 5-2, won their first Big Eight victory when they defeated the Kansas Jayhawks in Lawrence, Kan., on Tuesday night 15-6, 11-15, 15-5, 15-3.

Nebraska fell two spots in the latest Collegiate Volleyball Coaches Association poll, despite their 3-0 tournament

effort last weekend. In the National Collegiate Athletic Association poll, the Huskers were ranked No. 13.

This week's NCAA poll is the first this season.

In last weekend's action, the Huskers defeated Athletes In Action, a team that was previously undefeated. A.I.A. before they played the Huskers had defeated top-20 teams such as UCLA, Southern California and Cal-Poly. This weekend should be some of the stiffest competition the team has faced, Pettit said.

Purdue, which last season qualified for the NCAA playoffs, is 3-2 this year. The team has posted wins over Ball State, Notre Dame and Miami (Ohio); its two losses have been to Louisiana State and Texas Tech.

The Boilermakers are led this year by second-team All-Big Ten performer Linda Reichl and freshman Debbie McDonald. The two players are averaging 2.44 and 3.66 kills per game, respectively, and hitting .216 and .247. It will be the seventh time the Huskers and Boilermakers have met, with Purdue holding a 4-2 advantage.

The last time the two teams met was in the 1985 NCAA Midwest Regionals, which the Huskers won in four sets.

Illinois this year is the pre-season favorite to win the Big Ten Championship. The Illini are 8-1 and ranked No. 11 by the CVCA and No. 7 by the NCAA. Coach Mike Herbert's team made it to the semi-finals of the NCAA Midwest Regionals before losing to Southern California. The team finished with a 39-3 record.

This year the Illini are led by pre-season All-American Mary Eggers, who is averaging 2.60 kills per game and is hitting .345.

Pettit said another player that could give the Huskers some problems is freshman Bridget Boyle, who is averaging 2.14 kills per game and is hitting .429.

The Huskers lead the series against the Illini 4-0. Pettit said the key to winning both games will be controlling the tempo. The team has to pass the ball well and serve well if it is to win both games, he said.

Illinois is more balanced than Purdue and could give the Huskers more problems, Pettit said. Pettit said the defense of the Huskers has been good, and he hopes it will continue.

"The team has played a lot of important matches in front of large crowds, which gives us the advantage in experience," Pettit said.



Courtesy of Nebraska Sports Information

Hadley

NU softball team bounces back in spite of last year's setbacks

By Rich Cooper
Staff Reporter

After some bad luck at the end of last season, the Nebraska softball team will try to start its season on a positive note when it is host to the Nebraska Fall Classic this weekend at the Nebraska Softball Complex.

Last season, the Cornhuskers were penalized by the National Collegiate Athletic Association for violations. The NCAA told the Huskers that they couldn't play in the College World Series. In August, Coach Wayne Daigle resigned because of personal reasons.

New Coach Ron Wolforth, an assistant for Daigle last year, said this year's team is a lot better than last year's. Nebraska returns 15 lettermen from last season's Big Eight Championship team.

Wolforth said the team has adjusted well to the coaching change. He said the atmosphere is more relaxed, which means the team is having a good time playing softball.

"Last year we had some problems but it's a new year and we want to win the Big Eight Championship for a fourth time," Wolforth said.

See **SOFTBALL** on 8



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Karen Dahlgren (13) and Tish Delaney (1) warm up before last week's Nebraska Invitational. The Huskers won the tournament with a 3-0 record.

Rebuilding Illinois team has hopes for upset

By Rob White
Staff Reporter

Illinois football coach Mike White is taking a realistic approach to Saturday's game with the University of Nebraska.

"In reality, it doesn't look good," White said. "Nebraska is one of the top four or five teams in the country and has almost everybody back from last year. If you look at the facts, Nebraska has a better team than us in every area. We're hoping to see what a little intensity, emotion and pride can do."

The Fighting Illini sport a 1-1 record, the same mark they had before falling 52-25 to Nebraska last year. The similarity ends there, however, White said.

"We're in a good frame of mind this year," White said. "Last year we were trying to live up to your press clippings and we came to Lincoln shell-shocked."

Illinois opened last year with a disappointing loss to Southern California before a narrow victory over Southern Illinois.

"We went on on there (Lincoln) with our heads between our legs and got the tar beat out of us," White said.

Illinois' much heralded star of quarterback Jack Tynan, wide receiver David Williams and running back Thomas Brock has departed

and as a result, White has shifted gears with the offense, looking for more balance instead of previous seasons' pass-oriented attacks.

Despite the decreased emphasis on the pass, senior quarterback Shane Lamb has been a disappointment with his sub-par throwing in the first two games. He has completed 30 of 62 passes.

"We're dissatisfied that he's completed

'We're in a good frame of mind. We've weeded out a lot of (bad) attitudes.'

— White

under 60 percent of his passes, but he hasn't had any real competition for three years," White said. "We're happy with his leadership and the turnover situation, but we've had enough good quarterbacks here that we definitely expect to complete 50 percent."

While quarterback is a trouble spot for the Illinois offense, Nebraska signal-caller Steve Taylor poses the biggest threat for their defense.

"(USC quarterback) Rodney Peete played a great game against us and Taylor is better," White said.

Junior defensive end Scott Davis will lead the stop troops, who will be without the services of starting nose tackle Ron Bohm.

White dismissed 27 members of the Illini football team over the summer. He feels that the move has contributed to an improved team attitude.

"We're in a good frame of mind. We've weeded out a lot of (bad) attitudes," White said.

One of the pleasant surprises for the Fighting Illini this year has been walk-on freshman kicker Chris Striboski, who has made all six of his field goal attempts as well as three for three extra points.

"He's been unbelievable," White said. "He has excellent work habits, and a good mental outlook. He's been everything we could hope for."

Striboski replaced the Fighting Illini's all-time scoring leader Chris White, the coach's son.

"I'd like to think he had a pretty good tutor," Coach White said.

Salt and Stephen Pierce has been Illinois' leading rusher so far, carrying 13 passes for 177 yards in the first two games. Pierce

hauled in seven aerials for 51 yards in the Nebraska game a year ago.

Greg Turner and Lynn McClellan have led the rushing attack with 82 and 80 yards respectively.

The Illini opened the year with a 33-0 triumph over Louisville before last Saturday's 31-16 thumping by USC.

Despite the 15-point margin, White feels the Illini are in better shape than a year ago.

"We weren't beat physically as much as a year ago," White said. "We had opportunities to win the game. It helped our confidence to know we went out there and played pretty good, strong, physical football."

This will be Illinois' second straight tough non-conference matchup before their Big Ten conference opener at Ohio State. When asked during a teleconference call whether a tough non-conference schedule was an advantage, White said both methods of scheduling had their strong points.

"I like what we're doing," White said. "Because doggone it, that's what it's all about. It's a great challenge for our kids both emotionally and physically. But it's unfortunate because in the NFL, the first two, three or four games don't count. In college, those games can determine the outcome of a season, and that's a totally unfair."