



Super slugger Bob Munson . . . awaits first ball of the season

Baseball season begins next month

by Andy Riggs

Baseball season is still a month away. But the Huskers are preparing for the longest season they have known.

"We have a 44-game schedule this year and it will start with our annual southern swing," said Coach Tony Sharpe, now in his 27th year as the team's coach. "We'll play two games at Centenary, five at Louisiana Tech and wind up with four at Oral Roberts."

The southern teams will be at an advantage because of a weather factor, Sharpe said. They will have practiced outdoors longer than the Huskers, but Sharpe sees the trip as a help to the team.

"The boys have always enjoyed the trip south because it serves as a warm-up for conference play," he said.

The team will start the season with a young squad, having only one returning senior, outfielder Bob Munson, who was also last year's leading hitter.

Munson, 6-3, 190-pounds, batted .417 last year.

Also returning are lettermen Maury Damkroger at catcher, Jim Smith at third base, pitchers Ryan Kurosaki and Denny O'Doherty and all-Big Eight second baseman Sam Sharpe.

"We may be moving Sam to first base this year," his father, Coach Sharpe, said. "We will have a strong defensive infield this season. That is probably the strength of the team."

Regarding the conference race, Sharpe said he expects Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and Colorado to provide the most competition. He said he thinks the Huskers have a good chance at the title.

"Barring any injuries to the starters, we should be right up there," he said. "The only problem I can see is the lack of depth on the team."

"I'd like to win the conference championship and the kids would. All I'm going to say is that it is going to be damned tough to do," Sharpe said.

As soon as weather permits, the team will move out of the Fieldhouse and practice on the baseball field. The pitchers started practicing last week. The rest of the team began practice Monday, he said.

Practice consists of running laps, fielding practice, wind sprints and other drills for conditioning. Batting practice will begin later, Sharpe said.

Coaches sign 18 high school star recruits

Nebraska's football coaches made their bid to maintain football supremacy Tuesday when they signed 18 high school seniors to Big Eight letters of intent.

The players who signed the grants-in-aid letters to attend Big Eight schools, cannot attend any other school in the conference without losing eligibility. They still may sign national letters of intent to any school outside the Big Eight.

Fourteen of the players are from Nebraska high schools, including four from Lincoln. The Lincoln seniors were Mike Fultz of Lincoln High, Reg Gast and Joe Collura from East High, and Bruce Maske of Northeast.

Assistant coach Jerry Moore, a native Texan, signed two Texan high school stars who had been sought by several major universities.

Jason Justice and Jeff Rose, both of Lamarque, Texas, have decided to attend Nebraska after turning down offers from Oklahoma, Baylor and Texas Christian.

Justice is a 6-4, 254-pound fullback who also played linebacker while Rose 6-3, 215, played line for the Lamarque team.

Head coach Tom Osborne traveled to Ames, Iowa

to sign Ames High fullback King Block. Block is the son of former Husker assistant coach King Block who was on the Iowa State football staff last season.

Osborne then left for California where he has spent the last several years recruiting for Nebraska as an assistant under Bob Devaney.

Dan Miller, a 6-2, 225-pound lineman from Hebron, was the only Nebraska player signed outside the Lincoln and Omaha area.

Miller, who was signed by Sports Information Director Don Bryant, led Hebron to an 11-0 season and the Class C football title last fall.

All the players will have to make a final decision on April 3 when they will be asked to sign the national letter of intent.

Players signing and their hometowns were: Jason Justice, Lamarque, Tex.; Jeff Rose, Lamarque; Mike Fultz, Reg Gast, Bruce Maske and Joe Collura, all of Lincoln; King Block, Ames, Iowa; Marv Caperton, Las Vegas, Nev.; Mark Brock, Ed Burns, Tom Davis, Jack Kelley, Gary Herman, Steve Tangeman and Jim Wightman, all of Omaha; Dan Miller, Hebron; Dale Zabrocki, Bellevue and Jeff Carpenter, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

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