

Track team to defend Big Eight Championship

by Dave Sittler

Conference indoor track champion Nebraska will defend its title today in Kansas City in a contest that will crown Big Eight champions Saturday. Coach Frank Sevigne's thinclads enter the championships with an undefeated season, which included a win at the Michigan State Relays.

One Husker looking forward to the conference meet is sprinter Karl Webb.

Webb, who transferred to Nebraska this year from North Platte Junior College, won the national junior college sprint championships.

"I've been building myself up gradually for this meet, and I'm going to Kansas City to show a lot of people what Karl Webb can do," he said.

Heavily recruited by schools such as Arizona State, UCLA, Southern California and Texas after his brilliant junior college career, Webb says he is glad he picked Nebraska.

"Coming to Nebraska gave me a chance to work with Coach Sevigne, who I think is one of the best in the business," he said. "I was fortunate enough to have good coaching in high school and junior college and I knew if I came to Nebraska that trend would continue because of Sevigne," he said.

Webb said another reason he chose Nebraska was the interest the fans have in track.

Also in the Big Eight meet will be Dean Williams of Kansas State, a native of Omaha who competed against Webb many times during high school.

Williams has been waiting for another shot at the Husker star ever since Webb defeated him both the 100 and 220-yard dashes at the Nebraska State High School meet.

Webb said he isn't too concerned about the match-up with Williams or even how fast of time he runs, he just wants to win.

Webb, who was a member of last fall's Nebraska football team, plans to try it again next year. But he said he thinks his future may be with the new professional track circuit that started this year.

The Big Eight meet is foremost in Webb's mind at the moment and he said he hopes to play a big part in Nebraska's quest for the team championship.

Webb will have plenty of help from one of the strongest squads that Coach Frank Sevigne has fielded in 18 years at Nebraska.

Jim Hawkins is the only Cornhusker who won a championship at last year's meet, when he won the 1,000-yard run in 2:12.0

The senior from Omaha has already clocked a 2:10.5 this season.

Nebraska's Bob Unger and John Halberstadt of Oklahoma State are expected to produce one of the best races in the two-mile run if the Cowboy star has recovered from the flu.

Halberstadt, the defending champion, ran an 8:45 earlier. Unger, who set a Nebraska record at 8:47.6 two weeks ago, finished second to Halberstadt a year ago.

Sevigne figures that besides Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and Kansas State have a chance to win.

But Sevigne also concedes that his pre-meet analysis which downgrades his own unbeaten squad is based more on what has happened in the past than what may happen Friday and Saturday.

Preliminaries begin tonight, with the finals Saturday night at Kansas City Municipal Auditorium.

Cagers' game plan —stop K-State

Coach Joe Cipriano's basketball squad will try to prevent Kansas State from winning the Big Eight basketball title Saturday when it plays the Wildcats in Manhattan.

A Kansas State win would give Jack Hartman's club its second straight championship. The Wildcats have already assured themselves of at least a tie for the title. They have a 10-2 conference record with just two games remaining. Second place Missouri and Colorado both have 7-4 league marks.

Nebraska's record dropped to 4-7 in the conference and 9-14 overall, when it lost Tuesday night to Iowa State.

Cipriano's starting line-up is getting to be a bit like musical chairs, as he has used 11 players as

starts this season. Sophomore center Don Jackson is the only Cornhusker to start all 23 games.

Starting Saturday's regionally televised game, will be Tony Riehl and Ricky Marsh at guards, forwards Steve Erwin and Jerry Fort and Jackson.

That gives the Huskers a starting line-up of two freshmen, two sophomores and a senior. The line-up is possibly the youngest in Nebraska history.

The latest line-up changes were caused by the unexpected departure of Nebraska's second leading scorer, Lee Harris, who quit the squad Sunday.

"Lee came to our team as a walk-on, so I guess he has the right to walk-off," Cipriano said.

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Nebraska tennis coach Jim Porter currently is working with an 11-man squad. But he still won't turn down a tournament-caliber player if there are students who would like to try out.

"We started with 34 men last fall, and we've cut down to 11," Porter said. "However, we don't want to shut the door on someone, if he has had some tournament experience."

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