



Rugby Club to host two teams Saturday

Jim Cunningham sometimes wishes there were a few football fans in Nebraska.

"We saw a film about a New Zealand team and they had 76,000 people there and they all knew the team fight song," Cunningham said.

But when Cunningham and 14 other UNL students play football Saturday in Memorial Stadium most of the 76,000 seats will be empty. That's because they'll play English football—rugby.

UNL to be host

Cunningham is president of the UNL Rugby Club, which will host Creighton University and the Omaha Rugby Club in Memorial Stadium Saturday at noon.

He said the absence of large crowds does not hamper the fun of playing rugby, which has 15 players to a side.

"It's just in my blood. I love to play the game," he said. "The good thing about rugby is you go and play and then throw a party for the other team afterward."

The postgame party and camaraderie between the teams are traditions of English football that have survived in America, Cunningham said. "It's a tradition with the teams. It's your responsibility as the host team to throw the party and give them the royal service."

Great time

"It really is a great time," Cunningham said. "You go out on Saturday and knock each other's brains out, but then you are still good friends."

The Rugby Club includes a women's team as well as the 35-member men's team. There are 20 members on the women's team and, like the men, they have been practicing twice weekly in the north fieldhouse since mid-February.

The match Saturday will be the second for both teams. At the second annual Big 8 meet March 1 and 2 in Columbia, Mo., the women defeated Missouri, 4-0, and the men beat Kansas State, 4-0, both games on Saturday.

Nebraska, along with Iowa State and Oklahoma, withdrew from the tournament Sunday because of the field conditions.

"Everybody was so muddy you couldn't tell who was on which side except by the way they faced," Cunningham said. "Sunday, it was rock hard and it was cold and starting to snow."

Championship postponed

"We and Iowa State didn't want to play under the conditions and thought it could be postponed," he said. After the three teams had left Columbia, Cunningham said the two remaining teams, Kansas and Missouri, decided to postpone their "championship" match until there are better conditions.

Colorado and Oklahoma State didn't send teams to the tournament.

Cunningham said the playing date of the tournament probably will be changed for next year to avoid similar problems.

"We're for moving it later, sometime in April and starting the season with duals," he said.

In addition to the home meet Saturday, UNL will have home matches April 12 against the Kansas City Bulls and April 26 against the Kansas City River Quay.

sports

Qualifies for regionals

Gymnast's talent inherited

By Becky Morgan

Having a former Olympic gymnast as her mother hasn't prematurely pushed UNL regional qualifier Kathi Ruddick into gymnastic involvement.

"Gymnastic talent has always been in the family," she said. "Mom taught me handsprings and minor stunts when I was little but she didn't push me. I didn't really become seriously interested in gymnastics until I was in high school."

Ruddick's mother Sandy was a member of the 1956 U.S. Olympic Gymnastics Team.

An Omaha Westside graduate, Kathi Ruddick placed fourth in uneven parallel bar competition

at the state gymnastics meet her senior year.

Ruddick qualified in two events for the Association of Intercollegiate Athletes for Women (AIW) Midwest Gymnastic Regionals to be held this weekend in Ames, Iowa. She will perform in vaulting and bars.

Gymnastics coach Karen Balke said the regional tournament will involve 17 schools from North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and Minnesota.

In addition to Ruddick, UNL will have five other women gymnasts in regional competition. They are Anita Sasse in vaulting, Peg Van Beek in floor exercise, Peggy Newport in vaulting and beams and Carol Lundeen in floor exercise.

Gymnasts to challenge ISU in conference meet

By Scott Jones

Nebraska's gymnastics team won't just be along for the ride at the Big 8 Gymnastics Championships Friday and Saturday at Iowa State.

"This is the first year that we'll be in the driver's seat," Husker coach Francis Allen said.

"Iowa State in the past knew we were there, but we weren't really a threat to them. Last year if we had our best day we couldn't have beaten them."

Huskers improved

The last two meets show how much the Huskers have improved, Allen said. Nebraska, third in the Big 8 last year, beat national power Southern Illinois, 221.15-220.25 on Feb. 27 and Oklahoma, 221.70-210.55 on Feb. 22. Allen said the Huskers' score in the Oklahoma dual was the highest team score in the nation this year.

"I rather think they're a threat to us now," he said. "And I think that will be a tremendous psychological advantage to our guys knowing that we can beat them."

"This year man for man I think we're better than Iowa State."

The Cyclones have won the national championship the last two years. They will be competing at home in the Hilton Arena for the Big 8 meet, but Allen said their equipment is similar to that on which the Huskers practice.

Conference winners compete

Normally a team must win their conference championship before they can win the national title, Allen said. Conference champions from several conferences enter the national meet. All except three of the teams are then eliminated in preliminaries and these three teams compete for the national title.

But, Allen said, a team finishing second in its conference can still qualify for the national meet, this year at Terre Haute, Ind., April 3 to the 5. If one of the conference champions scores less than 400 points, the second-place team with the highest score replaces this team.

Allen said he thinks his 1973-74 team, which finished second in the conference, was slighted when Iowa was selected to compete in the national meet by this process.

Should the Huskers finish second this year, Allen said he would argue for a Nebraska invitation.

"I'm going to fight to get to the nationals because we can beat Iowa State. We're going to be in the running for the national title even if we get second," he said.

ISU 2, Huskers 1

Iowa State beat the Huskers twice in duals this year but Nebraska beat the Cyclones in one large invitational.

Allen said the Huskers have closed the gap on Iowa State by improving their optional routines, which are

performed in dual meets, while remaining superior to the Cyclones in the compulsory routines.

"If we're ahead after the compulsories we'll win, I'm sure," he said. "If we're behind after the compulsories it'll be close."

Seniors Pete Studenski and Jim Unger will have their last chance to place in the top three and thus qualify for the national meet.

Studenski missed third place in the still rings last year by .005 of a point, and Unger has finished fourth in the horizontal bar, sixth in the floor exercise and ninth in the vault the last two years.

Parts of the competition will be videotaped by the Nebraska Educational Television Network for a special broadcast on March 23 at 4:30 p.m.

sports shorts

Lincoln will be invaded today by fans watching the Nebraska State High School Basketball tourney, Friday and Saturday.

Games will be played at the Coliseum (Class A), Pershing Auditorium (Class B), Johnson Gym (Class C) and Lincoln East (Class D). Times for today's games will be noon, 2, 7 and 9 p.m.

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- SAUSAGE & EGG
- STEAK & EGG
- PEPPERONI & EGG
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