

Youth, experience are keys

By Pete Wegman

An unusual combination of youth and experience will be the key to UNL's success in the Big 8 Conference wrestling meet today and Saturday in Ames, Iowa.

Three freshmen—Jim Calvert, 167 lbs.; Steve Hill, 150 lbs. and Court Vining, 142 lbs.—will be the youngsters on the squad.

The experience comes from juniors Bruce Conger, heavyweight and Bill Hoffman, 177 lbs. and senior co-captains Tony Jennings, 134 lbs. and Bob Johnson, 190 lbs.

Head wrestling coach Orval Borgialli said Conger, Hoffman, Jennings and Johnson all have "excellent shots at titles" in the meet.

However, it may be the wrestlers who did not make the team for the meet who have the biggest influence.

"The guys on the sidelines are really pushing us," Jennings said. "They won't let us quit. I think this is the best condition we've been in going into the Big 8 since I've been here."

Unlike previous years when Borgialli had to push the wrestlers to do their daily running, Johnson said, team members are taking the initiative this year.

"My freshman year we had to get up every morning to run. When it came to working out, the team was a bunch of clowns," Johnson said.

The co-captains agreed that the freshman were instrumental for the success of UNL's wrestling squad this season.

"The freshman are really pulling us along. Usually a freshman kind of dies at the end of the year," Jennings said. "These guys have really surprised me."

The Huskers, who enter the meet with a 6-6 dual mark, have not won the conference meet since 1949. The Huskers are unlikely to finish on the top this year, according to Borgialli.

"You have to be realistic," he said. "In all honesty, we'll be battling to get in the top division," which means fourth, behind Iowa State University (ISU), Oklahoma State University (OSU) and the University of Oklahoma (OU).

Borgialli predicted OU to win the meet, with ISU and OSU close behind.

"They (ISU, OSU and OU) have the overall depth we just don't have. They can put two guys on the mat to one for us."

Borgialli said for the Huskers to break into the top three, the team needs "three or four firsts and two or three second places."

The Huskers will be trying to qualify at least four wrestlers for the national meet. The first three finishers in each weight class and six of the ten fourth place finishers will be invited to Tuscon for the NCAA national meet March 11 through 13.

Huskers play Cowboys Saturday

The Huskers host the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Cowboys Saturday in the Coliseum in the Big 8 Conference televised game of the week.

A National Invitational Tournament (NIT) bid is possible if the Huskers win their three remaining Big 8 basketball games to finish 19-8, according to Husker coach Joe Cipriano.

The Huskers, now 7-4 in the Big 8 and 16-8 overall, will try to end a two-game losing streak which dropped them to third place in the conference. The Cowboys, 4-7 in the Big 8 and 10-13 overall, will enter the game with a two-game winning streak, their latest a 77-65 win

over the University of Oklahoma last Saturday.

Leading the Cowboys will be junior guard Ronnie Daniel, averaging 15.8 points a game. Forwards Lafayette Threatt and Eli Johnson are averaging 8.4 and 9.6 points, respectively.

The game will be screened on KMTV and KHAS and radio broadcasts will be on KFAB, KFOR, KLIN and KRNU-FM.

Coliseum doors will open at 9 a.m. for a women's basketball game between UNL and the Sportsmen of Ankeny, currently ranked fifth nationally by the AAU. Both games require separate tickets and the women's game starts at 10 a.m. The Coliseum will open at 11:30 a.m. for the varsity game.

on record | Pro sports in Nebraska? Chances are slim and none

By Larry Stunkel

The chances of Nebraska getting a major professional sports team are nil.

That's the conclusion one comes to by considering the facts.

First of all, we have seen the success (or lack of) the Omaha Knights hockey team and the Kansas City-Omaha Kings basketball team had.

Both teams left Omaha after struggling through last season, although the Kings are making six appearances in Omaha this year.

The Omaha Royals minor league baseball team also has had a hard time making it financially.

So, the track record alone might indicate professional sports can't make it in Nebraska.

But why? One looks at UNL football and sees that the Huskers could put more than 76,000 people in Memorial Stadium if the tickets were available.

One also must remember the evolution of Nebraska football, the gradual expansion of the stadium and the status symbol that often accompanies a season ticket.

If Memorial Stadium's seating capacity had been expanded to 76,000 in 1965, there's a good chance it never would have been filled.

The Atlanta-Baltimore pro football exhibition game last fall showed Nebraska can get a respectable pre-season crowd, but the 35,000 attendance figure would not make it during the regular National Football League (NFL) season.

Part of Omaha's problem has been insufficient seating, poor playing conditions and insufficient lodging.

Civic Auditorium in Omaha holds about 8,000 people, and Rosenblatt Stadium has a capacity of 13,000.

The only alternative is UNL with Memorial Stadium and the 15,000-seat sports complex. But Lincoln is relatively isolated, with most major Nebraska cities at least an hour away.

The combined Lincoln-Omaha metropolitan area may not have an adequate population base for pro sports. One sees that Kansas City has had problems supporting the American League baseball Royals, the Chiefs in football and recently the Scouts, a professional hockey team.

Nebraskans may enthusiastically attend a game once a week for a season, but how would attendance be for more frequent games?

In football, where one game a week is played, would Nebraskans want to attend a UNL game on Saturday, then spend the money to stay around Sunday for a pro game?

Obtaining a pro team also is not that easy.

According to Jim Heffernan, director of information for the National Football Conference of the NFL, the League researched its recent expansion cities of Seattle and Tampa for two years.

Heffernan also said the NFL receives numerous invitations from city officials to expand into their city. The NFL now is considering Memphis, Tenn., and Birmingham, Ala., for expansion within the next five years, he said.

Heffernan said the NFL considers stadium size (at least 50,000), the population of the area and whether there is sufficient financial backing when determining pro sites. The amount of money an owner needs to invest varies, Heffernan said, adding that owners of the Seattle and Tampa franchises each paid \$16 million.

The "Golden Age" of pro sports is declining and it appears Nebraska missed the boat.

Time trials test swimmers today

UNL women swimmers in six events will try to qualify for the national meet in certified time trials ending today at the Women's Physical Education Bldg.

Two events daily are being timed in the trials, which started Wednesday after Grinnell College cancelled a meet with UNL scheduled for tonight.

"They wouldn't have been a strong team (Grinnell) but they would have been competition," said women's coach Pat Sullivan. "We were very disappointed." Sunday is the final qualifying date for nationals.

Swimmers attempting to qualify are Ellen Hollander, Omaha freshman, and Ruth Spencer, Omaha senior, in the 50-, 100- and 200-yard breaststroke; Deb Petersen, Omaha junior, in the 50-yard backstroke and the 200- and 400-yard medley relays.

Spencer (a nationals qualifier for the last two years in the 50-yard breaststroke) and Hollander are within .3 second of qualifying in the 50. Both were timed at 33.6 in Wednesday's time trials. Swimmers failed to qualify Wednesday in the 200-yard medley relay, but another 200 trial was Thursday and another 50 trial is today.

The 100-yard breaststroke trial was timed Thursday and the second 50- and the 200-yard breaststroke trial plus the time trial in the 400-yard medley relay is today.

Hollander and Spencer finished first and second, respectively, in all three breaststroke events at the Big 8 Conference meet last weekend, but failed to better the qualifying times for the national meet March 18 through 20 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Divers Nancy Dykes, Omaha senior; Lois Hayman, Lincoln freshman, and Kristi Wells, Omaha freshman, already have qualified for nationals.

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