

one at a time | Scholarship 'drifters' sour UNL's recruiting ventures

By Jim Zalewski

Anyone who witnessed one of the Nebraska State Basketball Tournament games in UNL's new sports center had to be impressed with the building's physical structure. It is truly a fine place to watch a basketball game, even though incomplete. Now the question remains: will Nebraska be able to field teams worthy of its new show-place?

Bob Siegel, Allen Holder, Rickey Harris, Brian Banks and Carl McPipe will return to form a solid nucleus for next year's UNL basketball squad. Holder, Banks and McPipe were recruited last year, proof of what good recruiting can do for a team in one year.

But the overall recruiting picture of the last four years has been inconsistent. The Huskers may lead the Big 8 Conference in basketball scholarships given to players who leave UNL in two years or less. At times, it seems as though the lookout on the Titanic did a better job of scouting.

Jerry Fort was a "sleeper" in high school who became one of the Big 8's better guards. Good job here. Larry Cox was a small center who adapted to assistant Husker coach Moe Iba's style of defense, playing more on hustle and desire than raw talent. A good job of character analysis.

Easy come, easy go

But recall the list of those who stopped by the court for a brief hello, shot some baskets in a few games and quickly rode off into the sunset; Mark Enright, Ernie Martin, Ron Taylor, Gary Fitzsimmons, Alan Bluman, Jim Goodrich, Ricky Marsh. The list reads on like a veritable used car lot of scholarship cagers.

And what about those who got away? Dave Weseley and John Johnson, the top two high school players in the state last year, both ended up at Creighton University and played extensively. Coach Joe Cipriano told me he didn't believe there were any Omaha area players last year who could play for UNL; hence no Weseley or Johnson.

The University of Colorado's leading player is Omaha native Larry Vaculik. He is joined by Omaha Central grad Clayton Bullard. Going back a few years, Drake University was paced by Omaha centers Larry Seger and Andy Graham. Omaha Central grad Lindberg White played for Kansas State University.

Maybe some players who came and left had attitude problems. I don't blame a coach for exercising discipline on his squad. But the player's background and attitude should have been researched while he was in high school to avoid wasting a scholarship.

Slipping out the back door

Admittedly, Nebraska is not a largely populated state, and the recruiters must be successful out-of-state if the team is to be competitive. But players are growing up here at home, too, and they're seemingly walking out the back door, avoiding UNL.

"The Omaha area and the state hasn't produced a lot of college basketball players," Cipriano said. "We are out getting the people we think can play for us."

Nebraska certainly is not a University of Indiana or Illinois as far as high school basketball goes. But what good does it do to sign an out-of-state phenom when he's only here long enough to repack his suitcase and head

sports shorts

UNL's bowling team won the Big 8 Conference tournament March 11 through 13 at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. The Huskers finished the nine-set tournament with a 15-3 record and a total pinfall of 18,056. University of Missouri and Kansas State University took second and third, respectively.

Ray Koziol, the tournament's top male bowler, led the Huskers with a 198 average for 18 games. Koziol and Pat Masters (190 average) were named to the conference All-Star team. Other UNL team members were Larry Meierdierks, Louis Rautenberg and Jim Krebs, who was hampered by a pulled thumb muscle.

In women's competition, UNL finished fourth. Debbie Bertrand led the Huskers, bowling the fourth highest set (408) and single game (228). Other Husker bowlers were Sue Frederick, Randi Brehm, Eileen Pazderka and Deb Holland.

The men's team also won the regular season championship by four games over Iowa State University. Krebs paced the Huskers with a regular-season average of 211 for 51 games.

UNL's soccer team shut out the University of Nebraska at Omaha 3-0 Sunday in Memorial Stadium. Dave Egr scored two goals and Victor Sangoyele added another on a penalty shot for the Huskers.

Entries for men's, women's and co-recreational intramural softball are due by 5 p.m. today at the Recreation Office, 1740 Vine St. The \$5 entry fee for each team also is due today. For more information, contact Gale Wiedow, intramural coordinator, at 472-3467.

Two positions remain for the backpacking trip to Utah's Escalante Canyon during spring break. Cost is \$75 for the March 19 through 28 trip. For more information, contact Mark Ebel, recreation coordinator, at 472-3467.

home?

The new sports center should greatly aid recruiting. I hope the coaches use it wisely and have a banner recruiting year. I can sense more Nebraskans becoming interested in basketball because of the center. You don't have to land all the big fish in the sea, coach Cip, but at least make sure the ones who sign know this is a four-year institution, not a temporary stop on a Midwestern bus tour.

So I took the gas on my high school picks. Conde Sargent didn't fare so well either. I hit 11 of 16 in college games for roughly 69 per cent. How was I to know that Phil Ford and Bernard King, bona fide All-Americans, wouldn't play for their teams? Three of my regional choices still are alive, and I'll stick with Marquette University for the title.

Husker hopes are high-literally

By Dennis Onnen

Nebraska's hopes in the national women's swim meet Thursday through Saturday won't rest with any swimmers.

Rather, hopes will rest with the team's three divers, the only three Huskers to qualify for the meet at Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Coach Pat Sullivan said she expects all three—freshmen Kristi Wells and Lois Hayman of Lincoln East High School and senior Nancy Dykes of Omaha—to make the first cut. She said she has even higher hopes for Wells.

"Kristi should place in the top 10 (of about 60 entered)," Sullivan said. "At least that's what we're hoping for."

Wells was champion in the three-meter diving in last month's Big 8 Conference meet and took second in the one-meter event. She was undefeated in duals this year and last year was state high school champion.

Hayman, fifth in the Big 8 on both the one-meter and three-meter boards, recorded her highest three-meter score at an AAU meet last weekend. Hayman said she and Wells have been diving together about five years, beginning with Lincoln Swim Club competition.

Wells said she has noticed few differences between high school and college diving.

"You feel you've taken a step upward," she said. "You feel more pressure to do good for the team—at least that's the way it is here at Nebraska."

She said she doesn't particularly prefer one diving event over the other, although she said a person has less time to make corrections on the low board.

"On the high board, if you do something wrong at the beginning of the dive, you have more time to correct it," she said.

To prepare for the national meet, she said, the divers have watched films of themselves and of other divers at last year's national meet.

Those films were taken by diving coach Rick Kincade, who himself was a diver at Yale University. He has a sister, Ginny, who dived for UNL before being graduated last year, and another sister, Susie, who will dive in the national meet for UCLA.

"He's (Kincade) helped us more than I've ever been helped in diving before," Wells said. "He helps get you in the right frame of mind."

She said all divers at the national meet have dives with about the same degree of difficulty, so the quality of those dives is emphasized. Her most difficult dive is a back two-and-one-half off the three-meter board, which rates 2.8 on the 3.0 scale of difficulty.

To qualify for the national meet, Wells said a diver

nebraskan sports

must execute six optional dives with a total rating of at least 13.2.

"Because the degree of difficulty is so high, you get good quality divers at the national meet," she said.

What does she know about the other divers and her chances of placing high at Ft. Lauderdale?

"I don't have any idea," she said.

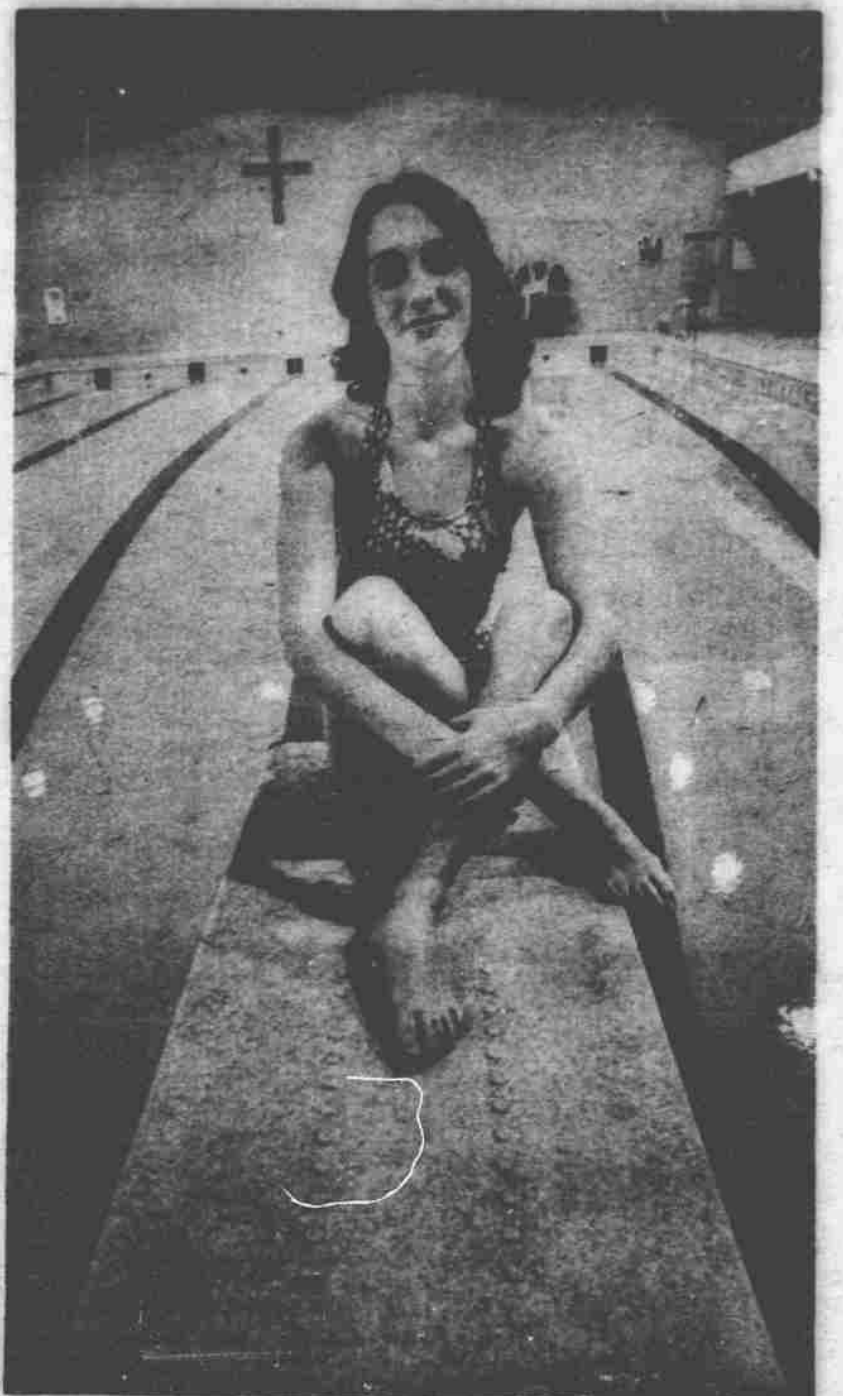


Photo by Kevin Higley

Husker freshman diver Kristi Wells

husker galaxy | All-American relay team suddenly 'fell into place'

UNL track coach Frank Sevigne hopes to maintain the momentum of the Husker distance medley relay as his team prepares for the outdoor season.

The distance medley team—composed of freshmen Ray Mahoney in the quarter-mile and Ron Fisher in the half-mile, junior Matt Reckmeyer in the three-quarter mile and sophomore Harold Stelzer in the mile—finished fifth in last weekend's NCAA indoor track meet. The relay members, Husker athletes of the week, clocked a time of 9:55.76 at Detroit's Cobo Arena.

"I am very pleased with their time," Sevigne said. "As we go outdoors, we will try to pick places for them to run where they can win. We might place them in the two-mile relay or the spring medley; it just depends on the opposition," he said.

The distance medley team didn't have much experience in the event before the national meet. The only meet in which they had run it was the Michigan State Relays, where they qualified for the NCAA meet with a time of 9:50.7.

Sevigne said the difference in time, almost five seconds slower at the NCAA meet, was caused by a difference in track surfaces.

At Michigan State, the Huskers ran on an eight-laps-to-a-mile track with a tartan surface, while Cobo Arena has an 11-lap wooden track, which he said usually is slower.

"I was more nervous for the Big 8 (Conference) meet than I was for nationals," Fisher said. "In the Big 8 meet I was running the open half, but when I got into the national meet I wasn't nervous at all."

Fisher, an Ottawa, Canada, native, said the NCAA meet was well-run and that competitors were able to see many athletes they had only read about.

He said a distance medley functions not only as individuals, but also as a team—if one runner lets down, the whole team lets down.

Reckmeyer, from Mt. Morris, Ill., said the quarter- and half-miles don't really win or lose the race for a distance medley team. The first two legs comprise less than one-third of the whole race, and the pressure actually falls on the anchor man, he said.

By finishing in the top five in the national meet, the Husker runners earned All-American honors.

"It feels great to have All-American status," Reckmeyer said. "It really came as a shock. It came all of a sudden. We went to Michigan State just hoping to do well, and it all fell into place."

Other nominees for Husker athlete of the week were: senior wrestler Bob Johnson, Gordon; sophomore gymnast Kathi Ruddick, Omaha; and sophomore trackster Cindy Dixon, Utica.