

World-record holder to run in women's Big 8 meet

By Rick Huls

World-record holder Mary Decker will highlight the third women's Big Eight Indoor Track and Field Championships Sunday at the Sports Complex.

Decker, from Colorado University, will compete in the mile and the 880-yard run. She holds the world record in the 1,000 meter race at 2:23.8 and has the world's fastest time this year in the 1,500 meters race at 4:13.4.

Decker will warm up for Sunday's meet by attempting to gain the 880-yard world record today in the San Diego Jack-In-The-Box Games.

Joining Decker in the distance events will be Karen Bridges of Oklahoma State University, Debbie Vetter of Iowa State University, and Donna Fox of UNL.

Bridges, who specializes in the two-

mile race, finished sixth last year in the AIAW (Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women) national cross country championships.

ISU's Vetter, a 10th place finisher in the AIAW national cross country meet, will run in the 880-yard and 1,000-yard events.

Fox, who last week ran a 2:13.5 in the 880, will compete only in the 1,000-yard run. Fox has won five of six races this year.

Kansas State University will have the favorite in the 440-yard dash with freshman Freda Hancock. The Pueblo, Col. product ran a school record 56.6 second time last weekend at Oklahoma City for the best time for any Big Eight performer this season.

KSU also boasts the best time of any Big Eight foursome in the mile relay. The 3:56.94 time the Wildcats posted in the season-opening Sooner Relays will be tested by strong relay teams from CU,

ISU and UNL.

UNL coach Carol Frost said Sunday's meet should be excellent although defending champion Iowa State is again the clear cut favorite to win the title. KSU won the first gathering of Big Eight schools two years ago.

"A real battle should be fought for second place," Frost said. "Colorado, Kansas State, Kansas and Nebraska are all very close in strength."

If UNL scores 70 points or more, Frost said second place is within reach.

"We're hoping to score in the top three in four events," Frost added. "We need a couple of high finishes to challenge for second place."

UNL already has defeated KU and CU this year, but Colorado was performing without Decker who was injured.

Hurdler Nancy Kindig is the only injured player on the UNL team. The Hastings St. Cecilia graduate is still having leg problems from the broken leg she suffered at the girl's state track meet last year.

Despite her injury, Kindig has the conference's best time of 8.15 seconds in the 60-yard hurdles. Challenging Kindig will be two-time defending champion MarJean Nielsen of ISU.

Pacing UNL in the sprints will be Cindy Tatum, who has won the 60-yard and 300-yard dashes in two of three meets. Tatum will face the defending conference champion in both events, Sheila Calmese of KU. Calmese is the only runner to defeat Tatum this year.

Other outstanding performers will be Cecil Hansen of OSU, who has heaved the shot over 50 feet for a national record in her native Norway, Shawn Corwin of KU who has cleared 5-feet-6-inches in the high jump, and Patti Gleason of UNL who has jumped 5-feet-4-inches.

The UNL mens track team will also compete this weekend as they host Oklahoma State, Colorado State and Wichita State universities Saturday at the Sports Complex.

The men will be warming up for next week's Big Eight Championships at the Sports Complex. Several Huskers already have qualified for the NCAA championships which will be in Detroit, Mich. on Mar. 10-11.

Freshman Everad Samuels has qualified in the 60-yard dash, sophomore Scott Poehling in the 660-yard run and junior Jeff Lee in the high hurdles. The mile and two-mile relay teams also have qualified for nationals.

sports

Campus buried under barrage of medal-heavy letter jackets

Anyone who has been on the UNL campus for more than a year should know it's time to begin bracing oneself for the invasion again.

Late February to mid-March are dreaded times for anyone seriously pursuing an education at UNL. The population on campus swells as thousands of high school athletes and fans (albeit mostly adoring parents) come to Lincoln for the state wrestling and basketball championships.

jim kay / mike mccarthy

You'll know when it's state tournament time in Lincoln. People from exotic sounding palces like Lodgepole and Venango wander about campus ("Look at the tall building, Ma!") with names like Winnie and Chipper stitched onto their letter jackets.

And those medals.

Hundreds of shiny little medals hanging from letter jackets. Lower East Platte Valley Conference Runners-Up, they proclaim.

The state high school wrestling championships began today at the Sports Complex.

Shortly after the conclusion of Wednesday night's UNL-University of Oklahoma basketball game, the wrestling mats were rolled out in preparation for 1,200 matches over the next three days. That's right, 1,200.

Now that's 768 wrestlers, with four family members and a small entourage of probably 30 to 40 town cheerleaders which raises the city's population by roughly 8,500 people (if you'll pardon our math).

Actually, it's not all that bad if you don't mind sharing your bar stool with a 17 year old with a fake ID.

And the money these people bring with them to throw about town probably has the Chamber of Commerce doing cartwheels. Not to mention UNL's Athletic Department which will rake in a lot of bucks on the stale popcorn and bland hot dogs in concessions.

After the wrestling championships conclude on Saturday, campus will enjoy a brief respite until the girl's state basketball championships begin next Thursday. Then in another week all will return for the boy's state basketball championships.

We can see it all now. Wading through three feet of snow to reach some class you don't want to go to anyway. All of a sudden hundreds of thundering footsteps roar down upon you and splat into a nearby snowbank. Your books are scattered in countless directions.

A pimply faced kid with a crew cut peers down at you.

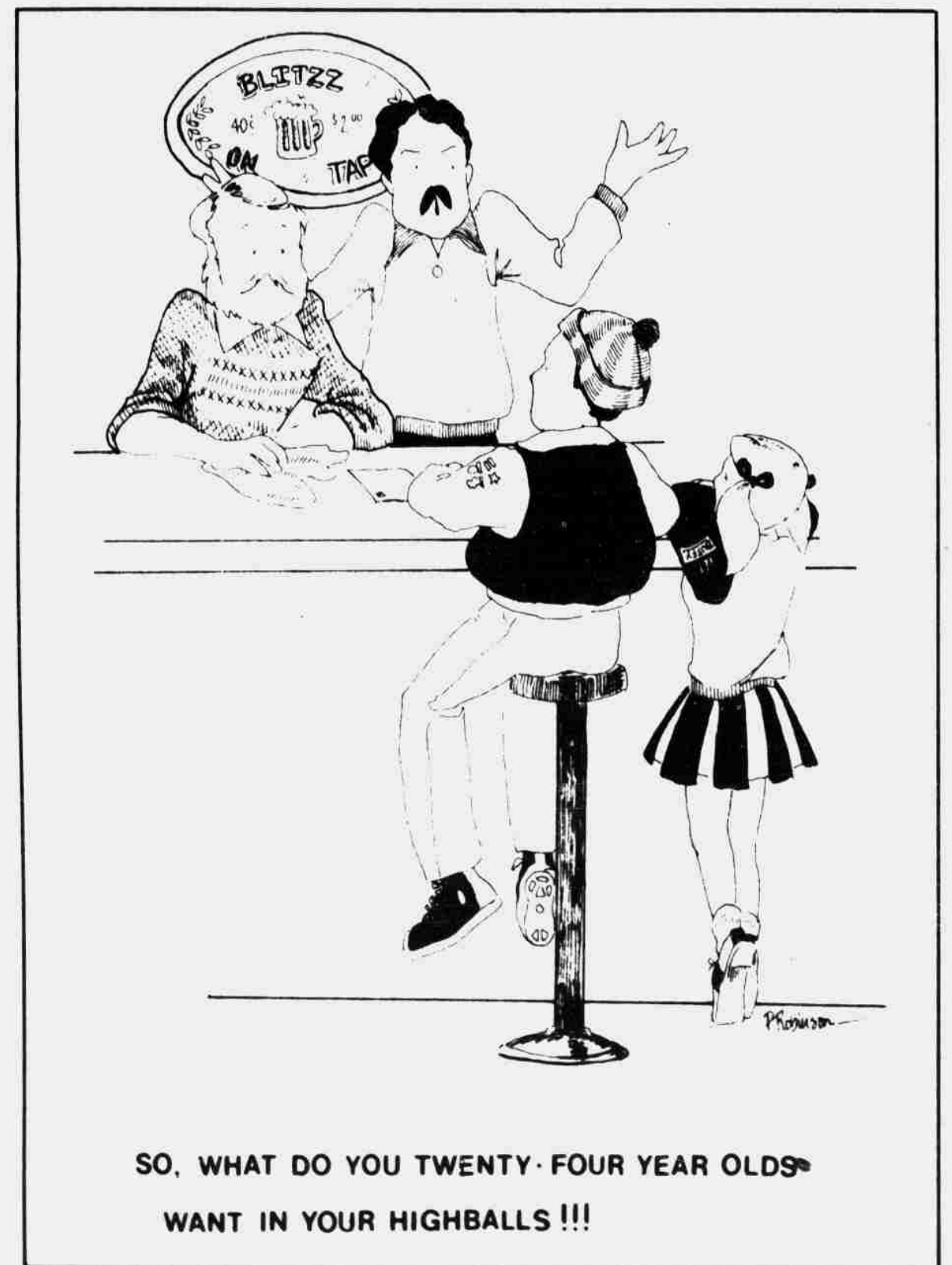
"Hey man," he says. "Where's the K-Mart at?"

"Huh?"

"You know, K-Mart. Blue light specials and all that. Where's it at?"

You point at Oldfather Hall and they all thunder off in pursuit of 79-cent T-shirts.

At least we know spring is not far around the corner.



Women gymnasts hoping for weekend Big 8 championship

By Mary Ryan

The UNL women gymnasts are hoping to equal their top score of the season this weekend and walk away with the Big Eight championship.

The gymnasts will face the Big Eight schools' top gymnasts at 7 p.m. today at the NU Coliseum.

Coach Judy Schalk said the Huskers have the opportunity to nab the Big Eight title if they top their season high of 135.90 recorded against Wichita State two weeks ago.

UNL's strongest competition will be from Colorado University and Iowa State University, Schalk said.

"I don't know what CU is doing," she said. "I haven't seen their individual scores. It is kind of upsetting, we are going in there blind."

Colorado has a former Olympian on

its team, Debbie Wilcox.

"Her season high is 38.2 which averages out to 9.55 for each event," Schalk said. "She is definitely out-distancing everyone else in the conference and will be tough."

"But, it takes four scores (per event) and one person can't do it alone."

Schalk said she did not expect any trouble from ISU, the defending conference champion.

"The last time we met ISU it was a disaster," Schalk said. "We had injuries and all the other meets where we would have competed against ISU at the (Rocky Mountain Open and Windy City Invitational) they didn't make it to the competition so we have not met them with a full team this year."

Hopefully, UNL will have a full team for the meet, but that is still in doubt, Schalk said.

Patty Carmichael, sophomore all-arounder, is recovering from an ankle injury received before the ISU meet. "I am hoping she can go all-around, but we won't know until the day of the meet," Schalk said.

Carmichael, the best all-arounder on the team, will compete in the floor exercise, Schalk said, but she is doubtful in the vault.

To win the meet, UNL will have to perform well in the balance beam and be consistent in other events, Schalk said. They have been averaging one fall a person in the beam, which costs a total of two points of the score. A half a point is assessed for each fall.

"Vaulting is the strongest," Schalk said. "Even though we have not always proven it, we are strong in it. But we need the fourth score (Carmichael). With her, we have a super vaulting team."

Hosting the meet at the Coliseum

should help, the Huskers, she said.

"The hometown crowd, our own equipment, no hassles adjusting to a new environment, the support of the Booster Club and the men's team are great factors psychologically for the team, I think."

Schalk said she thinks the team is excited about the meet, although the gymnasts may feel they need more time to train.

"You never feel ready for a big meet," she added.

UNL all-arounders will include freshmen Jeanne Concannon and Katie Vogel, sophomore Crissy Robertson, junior Peggy Liddick and senior Sandy Czaplowski and possibly Carmichael.

The preliminaries begin Friday when team all-around titles will be determined. The top eight competitors in each event will vie for the top individual honors Saturday.