

sports

Weight room Huskers 'never a really out of shape'

By Sara Martens

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles on winter condition of the Nebraska football team. The drills are winding down now with spring practice scheduled to begin the first week in April.

It will be six months before a mob of red-clad fans once again fill Memorial Stadium to watch Nebraska football, but the team that takes the field in the Sept. 15 season opener is already filling the weight room and track in preparation.

Prospective Huskers have been involved in winter conditioning since the beginning of February, under the direction of head trainer George Sullivan and strength coach Boyd Epley.

Winter condition is part of the year round conditioning program designed to keep athletes in shape.

"Players are never really out of shape," Epley said. "We are building a new level of conditioned athletes who are not always having to get back into shape."

The program, comprising quickness, strength and endurance drills, puts Nebraska a step ahead of others when it comes to conditioning, Sullivan said.

Conditioning speeds adaptation

Players suffer fewer injuries, have better muscle tone and are able to move into regular practice quicker with the use of winter conditioning, he said.

Sullivan said winter conditioning was established in 1968 after the Huskers had experienced two 6-4 seasons, and did not seem ready for spring ball.

A strength program was added to drills for quickness and endurance, forming the basis for the current program.

The workouts begin with a six-week winter program in which each athlete is tested twice for upper body strength in the bench press, upper body explosiveness in the power clean and lower body strength and explosiveness in the leg sled and the vertical jump. Players also are timed in the one and a half mile run and the 40-yard

dash to determine endurance and speed.

When not being tested, an athlete is working on agility and mobility drills, running, lifting weights or competing in a 22 game racquetball tournament, Epley said.

Adjustable emphasis

The emphasis placed on each station is adjusted to the weight and strength gains each player needs to make.

Backs and players wanting to gain less than 10 pounds are placed in the circuit program, while young players, who need to gain weight and strength, are placed on the heavy program. Players with injuries or special problems workout on a contract basis through agreements with the coaches.

The number of players involved in winter conditioning has increased from 180 to 270 in only one year. This has forced Epley to run two 40 minute sessions daily

to accommodate the large number.

Epley said the increase is due to the large number of participating walk-ons.

"Nebraska has a tradition for giving the walk-on player a chance," he said. "If he wants to walk into spring training, he needs to take conditioning. There are a lot of young men working hard to earn a role on the team."

Winter conditioning is administered through the physical education department but is mainly a course taught for varsity athletes, according to James O'Hanlin, dean of the physical education department.

Strength emphasized

Winter conditioning uses two weight rooms, one in the north fieldhouse emphasizing overall strength development and the circuit weight training room in the south stadium to maintain muscle strength.

"Nebraska has a reputation as having

the best facility in the nation, including pro ball," Epley said. "One of the reasons for this reputation is the organized and orderly atmosphere."

The equipment in the rooms is organized by body parts to make training easier. The Nebraska training program, developed over the years by Epley has been the model for programs throughout the country.

"People from all over have stolen this program," Epley said. "It disturbs me on one hand that they would copy it word for word and say it is theirs. But if they can't come up with one of their own, then they are a step or two behind us. What they see printed is what we used to do."

"Anyone can have a training room and a set of weights," he said. "The attitude, tradition and motivation here, added to the supervision, is what allows us to make the maximum gains."



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Cornhusker football players participate in a winter conditioning program designed to strengthen their leg muscles.

Tournament matches Lady Huskers, 3-time KU victors

For the first time ever a Nebraska women's basketball team will compete in the AIAW regional playoffs, when the members travel to Minneapolis, Minn. Saturday.

This year's 23-12 team takes an all-time Nebraska school record into regional cage action. The 23-win record is the best by a Nebraska men's or women's team.

The opening round in Minnesota will feature top seeded Missouri against the University of South Dakota, UNL against 4th seeded Kansas, Drake facing Central Missouri State and the University of Minnesota will take on Kansas State.

The Nebraska women already have faced Kansas three times and were defeated. But the prospect of facing the team that Big Eight leading scorer Lynette Woodard paces does not seem to have them overly worried.

Head Coach Lorrie Gallagher is confident that the KU team will not be overpowering or a negative psychological barrier affecting her team.

Hands full

"I would have to say we have our hands full," she said. "KU has beaten us every time we have played. The first time they beat us by about 20 and the last time by four. The first time they played the tempo they wanted to, but now it's our turn to pace the game."

"We plan on slowing them down and taking the fast break away from them," she said. "They have some very good, very strong individuals that like to play real quick ball. But they are not so good if you slow the pace down far enough."

Kansas also has seniors Adriane Mitchell and Shira Holden on their team, Gallagher said. Mitchell has scored over 2,000 points in her four years at KU and Holden is averaging 16 points a game. Gallagher also credited their depth.

"KU is still ranked 14th nationally," she said. "I think that what it comes down to is that you have to play best to be best and we have got to produce to win. If we can get past Kansas we will have a real shot at winning the whole thing. We have beaten both the other brackets. (MU, USD, Drake, CMSU). KSU and KU are the two best teams, the teams we must beat to win it," Gallagher said.

Chances confirmed

Team center Janet Smith agreed with Gallagher's analysis.

"We really do have a pretty good chance to win it all," Smith said. "We have almost beaten all these teams at one time. We have proved that we could handle Drake from a scrimmage we had with them, we hit Central

Missouri on a bad night and got beat, and we just slaughtered SMSU. We split our series with Minnesota, but I think we can handle them," she said.

"Anybody in it could win," she added. "NU ranks up there as a definite contender."

Smith said she is not in the least fearful to meet a team that has already defeated her team on three other occasions.

"I think KU might be trying to look past us a little bit to KSU," she said. "I hope that will happen. We are really up for the game, we want to beat them this fourth time out."

"I don't think the team is overly psyched or psyched out," she said. "We want to win and we want it bad."

Tournament not comparable

Coach Gallagher also commented on last week's women's high school basketball tournament.

"I really enjoyed watching it (the tournament)," she said. "I can't compare it to any other Nebraska tourna-

ments because this is my first year in the state. I would have to say that it doesn't really compare with the state tournaments I have seen in California, New York or Nevada. There play was a little higher caliber.

"The reason I would say is because they have had the sport for women longer. I think if we wait we will see Nebraska come up to that level real soon. What I would like to see would be more man-to-man defenses and more passing and having the girls utilize their left hands on offense," she said.

"Individually, I was real impressed with Chris Leigh (Platteview)," she said. "We are looking for a guard and she could fill the ticket. She has good drives and is a good medium-range jumper. In my opinion, she was the best all-around player in the tournament."

"Susan Keith from Bellevue East was the best pure shooter I've seen around here," Gallagher said. "I was real impressed with those two ladies."

Tennis team hopes to leave cellar

By Ed McClymont

The UNL men's tennis team hopes to rebound this year from a nightmarish 1978 season plagued by ineligibility, dropouts and injuries.

Nebraska finished eighth in the Big Eight championships last year, but the 1979 prospects look much brighter, according to head coach Jim Porter.

"We have the potential for a fine season this year," Porter said. "We have several lettermen back and some promising newcomers."

There are five lettermen this year, including seniors Dan Sloboth and Phil Woog, and juniors Kent Lyngaard, Larry Rugg and Kerry McDermott.

Woog, one of those injured last year, is optimistic about the new season.

"It was like playing with half a team last year," Woog said. "It was just disaster."

The Huskers' dual record so far this season is 2-1 with victories over Northern Iowa (8-1) and Doane (9-0) and a 6-3 loss to Kansas.

"We have a shot at anybody we play except Oklahoma

State," Woog said. "There is no question they'll win the Big Eight."

The Cowboys are the returning Big Eight champs, a crown Nebraska has never won. For this season Woog sees UNL at a possible fourth place conference finish, moving ahead of Kansas State, Iowa State, Missouri, and possibly Kansas.

The next action for the Cornhuskers is 9 a.m. Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center track. The meet will be a triangular with UNO and Creighton.

"We've been looking pretty good this week," Porter said. "But we still have some work to do on our consistency."

"Neither team should be as tough as Kansas, but I really can't say how good the competition will be," he said.

Also on the schedule is a California trip over spring break for the Huskers. The trip will be a homecoming for Woog, a California native.

"The last two years we have gone to Illinois and Minnesota for spring break and they both had snow," Woog said. "I'm glad I get to go home this year."