

Swim coach seeking support

By Shelley Smith

Although the season doesn't officially open until November, men's head swimming coach Cal Bentz said he's already planning for the season.

However, Bentz's planning right now isn't with the athletes.

Bentz, who led the Huskers to a fourth place finish in the Big Eight last year, said right now he's only concerned with swimming fans.

"This year we've got to prove to the conference that we can pack our swimming pool," he said.

Bentz said he hopes to host more home meets, organize a student support group and sell T-shirts in an attempt to have Nebraska chosen as the permanent site for the conference championship.

He said the 40 swimmers and divers expected to report to practice next week, coupled with a new assistant swimming coach, should spark fan interest in the swimming program.

BENTZ SAID many recruits that signed with the Huskers have good credentials—some with potential to place high nationally.

Bentz declined to say which athletes he feels will fare well for the Huskers, saying he didn't want to give anyone the pre-season "kiss of death."

The Huskers finished fourth in the Big Eight last year behind Kansas, Iowa State and Missouri.

Bentz said he thinks Kansas again will be the team to beat.

The returning swimmers have experience which will be an added asset, he said.

NEBRASKA LOST two swimmers last year: Mark Crowder who holds the school record in the 100-meter butterfly and the 50-meter free-style, and Goran Westerlund

from Sweden who holds the school record in the 200-meter butterfly.

Pat DiBiase, former Husker swimmer and head swimming coach at Omaha-Westside, will join Bentz and assistant coach Jeff Collen this fall as an assistant coach.

DiBiase will head the Husker's power program, Bentz said.

The program, which is new to the Husker swimmers, will attempt to increase power and enable the swimmers to work harder and at a faster speed, according to Bentz.

It will consist of an individualized weight program supplemented with an exercise development program, he added.

"You have to train for a specific event in swimming," Bentz explained.

"**THIS YEAR WE'RE** going to be more individualized and coach the swimmer in his event," he said.

Last year, Bentz explained, the swimmers trained under a general program and didn't concentrate on specific events.

Bentz said he hopes to develop a sound Nebraska-athlete-based program because of their importance to fan support.

"They're the identifying link between the stands and the competitors," he said.

"It's easier to identify with the guy next door. As a result, the younger kids in high school are gaining interest and getting better," he said.

Bentz said he believes Athletic Director Bob Devaney's support and commitment to Nebraska athletics has greatly boosted minor sports.

"Coaches and athletes like to have people support them and pay attention to them," he said.

Nebraska begins their season with the intra-squad meet Nov. 3. The regular season begins Nov. 17 in Ames, Iowa against Iowa State University.



Daily Nebraskan Photo

The Nebraska defense swarms Heisman Trophy winner Billy Sims in last year's NU-OU game in Lincoln.

Oklahoma...

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The strength of the defense, according to Switzer, is the secondary where all four of 1978's starters return. At the cornerbacks will be juniors Basil Banks (5-11, 177) and Jay Jimerson (5-9, 171). Banks had 60 tackles in 1978 while Jimerson had 42 and intercepted three passes.

At the safeties will be seniors Darrol Ray (6-2, 210) and Mike Babb (6-2, 197). Ray was an all-conference selection a year ago with 41 tackles and seven interceptions. Babb had 35 tackles last year.

Another hole Switzer must fill is at kicker where NCAA record-holding extra point ace Uwe von Schamann is gone. The replacement will be redshirt freshman John Hoge who, like von Schamann, is a soccer-

style kicker from Dallas.

Switzer said there should be no extra pressure on his team because they end the season with Missouri and Nebraska, the two teams considered favorites with the two teams considered favorites with the Sooners for the Big Eight crown.

"I just hope we arrive to the final games in a position to win the conference," Switzer said.

Oklahoma Schedule

Sept. 15—Iowa, Sept. 22—Tulsa, Sept. 29—at Rice, Oct. 6—Colorado, Oct. 13—Texas (at Dallas), Oct. 20—at Kansas State, Oct. 27—Iowa State, Nov. 3—at Oklahoma State, Nov. 10—Kansas, Nov. 17—at Missouri, Nov. 24—Nebraska.

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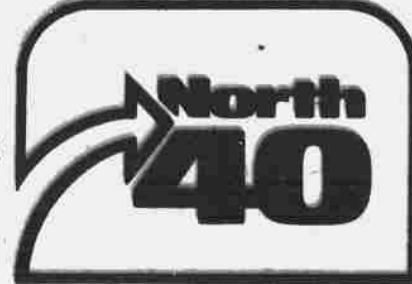
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