

sports

Cagers put conference mark on line in Stillwater

By Pat Beecham

Nebraska will put its 7-3 conference mark on the line tonight when the cagers invade Gallagher Hall in Stillwater, Okla. to take on the Oklahoma State Cowboys. Even though the Cowboys have a 2-8 conference mark and an 8-14 overall record, Acting Head Basketball Coach Moe Iba said they are a good team and should give Nebraska a stern test.

"I really respect Oklahoma State's material," Iba said. "They've got great scoring with Odom and Youman and they're getting more scoring out of their other people."

Iba was referring to Mark Connolly, Jon Moorehead and Randy Wright. In Oklahoma State's recent upset win over Oklahoma, Wright, Odom, Youman and Moorehead all scored in double figures to lead the Cowboys in what OSU basketball Coach Paul Hansen said was "our best

basketball game of the season."

After their upset of Oklahoma, the Cowboys traveled to Manhattan, Kan. to take on league-leading Kansas State, giving the Wildcats all they could handle before bowing to an 82-72 score.

Although OSU hasn't won many games this year, Hansen said they have "played well in games at home, but have lost some close ones." Hansen also said he thinks a good home crowd could "pick us up."

Iba said he isn't too excited about playing the Cowboys at home.

"It's the smallest place in the league to play," he said. "The crowd is right on top of you. It's always been the hardest place for us to play."

Both coaches agree that defense will be the key factor in the game.

Hansen said the Cowboys must "shut down Andre

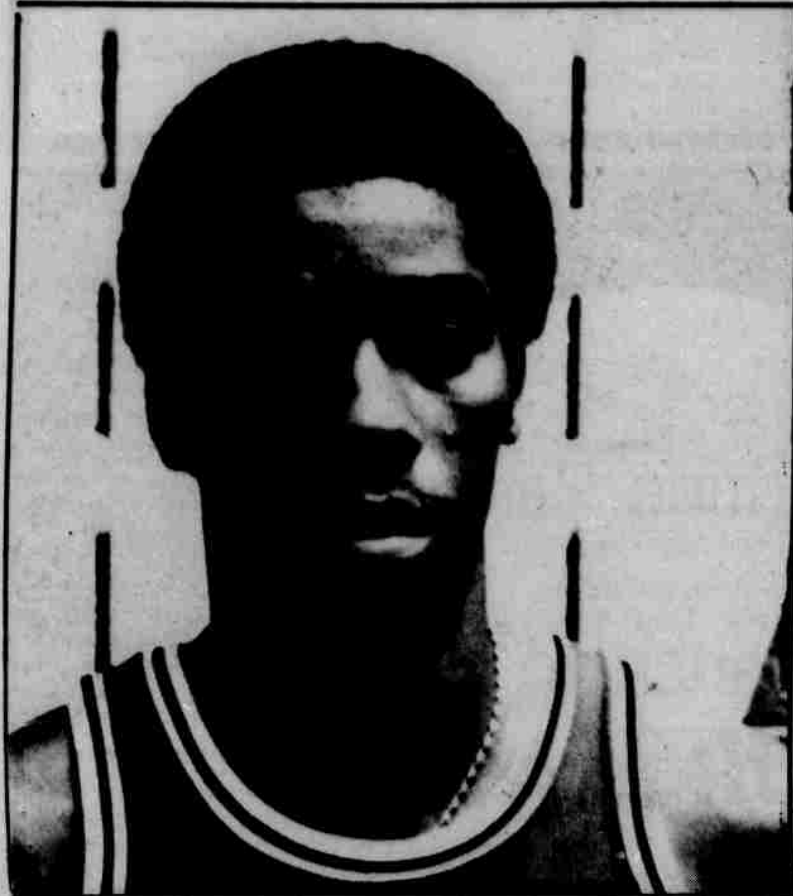
(Smith) and keep (Jack) Moore off the line" for an OSU victory, but doesn't think the Cowboys will enjoy any real height advantage against the Huskers.

"We're going to have to play the best defensive game we've played all year," Iba said. "They're very, very good at a transitional ball game. They pass the ball three or four times before they shoot," he added.

If the Huskers are going to stop Oklahoma State they will have to shut down Odom, the league's leading scorer with a 24.1 per game average and Youman who is averaging 16.8 points a game. They have led the Cowboys to the third highest point total in the Big Eight this year.

"Oklahoma State is playing right now as good as anyone in the conference," Iba said. "They're playing excellent."

The Huskers will return home to host the Colorado Buffaloes at the Bob Devaney Sports Center Saturday night.



Greg Downing has carried his share of the load on the Husker basketball team this year. The freshman has been a pleasant addition to the UNL squad.

Wrestlers to need new eastern flair

By Joni Kramer

The Husker wrestling team will have to develop an eastern flair when it travels to New England this weekend, according to Coach Bob Fehrs.

"Eastern teams have certain moves and rolls which are prevalent, and we need to know how to defend these moves so we don't get caught by surprise," Fehrs said.

Saturday, the Huskers face Maryland and the University of West Virginia in a double dual at Maryland. Sunday, at the U.S. Naval Academy they meet William & Mary, East Carolina and Navy.

According to Fehrs, this will be the first time in several years that Nebraska has been up against East Coast teams, and said there will be some unfamiliarity with the opposing team—for both sides.

The competition this weekend is balanced, with Navy being the toughest of the five, according to Fehrs.

"We're capable of beating all five teams. It will depend on how well practices go before the meets. Some meets will be close, but we shouldn't win any of them by a landslide," Fehrs said.

Although the team has had some ups and downs, the strength of the middle-weight classes has helped carry the team through the season, according to Fehrs, and should do the same this weekend.

"I feel that our mid-weights have had a good performance this season. The weights of 118 and heavyweight are also wrestling decently, and are improving. At 167, Tim Neumann is doing very well, and should wrestle well this weekend," Fehrs said.

Fehrs added that two of the teams Nebraska wrestles this weekend have their best wrestlers at 167, so these meets could be a personal test for Neumann.

This year's team has put an emphasis on a strong finish, Fehrs said.

"Our primary goal is to come out of the cellar in the Big Eight at the end of the season," Fehrs said. "Our duals are a type of preparation for end of the season tournaments."

Getting "out of the cellar" may not be easy because five Big Eight teams are ranked nationally.

The Huskers' dual record is 14-6 with four more duals to go before the Big Eight meet.

These meets could be important to Nebraska as far as eastern seaboard recruiting is concerned. Fehrs said this trip is needed to give Nebraska exposure to better schools all over, which will be a step towards the goal of establishing national prominence.

Downing pleasant surprise at UNL

By Tad Stryker

Husker forward Greg Downing has surprised Nebraska in more ways than one.

Last week, against both Kansas and Iowa State, Downing sank crucial one-and-one free throws and grabbed an important rebound to preserve a narrow Husker lead with little time left on the clock. Throughout the season, he has carried more than his share of the load as a freshman.

Last year, not many in Lincoln knew anything about Greg Downing. Husker recruiters had their eyes on Lance Berwald of Washburn High in Minneapolis for quite a while. But when they went to watch Berwald at the Minnesota state tournament, they accidentally saw Downing.

"I had some real good games," Downing recalled. Recruiters saw the 6-2, 164-pounder lead his team, Duluth Central, to the Class AA Large School Championship.

Downing was honored as Co-Mr. Basketball for the state of Minnesota at the season's end. He also was named the number one athlete in the state by the Hertz Corporation.

Downing's hometown is officially listed as Duluth, but that hasn't always been the case.

"I've lived there only since high school," he said. "My father was in the Air Force, and we've lived all over the place."

Downing was born in Illinois, but at various times in his life has called Maine, Michigan, Texas, and even Okinawa, Japan his home.

"I like to move around a lot," he said, but added that "the hardest part was leaving my friends behind every time." He said his varied cultural experiences have helped him adapt to university life with no trouble.

Downing has four sisters, (two younger and two older) and a younger brother. He is a "distant cousin" of Husker I-back I.M. Hipp.

Downing started his high school career with a bang as a sophomore.

"My first two or three games, I did real well, but then I

settled down. I played consistently throughout the whole year, and had a pretty good season," he said.

His junior and senior years were nothing short of exceptional. Downing pointed to a 35-point game and a 43-point effort in tournament play as a couple of his better games, but recalled with relish two others.

"One game I had five slams," he said, "and then later that year, at state, I had three in one game."

Downing averaged 22 points and 10 rebounds a game in the state tournament as a senior, and then went on to become the Most Valuable Player in the Minnesota-Indiana Prep All-Star game, where he faced Eric Williams, now his present roommate.

Because he stayed in training for the All-Star game after the season ended, Downing didn't visit many college campuses. "The only two I went to were Nebraska and Minnesota," he said. "Villanova recruited me real heavy, though, and so did Indiana, Utah and Utah State."

Downing picked Nebraska, even though he hailed from Big Ten country, where discussion of Big Eight basketball ranks right up there with body surfing as a daily pastime.

"I knew nothing about Big Eight basketball," admitted Downing. With nearly a full season behind him, however, he said the conference is better than most people give it credit for.

"I think it's improved a lot even from the start of the conference season," he said.

Downing has started the Huskers' last two games, but hinted that, at this point in his career, he feels more comfortable coming off the bench. "It's nice to start," he said, "but what counts is finishing the game."

Last Saturday night, Downing found himself on the razor's edge near the end when he missed a layup the Huskers needed to stop a late Iowa State charge. But he recovered the ball and fed Andre Smith for an easy two.

"I was caught in between," he said, recalling the play.

"I tried to dunk it at the last second, but it slipped out of my hand. I was lucky to get it back. Then I just wanted to get the ball back out to set it up, when I saw Andre coming down the lane, and I said, 'Hey, that's two points.'"

Reisdorff ill, still plans to compete

By Ron Powell

If UNL gymnast Renee Reisdorff shows up at the Big Eight meet Friday in Stillwater feeling ill, she probably won't get any sympathy from the other competitors.

Despite a severe case of bronchitis, Reisdorff set a school record last Friday at Kansas, scoring a 36.1 in the all-around competition, and led the Huskers to a 136.65-94.35 victory.

Reisdorff won three out of four events for the Huskers, scoring a 9.1 in both the balance beam and floor exercise and a 9.4 in the vault.

Reisdorff said she began feeling ill Thursday night, and said she didn't feel like going to the meet.

"I was hoping the meet would get snowed out," Reisdorff said. "But I slept on the way down, and I felt a little better when we got there. I thought the meet was a good chance for a good score so I gave it everything I had."

The 136.95 team score was the second highest for the Huskers this season, and Reisdorff said the presence of the Husker's men's gymnastics team at the meet was a definite help.

Own rooting section

"We were definitely psyched," Reisdorff said. "We had our own rooting section there. We might have had more fans there than they (Kansas) did. They were really rowdy."

Even more surprising about Reisdorff's performance was that it was her first all-around competition since injuring a wrist in warm-ups in a meet at Brigham Young University Jan. 12. Reisdorff said the wrist still bothers her, but added it is getting stronger.

For now, Reisdorff is more concerned about her bron-

chitis than her wrist injury. Reisdorff is still on antibiotics with the Big Eight gymnastics meet set to begin Friday in Stillwater.

Reisdorff was second in last year's Big Eight all-around competition. With last year's winner, Colorado's Debbie Wilcox taking a redshirt year, Reisdorff said she is confident of winning the all-around. She added she is confident she can break her own school record, despite her illness.

"Last weekend, I gave away a point on errors on the uneven bars and the balance beam," Reisdorff said. "With the routines I'll be doing at Big Eight, I don't think it will happen again."

Huskers will win

Women's Gymnastics Coach Judy Schalk said she is confident the Huskers will win their third consecutive Big Eight title.

"We've been planning and working hard for the meet," Schalk said. "There's no reason why we shouldn't win it. Only sickness, injury or death could keep us from winning it."

Schalk said she is hoping the team can score 140 points this weekend, and is hoping the return of senior all-arounder Patty Carmichael-Gerard will help achieve that goal. Carmichael-Gerard sprained both of her ankles in the meet against Missouri Jan. 18, and this weekend will be her first all-around action since then.

"She's still hobbling around, but she's going to gut it out," Schalk said.

Schalk said she also is hoping the Huskers score high in the meet in order to use the scores to help qualify for the AIAW National Meet in Baton Rouge, La. April 3-5. To qualify for nationals, a team must either win their regional meet or take an at-large berth based on team averages.