

sports

Husker Invitational meet next for men swimmers

By Joni Kramer

Southern Illinois will be the team to beat this weekend at the Husker Invitational, according to men's swimming coach Cal Bentz.

"Southern Illinois will undoubtedly be the toughest competitor. They have a couple of real outstanding guys. One is currently heading the nation in the 200-yard backstroke and the 200-yard butterfly," Bentz said.

Along with Southern Illinois and Nebraska, teams attending the meet include Minnesota, Kansas, Iowa State and Northern Iowa.

The meet consists of three sessions. According to Bentz, each session represents one day of competition. However, the three will be held in 1 1/2 days, starting Friday at 6 p.m. The second and third sessions will be Saturday at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. All events will be at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Despite the threat of Southern Illinois, Bentz said the Huskers should do well.

"We're swimming well, and working hard right now. Our times have improved and we've won our first two duals," Bentz said.

According to Bentz, the team has good balance and depth.

"This year, the team is pretty good-sized. We haven't had any injuries per se, although we have had some illness," he said. "There's a lot of depth in our shorter distance freestyle events. There is better over-all strength than there has been in the past."

Some of Nebraska's individual strengths, according to Bentz, come from diver David Goodwin, Tim Boyd in the freestyle, Matt Rye in the breaststroke, distance freestyler David Ochtemeier and backstroker David Whelchel.

"The bottom line is how fast the guys swim, and how well we put our races together."

Being the host team is a good opportunity for the Huskers, according to Bentz.

"It's a chance to have a lot of people in with some keen competition. We're hoping for a good crowd since there will be a number of Big Eight and national-level swimmers here," Bentz said.

As for the whole season, Bentz said winning this invitational will be one step toward the conference meet and nationals.

Because of the number of top performers attending, Bentz said he's hoping for good performances from all swimmers.

"The meet should be much faster than it has been in past years, and I'm hoping for some broken records," Bentz said.

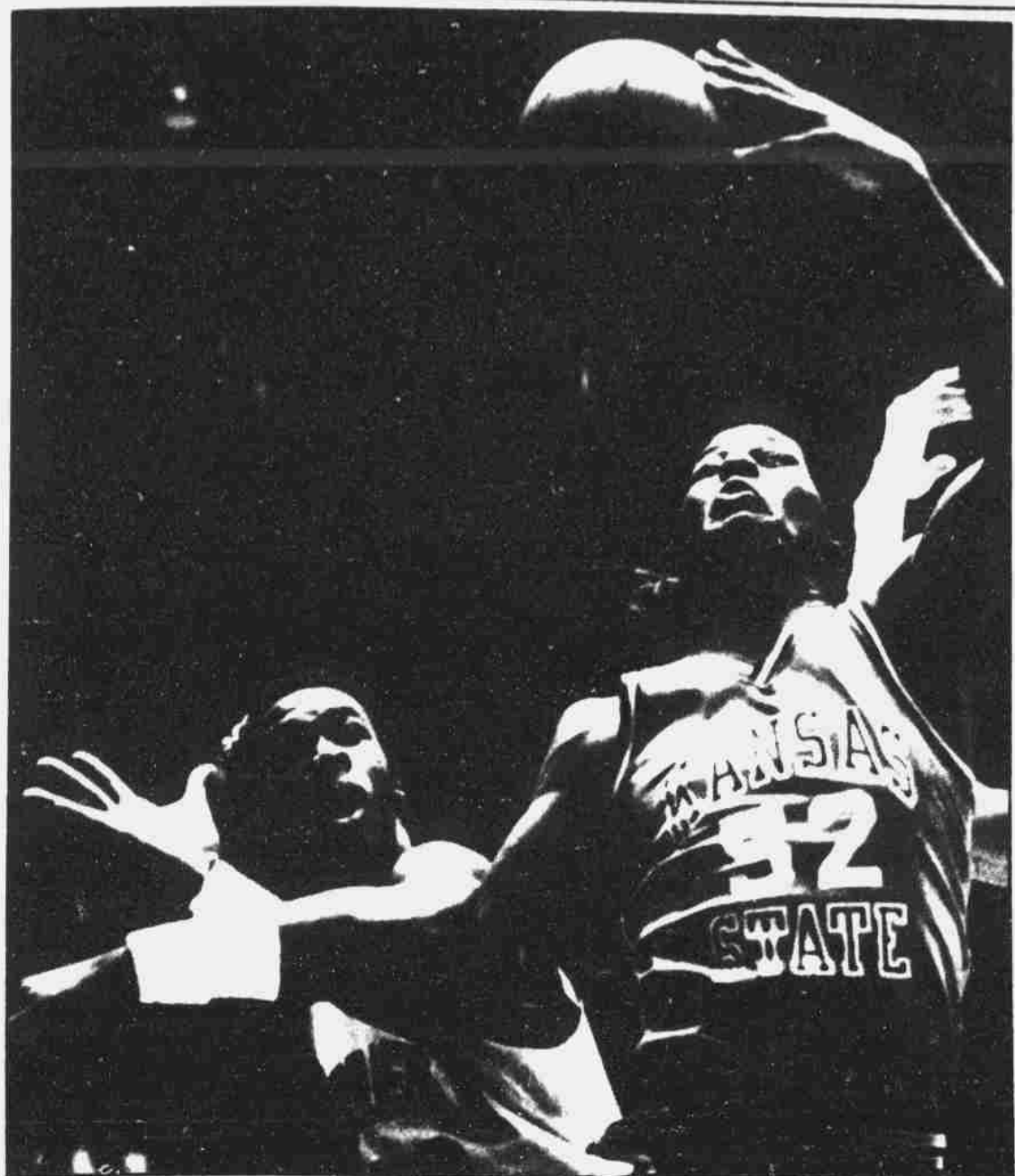


Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka
Randy Reed of Kansas State grabs a rebound over Ray Collins of Nebraska. The Huskers won 59-49.

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