

Determination keeps UNL track runner busy during training

By Scott Ahlstrand

Pam Schubarth has had her ups and downs in the track world, but the sophomore from Scottsbluff has always remained optimistic.

She was highly touted as a freshman and sophomore in high school, but several schools seemed to lose interest in her during her senior year.

"It was really hard for me to understand," Schubarth said. "But during my senior season, even when my times improved, a lot of the schools dropped out."

Schubarth elected to attend Kansas University on a full athletic scholarship.

"I wanted to see what I could do out of state," she said.

At Kansas Schubarth was a member of the Big Eight championship two-mile relay and indoor distance medley teams. Although Schubarth had achieved a level of success at KU, she said, she became disenchanted with its program.

"KU was having a lot of problems," Schubarth said. "I thought that UNL track was on the upswing. Nebraska has a better program than KU and has more money allowed to it. We attend more and better meets than KU does. I also like UNL's new coach Gary Pepin."

Since arriving at UNL, Schubarth said she has set some new goals for herself.

"Right now I'm centering most of my efforts on the two-mile relay team," she said. "It's got a real chance to go far in nationals. As an individual, I'm just trying to bring my times down. I really can't compete against the real good runners yet. But if I keep lowering my times I'll be ready to run against them next year."

UNL's two-mile relay team finished second at the indoor nationals, only .4 of a second behind the first-place team.

"That was definitely the highlight of my career so far," Schubarth said. "It was a really great moment."

Schubarth, however, has been hampered by injuries.

"I had a few minor injuries last year, but not near as many as I've gotten this season," she said. "I think one of the reasons could be the track surface here at UNL. At Kansas the indoor track is softer, and I think some of my injuries can be attributed to my adjustment to UNL's harder indoor track. I'm sure that as soon as I become completely healthy my times will drop."

Another factor that has contributed to her optimism, she said, is the start of the outdoor track season.

"I never had run on an indoor track until I got to college," Schubarth said. "I'm a lot more confident on an outdoor track and I think that will help my performance."

During this outdoor season, Schubarth will divide her time between three events.

"I'll run the relay, the 800, and I'll try the 1,500," she said. "The 800 is getting to be such a fast race that I might have to run the 1,500 where more strength is required."

Schubarth said she believes her determination has helped her achieve an equal balance between her grades and her practice.

Pepin said he has nothing but compliments for the hard-working Schubarth.

"Pam is a fine person and a fine team member," Pepin said. "She's a very talented runner and we're very happy to have her on our team."

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