

Air Force dominates rugby classic

By Mona Koppelman

Air Force winged its way through four matches to successfully defend their title at the third annual Husker Rugby Classic Saturday and Sunday.

Sixteen teams competed in the tournament at Sawyer Snell Park.

Air Force defeated Omaha A 23-4 in the championship match. Omaha's B team took third place.

UNL's A team fell victim to Air Force in the second round.

Trailing 13-0 at the half, the Huskers scored two four-point tries to close the gap.

But Lady Luck just wasn't with the UNL ruggers. Twice, the Huskers came within inches of scoring. Eight-man Bob Hansman was over the goal line, but when he went to touch the ball down, it was knocked out of his hands.

Flyhalf Rob Martin was a foot from the goal line later. Martin was tackled before he could dive into the try zone.

"We just didn't pass the ball well in the first half," UNL Coach Vince Powers said.

Powers attributed Air Force's sweep to "better coaching and better grasp of fundamentals."

"They have five coaches who can take the time to go over the basics, Powers said. The (Air Force) Academy supports them well. They have a much better program, well funded."

Powers said UNL is just a club sports, but that nobody else even came close to the Air Force.

Omaha A coach Phil Reuning said his club's difficulties with Air Force were because of injuries.

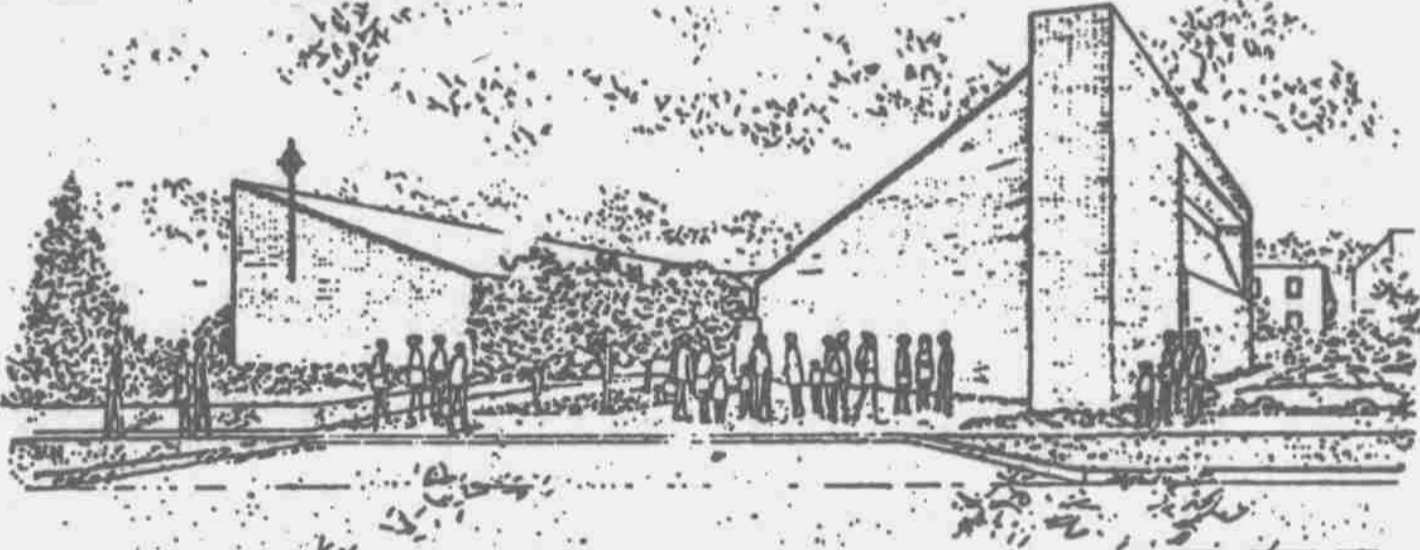
Both props and second rowmen weren't regulars, Reuning said.

The B side lost both of its games, to the Omaha G.O.A.T.S. and the Air Force B.

The Air Force took home the tournament's trophy for the second straight year. Air Force is rated second behind the University of California in the national rugby ratings.

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A \$10 entry fee must be paid before the first game, Brodie said. That money goes to a party fund, which pays the World Series winner \$60. The runner-up gets \$20. There is a catch, though — the manager who wins the league has to buy a keg of beer and throw a party for all the other members.

"Once the league starts, it won't expand," Creek said. "But when it gets over, we hope to get another one started and then maybe expand."

The commissioner of O'Rourke's Strat-O-Matic baseball league is Dave Moreland, one of the owners of O'Rourke's. Brodie and he made it clear that the new baseball league was not started in order to enhance business. On the contrary, Brodie said, "We do it just for the fun of it."

Fun seems to be the name of the game when it comes to Strat-O-Matic Baseball.

Huskers . . .

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I'm sure it's for some little reason," Burke said about the yellow shirt, "but they didn't tell me. I'm still practicing with the first team. Maybe they're trying to motivate me or something."

Even though the coaches gave Burke no concrete reason for the yellow shirt, he guessed that it may have been because of his play in the team's Saturday scrimmage.

"I missed a tackle toward the end of the scrimmage," Burke said.

Defensive secondary coach Bob Thornton could not be reached for comment on Burke's apparent demotion.

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