

Sports

Swimmers, divers to meet 'rival' Kansas

By Corey Anderson
Staff Reporter

In what one coach says should be the closest, most exciting dual of the year, Nebraska's swimming and diving teams will finish their 1985 home dual schedules Saturday at 1:30 p.m. in the Bob Devaney Sports Center Pool when they entertain their traditional swimming rivals, the Kansas Jayhawks.

Kansas will bring a 3-6 men's record into action Saturday, but Nebraska swimming coach Cal Bentz said his team, currently 5-3 after splitting duals with UNO and Arkansas last weekend, won't be tempted to look ahead to the Big Eight Championships a month from now.

"We're not at that point in the season where we can afford to take anybody or any swim lightly," Bentz said.

According to Bentz, whose club is ranked 20th in the nation, the Huskers are a balanced team.

"We've got a lot of guys who are doing an excellent job for us and are working really very hard," Bentz said. "I really hesitate to single one person out because I think we're much bigger than that. We feel we have what I consider to be a very good all-around team. We feel we cover each event pretty well."

The newcomers to Bentz's squad have performed better than expected.

"Our freshmen have been a very nice surprise to us," Bentz said. "At this point, the thing we need to do is to feel confident about all of the work that we've done and preparation that we've made and kind of let it flow, so to speak."

"Hopefully, we aren't going to be as tired this week and that will translate into some good times. The thing we have to work on is putting our races together a little better. That's a mental thing, and we need to work on that."

The 12th-rated Husker women will host 4-2 Kansas, ranked 15th in the nation, in a dual that should provide a preview of the upcoming Big Eight Championships. Coach Ray Huppert, whose team is 8-1 in dual competition this year, said his club is anxiously awaiting the meet.

"The athletes have been looking forward to this weekend," Huppert said. "They've also obviously been looking forward to the conference championship meet."

The Jayhawks have won all 10 of the Big Eight Championships contested so far. They have won all but one of the seven duals between the two schools.

"Kansas has built a real fine tradition," Huppert said. "This may be the year we can overtake Kansas, and once we do, we feel then we ought to be able to be in the driver's seat and try and dominate the conference. It's not going

to be easy because they've got that tradition going, but we're looking forward to the challenge."

Despite Kansas' tradition, Huppert thinks Nebraska can compete with them.

"They've been such a good team and they've made it very tough on all the conference schools," Huppert said. "We expect a tremendous challenge out of them. I think we're going to be up to the task to at least swim well."

Some of the best races Saturday could be in the sprints where KU All-American Tammy Pease and defending Big Eight 50 free style champion Dana Powers will race head-to-head.

"Dana and Tammy have really built up a great rivalry in the conference," Huppert said.

Powers beat Pease in the 50 last year at the Big Eight, but Pease has returned the favor twice this season. Both

swimmers are ranked nationally in four events: Pease in 50 free, 100, 200 breast stroke and 200 intermediate; Powers in the 50 free, 100 fly, 100 breast and 200 intermediate. Pease was an All-American in the 50 last year, while Powers just missed by finishing 13th.

But, Huppert said, Saturday's meet will feature more than Powers and Pease. KU's Marcy Herald will swim against Emily Ricketts, who has NU's best time in five events this year.

"This'll be one of the most exciting meets for spectators because there'll be so many close races," he said. "If we can get students into that meet, I think we'll hook some of them on swimming."

Huppert said it won't be the end of the world if the Huskers lose.

"Our whole philosophy and our whole training program is gearing us toward the Big Eight Championship," he said. "This is just another dual meet."

I know that's hard to say, and I think our athletes probably look at it a little different, but it is. It's just another dual meet, another step on the ladder which will take us to the Big Eight Championships. Obviously we would like to win this meet and make it the most successful dual meet season.

Huppert said he expected Kansas to be "very well prepared."

"Hopefully, we will be prepared for them," he said. "Although team depth doesn't come into play during a dual (teams can only score two athletes in each event), each coaching staff will be looking to see how the other's depth performs. I can't think of a more dramatic or exciting dual meet. It should be a great one for people to see."

Saturday's dual marks the end of the regular season for the Husker women. They will go into their final set of workouts and begin their tapering process following the meet in order to bring out their maximum performance at the Big Eight Championships (Feb. 28 through March 2), Huppert said. Cal Bentz's men will travel to Ames, Iowa, for a final dual against Iowa State next Saturday.

"This should be by far the toughest meet we have had to swim all season," Kansas Coach Gary Kempf said, referring to the womens' matchup.

"They have no weaknesses," Kempf said. "They have a lot of depth in the freestyle sprints and distances."

Kempf said every event will be tough, but agreed that the key matchup will be between Kansas All-American Tammy Pease and Nebraska's defending Big Eight 50-yard freestyle champion Dana Powers.

Kempf said his men's team is coming to Lincoln hoping to just swim hard and improve their times.

"Nebraska is a heavy favorite to win the Big Eight championship and to beat them we are going to have to have an outstanding meet," Kempf said.

The Jayhawk men have not beat the Huskers in three years. Kansas is led by senior Brad Coens. Coens is the Big Eight champion in the 100-yard backstroke.

Kempf said a key matchup will be between Coens and Ed Jowdy, the Husker's top backstroke. Jowdy's time of 50.87 is only .25 of a second off qualifying for the Big Eight honor list in the 100 backstroke.

Alaskan diver makes most of talent

By Corey Andersen
Staff Reporter

Alaskans don't get much recruiting attention in the NCAA, and Nebraska diver Alvin Spencer is no exception.

But Spencer, a half- eskimo from Anchorage, has made a significant impact on the Nebraska men's diving fortunes this season.

Spencer is in his third year of competitive diving. After winning the Alaska state title as a junior for Chugiak High School, where he set a state record, Spencer transferred to Long Beach, Calif. for his senior season and finished second in the CIF (California Interscholastic Federation) championships for Woodrow Wilson High. He went on to qualify for senior nationals. Spencer's performances prompted Husker diving coach Jeff Huber to offer Spencer a half-scholarship.

We took a little bit of a chance, especially early when we signed him," Huber said. "But that summer he qualified for the senior nationals. In the beginning it was a little bit of a gamble."

But the gamble has paid off. Spencer and freshmen teammates Lewis Myers and Matt Clark have provided adequate support for senior All-American and two-time Olympic participant Reynaldo Castro. Spencer has finished second or third on the team at most meets this season on both the three-meter and one-meter board.

"He's improved quite a bit," Huber said. "He's shown that he can learn. He's a real talent and he's done well in some of the big meets for us and we've needed him. He's got talent and he can learn and he can compete under pressure, so those are pretty good qualifications."

"I really just didn't have anything else to do in junior high and high school," Spencer said. "It's not really a big sport, but one of my best friends was in it and I was watching



David Bourke/Daily Nebraskan

Diver Alvin Spencer ... "I never thought I'd get this far."

him dive so I thought it would be easy."

But it was evident to some Alaskans that Spencer had enough talent to do well right away. Some members of the Lion's Club in Barrows, Ala., supported him in high school and helped him get to California to practice with a good coach.

Spencer trained under two-time Olympic Coach Glenn McCormick

and his wife Debby.

"It was a big adjustment going to California," Spencer said. "That was the hardest part. But as far as the training, it was great. I learned quite a bit of diving. I caught up, I'd say, five or six years, and crammed it into a year and a half, because of them pushing me so hard."

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HUSKER



Dan Dufanay/Daily Nebraskan

Heidi Hecker • Des Moines, Iowa

Heidi Hecker

"It's great to see someone who has worked so hard to finally reap the benefits," Nebraska's diving coach Jeff Huber said of Husker diver Heidi Hecker. "It's satisfying for me to coach someone like that, to see her improve."

College: Hecker finished fifth on the three-meter board at the Big Eight meet last year. She finished 24th at the U.S. Outdoor Championships this summer on the one-meter board.

Hecker's top scores at Nebraska have been 303.96 on the one-meter and 372.06 on the three-meter board. She attributes her coach for part of that success.

"He's just great," Hecker said. "He never lets me get down on myself and he doesn't let me just get by. He makes me go one step further."

Hecker, an elementary and special education major, probably will redshirt next season to gain a little more experience, Huber said.

High School: Hecker did not start diving until she started high school at Des Moines East. She was runner-up both her junior and senior years at the Iowa State meet.

Hecker received most of her diving training when she attended diving camps over the summer.

"Virtually every dive she's ever learned has been in this pool," Huber said.

The closeness of the diving team is one of the reasons why Hecker is glad she came to Nebraska.

"We have a really close team," she said. "And I like being with the team. Every time we go somewhere else, I'm so happy that I come to Nebraska."

Cheryl Peterson
Staff Reporter

Wrestler fulfills high school wish

When the Nebraska wrestling team takes on North Dakota State Friday night and North Dakota Saturday night at the Bob Devaney Sports Center, it will need all the age and experience it can get. Their two most experienced wrestlers, heavyweight Gary Albright and 118-pounder Matt Campbell, are both questionable, and 142-pounder, Bill Ferrie is doubtful because of injuries.

One older wrestler Coach Bob Fehrs will probably not use is 22-year-old Wallace Dawkins, a 118- to 126-pounder. If Campbell does wrestle, and Terry Cook wrestles as expected at 126, Dawkins will sit out, as he has most of the season.

This is Dawkins' first year as a Husker after spending two years in the Army and a year at Westmar College in De Mars, Iowa. The freshman from South Sioux City wrestled six months for the Army and traveled with the Army team at tournaments in New York, New Jersey, Washington, D.C. and Virginia. While in the Army, Dawkins won the National Somo (a combination of judo and wrestling) tournament.

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