

Sports

NU cross country team ranks fifth

By Rich Cooper
Staff Reporter

Until last year, the Big Eight Championships had been the last meet of the year for the Nebraska women's cross country team.

Last year, the Cornhusker women finished fifth at the conference meet but still qualified for the NCAA Championships.

But this year the Huskers are ranked fifth in the nation and coaches polled throughout the conference agree they are the favorites to win the Big Eight title this weekend in Columbia, Mo.

Nebraska cross country coach Jay Dirksen said his team's chances are as good as anybody's to win the championship.

"We have a good shot of winning the meet," Dirksen said. "But, we still have to worry about seven other teams. This meet is going to be a real dogfight."

Dirksen said the Big Eight is the toughest in the nation. Four teams are ranked in the top 20.

He said any of the top five teams could win the meet. Iowa State, which is ranked third in the nation; Kansas State is seventh and Missouri is 14th. Oklahoma State is ranked in the top 10 in the Midwest.

Dirksen said in order for his team to win, all five runners are going to have to run their best races of the season.

"None of our girls have run their best races yet," Dirksen said. "This meet will hopefully be the best race for our

team because we are going to need that to win."

Dirksen said his team's best aspect is the runners' equal talent. He said every week the team has had a different leading finisher.

The biggest surprise, Dirksen said, has been the performance of Sammie Resh, a freshman from Shelton. In high school, Resh won the Class C state individual championship and also won the 1,600 and the 3,200 meter runs all four years she ran in high school.

Dirksen said a key to the Huskers winning the championship will be how Resh performs in the meet. He also said the team whose fifth runner finishes first will probably win the meet.

Dirksen said the toughest teams will be Iowa State and Kansas State. Iowa State defeated Nebraska by only one point earlier this season. Nebraska has only run once against Kansas State this season. They nipped the Wildcats by less than five points.

Here is a rundown of the rest of the teams in the conference in order of finish predicted by the coaches.

The Cyclones have a lot to prove this year after slipping to fourth place in the conference last year, Coach Ron Renko said. They return five runners from last year.

Renko said his runners were disappointed they didn't go to nationals last year and that has made them work harder this year.

Bonnie Sons is the top runner for the Cyclones. Renko said she ran her best

race when she finished second overall at the Wisconsin Invitational Oct. 19.

Renko said his squad is strong all the way down to its seventh runner. He said freshman Tami Colby from Boone, Iowa, has been running strong.

"The key to winning this meet will be consistent running by all our runners one through seven," Renko said. "We have a gameplan going into this meet. Every runner's going to run a certain race."

The Wildcats could surprise a lot of people, Coach Steve Miller said. The Wildcats have three runners who have competed at the national level. He said the team is very young. It has two juniors, two sophomores and one freshman.

Miller said Allison Deckert, Anne Stadler and Jacque Struckhoff all will have to run well if they are to win their second Big Eight title in three years.

The Cowgirls are the Rodney Dangerfields of the conference, Coach Dick Weis said. They are not ranked nationally, but they should be, he said.

The Cowgirls have given the top teams in the conference tough races this season, he said.

The top runner for the Cowgirls is All-American Christine McMiken, the world record holder in the 5,000 meters. She set the record at the Big Eight Championships last year in Lincoln. Weis said McMiken has broken every cross-country course record she has run on this season. He said she is the pre-meet favorite to win the individual title.

Weis said Veronica Haberl, Laura Davis and Geradine Achinson will help the Cowgirls finish strongly at the meet.

The defending Big Eight Champion's hopes of successfully defending the title went down the drain when Andrea Fischer had knee surgery this fall. The Tigers were also hurt by graduation when Sabrina Darnhoefer, the two-time Big Eight champion, graduated last year.

Tiger coach Lou Duesing said his team is good enough to be ranked 14th in the country but it's really hurting without Fischer. Leading the Tigers into the championships will be junior Jill Kingsbury and Cyd Thomas. Duesing said his team has been running well this season but not good enough to win the title again. He said the Tigers will be lucky to finish in the top four.

The Buffaloes Big Eight Championship hopes ended when their top runner, sophomore Michelle Bews came down with a virus that develops under the knee cap and causes swelling.

Colorado coach Jerry Quiller said the virus is very painful and it is doubtful Bews will run.

With the loss of Bews, Quiller said he is hoping his team can finish in sixth place. He said the meet will give his runners the experience so that next year they can aim for the title. Without Bews, the Buffaloes lost a possible 30 points which any team can't afford, he said.

Quiller said he thinks the favorite to

win the meet is Iowa State because they have better depth than any team in the Big Eight, but the title race should be close, he said.

The Sooners don't have enough depth to win the title but they could mess up things for the top three teams, Dirksen said.

The Sooners have two runners who have been running very well this season, he said. Dirksen said Tove Lutdal, a sophomore from Brenham, Texas has a good chance to finish second behind McMiken. Last year the Sooners finished eighth in the conference meet. This year they will climb up to seventh because of Lutdal and freshman Bonnie Littlejohn, who has been a big surprise, Dirksen said.

The Jayhawks will go nowhere but to the Big Eight cellar, Dirksen said. They have the youngest team in the conference with four sophomores and all the rest freshmen.

Dirksen said lack of experience will hurt the Jayhawks.

Nebraska women's cross country runner Jill Noel said her team knows what it has to do to win its first Big Eight Championship. She said everyone is going to have to run their own race.

She said the team is not afraid of any of the top teams in the top of the conference.

"We are as ready as we are going to be for this meet," she said. "If everybody is consistent and runs tough, then we should win."

KSU's Hundley says this year's goal is to 'just improve' his playing

By Chuck Green
Staff Reporter

The goals of Kansas State safety Barton Hundley epitomize the goals of the entire Wildcat team this season.

The 5-11, 187-pound senior said his primary objective this season is to "just improve" enough to compete in the Big Eight.

"You always want to improve on technique," Hundley said. "I'd just like to give 100 percent and play good football each week."

Hundley, an all-Big Eight defensive back in 1984, appears to be one of the few bright spots on Kansas State's 1-6 team.

"I think I've played very average football this year," Hundley said. "I've had a couple good games, but I've had a few bad games, too. Our entire defense has played fairly well this season, but there's always plenty of room for improvement."

Hundley, a three-year letterman from Clay Center, Kan., was not a highly-recruited player, mainly because of his

size. He said this played a major role in his decision to attend Kansas State.

"I was only 5-11, 160 coming out of high school," he said. "No major college recruited me, other than Kansas State. All of my offers came from smaller schools and junior colleges in Kansas. I nearly went to Dodge City (Kansas) Junior College, but then Kansas State asked me to walk-on for them."

Hundley walked on in 1981, the same year Coach Jim Dickey redshirted 10 Wildcat lettermen, including eight starters.

"I had the opportunity to play right away," Hundley said, "so I grabbed it while it was there."

Hundley saw playing time in Kansas State's last seven games that season. But that was only the beginning.

Last season as a junior, Hundley tallied 133 tackles, including 22 against Oklahoma State, and broke up seven passes for good measure. When he wasn't chasing the ball, he was carrying it on punt returns, averaging 6.7 yards per return.

Despite the Wildcats' disappointing

season records since his stay there, Hundley said has had no second thoughts about his decision to attend Kansas State.

"I've never changed my mind about Kansas State," he said. "Of course, I wish we could have done better. This season has been really tough. We needed a win quite a bit, and we got it last week against Missouri. I think this program is not too far from turning around, maybe not to contend for the Big Eight title, but at least to be a halfway decent team. We really have good facilities here, and all the coaches do the best they can. I'm happy to be here."

Though Hundley said he feels he's played "fairly well" so far this season, he's said he's "still undecided" about some of the talk from his coaches about All-American honors in 1985.

"I don't know," he said. "If I play hard, it'll take care of itself. That goes for the NFL, too. If the opportunity comes, I'd love to play there, but I guess I'll just have to take things as they come. Right now, I'm just worried about finishing the season."

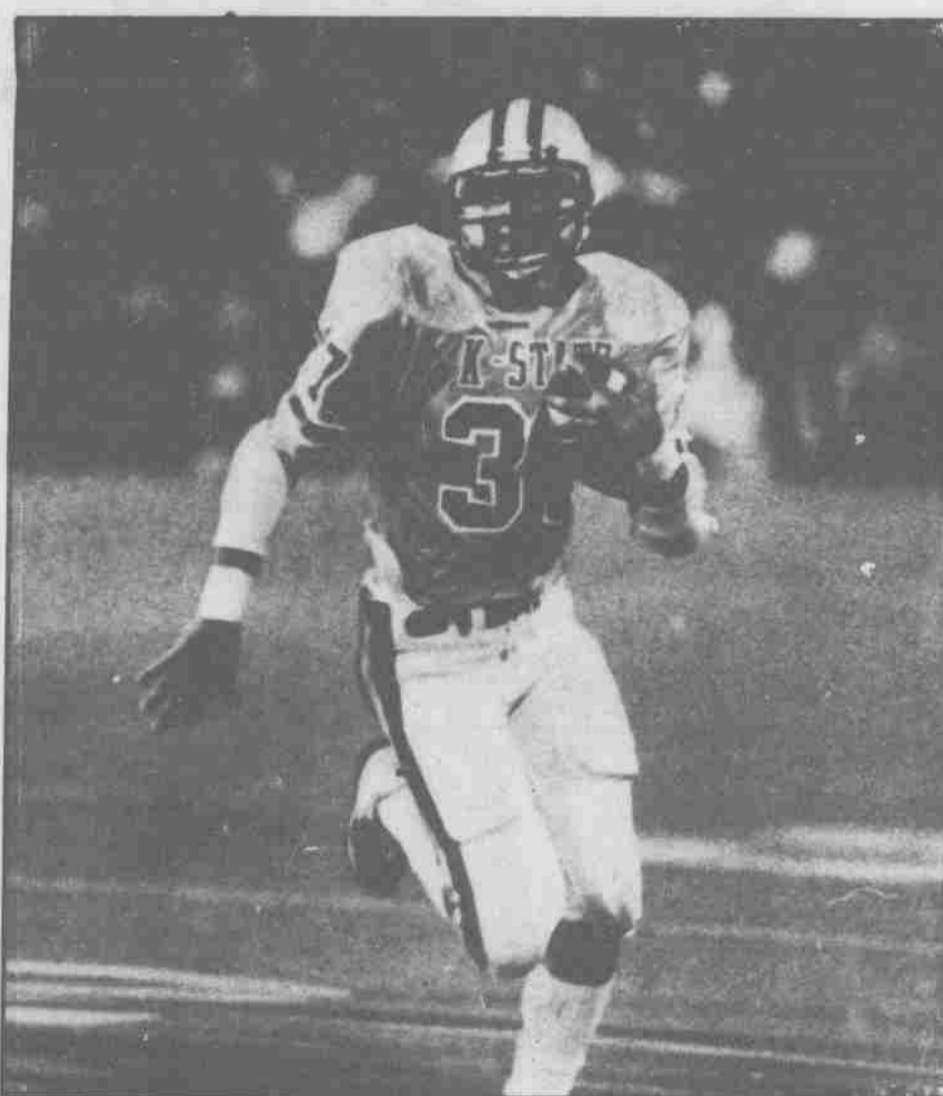


Photo courtesy KSU Sports Info.

Hundley

My weekly contribution to the trash can

I'm not aware of the reasons, but I'm getting varied reactions to my weekly predictions.

Some people, few though they be, praise me for going out on a limb each week to predict the ruthless game of college football.



Jeff Apel

The majority of my readers, however, either tell me unique things about the column, or they come right out and criticize it.

I have decided to do something about it.

I have taken the most unusual

criticism I had this week and tied it in with this week's guest predictor.

The criticism which won, lids down, was "this column is nothing but a bunch of trash."

With this in mind, I welcome Gordon Petrie to this week's column as guest predictor.

Petrie, a faithful employee of Midwest Refuse service for 10 years, was more than willing to help when I told him I would leave a few bucks under the car next time he picked up my trash.

Before Gordon and I get into the predicting, I'll tell you that in last week's (garbage) I posted a 4-1 record, missing only on SMU's 44-14 rout of Texas.

I also picked up my second win of the year against a guest predictor, as

Pete Rose posted a dismal 2-3 record against me.

For the year, I'm 79-20, for a winning percentage of 73%.

Auburn 27, Florida 16 at Auburn, Ala.

Gordon said he liked Florida by a 24-14 margin but I'm taking Auburn in this one. The Tigers have shown that they are extremely explosive on offense, and, although Florida has a respectable defense, I don't think they will be able to shut down Bo Jackson and company.

Nebraska 52, Kansas State 6 at Manhattan, Kan.

Gordon and I agree that this game is definitely the trashiest of the week. Kansas State has shown nothing except the loss of Jim Dickey all season. Nebraska has continued to make amends for its season opening loss to

Florida State by pounding its opponents. Gordon must have been thinking along the same lines; he picked Nebraska by a 35-10 score.

Iowa 20, Ohio State 15 at Iowa City, Iowa.

Gordon picked Iowa by a 14-7 margin and I have to agree with him. Iowa has shown that it is truly worthy of its No. 1 ranking while Ohio State still refuses to say that Keith Byars is playing with a broken foot.

Miami, Florida 31, Florida State 20 at Miami, Fla.

Two weeks ago, Jimmy Johnson blew away archrival Barry Switzer and the Oklahoma Sooners, and I think he will continue that torrid pace by defeating Florida State. Gordon agrees with me, picking Miami by a 21-7 margin.

Colorado 21, Oklahoma State

20 at Boulder, Colo.

Gordon picked Oklahoma State by a 21-14 margin, but I think Colorado will win this one. The Buffaloes impressed me in their 17-7 loss to Nebraska last week while Oklahoma State looked bad in its victory over Kansas.

Other scores: Michigan 31, Illinois 7 (Todd von Kampen's pick); Michigan State 20, USC 17; Penn State 31, Boston College 14; Oklahoma 34, Kansas 21; Notre Dame 20, Navy 17; Georgia Tech 35, Duke 10; West Virginia 26, Virginia 12; Iowa State 20, Missouri 17; Minnesota 30, Michigan State 10; Temple 45, Delaware 10; Tennessee 24, Rutgers 14; Washington 30, Stanford 6; LSU 21, Mississippi 3; Georgia 10, Tulane 9; SMU 41, Texas A&M 12; BYU 20, Wyoming 17 and Air Force 34, San Diego State 9.