

Sports

Women swimmers head for championship

By Todd Aron
Staff Reporter

Coach Ray Huppert said the Nebraska women's swimmers might have a hard time matching last year's success in the NCAA swimming and diving championships Thursday through Saturday in Fayetteville, Ark.

Last year, the Cornhuskers finished ninth with 123 points.

"It will be more difficult this year," Huppert said. "We didn't qualify in two events that we did last year. But I don't know what to expect. We could finish in the top 20. Like 20th or 19th or maybe all the way down to seventh or eighth."

Huppert said this year's team title is between Florida and Stanford, who tied for the top position in the final Associated Press poll, and No. 3 Texas.

This year, the Huskers sent nine swimmers and one diver to compete in eight individual events and four relays.

Huppert said they are ready for this meet. "They're as tapered as they ever could be, absolutely," he said.

All-Americans Dana Powers and Erin Hurley lead Nebraska. In the individual events, Powers qualified for the 50 freestyle, 100 butterfly, 100 breaststroke and 200 individual medley. She also swims on the 200, 400 and 800 freestyle relays for which the Huskers qualified.

In last year's NCAA championships, Powers finished 10th in the 50 freestyle and 13th in the 100 butterfly.

In the Big Eight championship, Powers finished first in the 100 butterfly and 100 breaststroke. She got second in the 200 butterfly and third in the 50 freestyle. Last year, she set school

records in all those events except for the 200 butterfly.

Three of the individual events Powers qualified for at Fayetteville are scheduled on the same day.

"We'll try and keep Dana (Powers) in all three events, but if we scratch one it will be the 200 IM," Huppert said. "But she knows what it takes to swim fast and be mentally prepared."

Hurley, the only other Huskers winner to qualify for an individual event, is back for her second NCAA championship. She qualified in the 100 and 200 breaststroke. Last year, Hurley finished fifth in the 200 and 12th in the 100 breaststroke, earning all-American honor, in both events.

In the Big Eight championships, Hurley finished first in the 200 breaststroke and third in the 100 breaststroke. She holds the school's best mark in the 100 breaststroke.

Huppert said Hurley is swimming the best she has all year and is ready for the meet.

Sophomore diver Julie May also represents Nebraska at the championships. May qualified for the 1-meter event after a first-place finish in last week's NCAA zone-qualifying meet.

Nebraska also qualified four relay teams. They are the 200, 400 and 800 freestyle and the 400 medley relay.

Missy Allington, Shauna Gilmore, Cindy Hoppel, Lorie Kapperman, Emily Ricketts and Linda Sebesta join Powers and Hurley on Nebraska's relays.

None of Nebraska's relays are seeded high, but Huppert says he thinks they could score in all of them.

"We are most solid in the 400 freestyle (relay)," he said. "The 800 (freestyle relay) is our toughest. But, if we place good, it could give us momentum and get the ball rolling."

Huskers begin spring practice

Analysis by Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

Just when you thought it was all over until next fall...Nebraska officially begins spring football practice March 31, hoping to prevent the Cornhuskers' current two-game losing streak from becoming any longer.

Nebraska lost to Oklahoma in the final game of the 1985 regular season, then lost to Michigan in the Fiesta Bowl. Nebraska will open its 1986 season Sept. 6 at home against Florida State. The Huskers lost to the Seminoles in last year's opening game.

Going into spring drills, the Huskers return 11 starters from last year's 9-3 team, including six on defense. Thirteen players who started at least one game last season with the defensive unit are returning.

On the offense, the Huskers return five starters, including Heisman Trophy candidate Doug DuBose at I-back. DuBose is sixth on the Nebraska career rushing list. Junior Keith Jones, the fastest football player ever at Nebraska, is second on the depth chart behind DuBose. Jones has been timed in the 40-yard dash at 4.33 seconds. Other hopefuls at I-back include junior Jon Kelley and sophomore redshirt Jeff Wheeler.

Who will throw the lead blocks for the aforementioned back will take a little longer to answer. The fullback slot is wide open, and four players are prime candidates. Tyreese Knox, a sophomore from Daly City, Calif., will begin his fullback career after a solid performance with the freshman team last fall at I-back. Knox, who rushed for 483 yards and five touchdowns with the freshmen, was asked to move to fullback after the Fiesta Bowl. His 4.44 speed in the 40-yard dash makes him the third-fastest player on the team.

Senior Ken Kaelin, who backed up '85 graduate Tom Rathman last season, also will challenge for starting honors. Kaelin, a 5-10, 215-pound fullback from Westerville, rushed 17 times for 137 yards and two touchdowns last season. Senior Dan Casterline and junior Micah Heibel will round out the top four full-

back spots to begin the spring.

Perhaps the most intense battle will be for quarterback. Junior McCathorn Clayton returns, as does sophomore Steve Taylor, whose late-game performance in the Fiesta Bowl nearly rallied the Huskers past Michigan. Taylor never started during the '85 season, but came off the bench in several games to post impressive performances. He finished the season with 14 rushes for 112 yards and two touchdowns and completed three passes for 38 yards during the regular season with the varsity.

Clayton and Taylor will be pushed by junior Clete Blakeman and Jeff Taylor, who may forego spring football to remain with the baseball team.

Whoever the starting quarterback is, he will have a wide variety of talent to throw to. Senior split end Robb Schnitzler returns to his starting position, as does junior wingback Von Sheppard. Sheppard also may spend time in the backfield if the Huskers continue to work on the power-I formation they used in the Fiesta Bowl. Junior Pernell Gatson also returns to challenge for wingback after sitting out last season because of a knee injury. Sophomore Dana Brinson also will battle for a starting position at wingback.

Nebraska's tight ends will be Tom Banderas, a 6-2, 225-pound junior who played second-string to last year's Todd Frain. Sophomore Todd Milikan, a 6-2, 215-pound player from Shenandoah, Iowa, will push for the starting duties as well.

The offensive line, usually the biggest rebuilding concern for Nebraska, won't be much of one this spring.

Nebraska returns two starters from last year's squad and three others who were second-teamers. Left tackle Keven Lightner, a 6-2, 280-pound junior, returns, as do left guards Mike Hoefler, 6-5, 245, and Ron Galois, 6-0, 265. Lincoln East graduate Mark Cooper and senior Jeff Sellentin will compete for the center spot.

The right side of the front wall is solid, returning junior John McCormick, a 6-0, 250-pound guard, and senior tackle Tom Welter, 6-4 and 275, from last year's team. Brad Johnson,



Andrea Hoy/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska quarterback McCathorn Clayton evades new Mexico defensive players in a game last season. Clayton and Steve Taylor will be vying for the No. 1 quarterback spot when spring practice opens March 31.

Rob Maggard and Stan Parker also return to attempt to earn starting jobs.

Defensively, the Huskers' main concern is the condition of linebacker Marc Munford's knee. Munford underwent knee surgery following the Kansas game last season.

John Melton, Nebraska's linebacker coach, said Munford probably won't practice this spring, but may be ready for next fall.

"It's just phenomenal how well he's recovering," Melton said. "He tested at 61 percent the other day (Wednesday), and I wouldn't absolutely count him out of spring ball, but it looks highly doubtful."

Melton said the linebacker situation overall "looks pretty good." Nebraska returns Kevin Parson, a 6-3, 230-pound junior who started at weakside linebacker last season. Backing up Parson on the weakside will be junior Blake Henning.

On the strongside, the Huskers will have sophomore Leroy Etienne and senior Steve Forch to pick up the slack if Munford isn't healthy. Sopho-

more Steve DeShazer from Kansas City will also contribute following a solid performance with the freshmen last fall.

Nebraska's defensive line returns six of the top 10 players from 1st season. Sophomore left end Broderick Thomas, a 6-4, 235-pound Houston native, is back after ample playing time with the varsity last season as a freshman. Tony Holloway, 6-2, 205, and Brad Tyrer, 6-2, 220, will challenge for the other end spot.

The battle for the middle guard position will be intense. Senior Danny Noonan will start the spring as the top noseguard, but sophomores Lawrence Pete and Kent Wells will also vie for starting honors. Pete set a Nebraska team bench-press record of 500 pounds Wednesday. Noonan had benched 485 earlier in the week.

The tackles will include Chris Spachman, a 6-5, 265-pound senior who started last season. All-American Jim Skow will be replaced at right tackle by either junior Lee Jones, a 6-1, 230-pound player from Omaha, or Danny

Groskurth, a 6-4, 240-pound junior.

Nebraska's defensive backfield returns three starters, the only hole to be filled being that of right cornerback, where Dennis Watkins started last season. Mike Carl, a 5-11, 180-pound senior from Gretna is expected to fill the vacancy to start the spring, though he may be pushed by sophomores Charles Fryar and Marvin Sanders.

Right cornerback Brian Davis returns, as does monster Brian Washington. Cleo Miller and Gary Schneider also figure to contribute at cornerback. The safety position will be fought for by Chris Carr, Bryan Siebler, last year's starters and Dan Thayer, all of whom will be seniors this season.

Nebraska's special teams will be led by placekicker Dale Klein, a junior who connected on 13 of 20 field goal attempts and 38 of 38 extra points last season. Sophomore Chris Drennan will give Klein competition. The punting chores will be handled by either redshirted sophomore John Kroeker or Craig Schnitzler, a junior from Battle Creek.

NU wrestlers could've, should've but didn't win

By Doug Carroll
Staff Reporter

It was a "could've and should've" situation for the Cornhuskers at the NCAA wrestling tournament last Saturday in Iowa City, Iowa, said Nebraska coach Tim Neumann.

But Nebraska didn't.

Nebraska took nine wrestlers to the tournament and came back with a 12th place finish and one medal winner, heavyweight Gary Albright placed third.

Neumann said that if three matches had gone the other way, Nebraska could have placed as high as sixth in

the tournament. Gil Sanchez, Keenan Turner and Jeff Coltvet all lost close matches, Neumann said, and hurt their chances for placing. Neumann said several of the team's losses came in the last few seconds of the match, which upset him.

While Neumann said he was disappointed, "the 12th place finish was a 30-place move" for Nebraska. Nebraska finished 42nd last year.

Heavyweight Albright led Nebraska. Albright, the second seed, pinned his way into the semifinals before losing 4-2 to Kirk Trost of Michigan, the eventual champion. Neumann said Albright

did "super" and got beat by an opponent who wrestled Albright's own style.

After his loss, Albright came back to pin Edinboro's Dean Hall to set up a fifth meeting with top-seeded Tom Erikson of Oklahoma State. Erikson had been upset by John Heropoulos of Iowa State, the eventual runner-up. Erikson led the series 2-1, with one tie, but Albright evened it by pinning Erikson in 6:57 to earn third place and revenge for a 4-0 loss at the Big Eight championships.

"He went out with style," Neumann said.

Albright finished the season with a 43-4-1 record, including 36 falls, the

third most in NCAA history for a single season. His career record was 112-19-4, with 68 falls. His five falls in the tournament earned him the award for the most falls in the tournament, making him the only wrestler in NCAA history to win the award twice. He also won it his freshman year when he placed seventh. Albright was the 1984 NCAA runner-up.

With the NCAA tournament over, Neumann said the team will get a short break before starting freestyle practices. He said the team will send wrestlers to as many open tournaments as possible this spring and summer.

Among the plans Neumann has for next year: Redshirting several of this year's NCAA tournament qualifiers. Some of the wrestlers who he said will be redshirted are Terry Cook, Turner, Coltvet and Cody Olson. Neumann said these wrestlers will sit out a year in order to get stronger and to work on various aspects of their wrestling.

Neumann, who recently found out that he's been hired as the permanent coach, said he and assistant coach Mark Perry, who also was hired this year, are "ecstatic" about their new jobs.

"Now we can get started building the type of program we want," he said.