

Women's track team will try to increase national rankings

By Rob White
Staff Reporter

Last year the Nebraska women's track team won conference titles in both the indoor and outdoor competitions, in addition to the Big Eight cross-country title. With most of the major contributors from last year's team returning and the addition of several newcomers, coach Gary Pepin is hoping for more of the same this year.

"We're looking to duplicate that feat and raise our national ranking," Pepin said. "Last year, we were rated as the fifth-best dual team in the country, and I think we'll be better than a year ago."

Pepin said team balance will be the key this year.

"The strong point of our team isn't any one area," Pepin said. "We just have really good team balance. We'll be firing bullets at people in every event. In every event, we'll have someone capable of contending."

Key losses for the women's team include middle-distance runner Nicole Ali, triple jumper Sha-ri Pendleton and Deb Smith.

Angela Thacker will return for her senior season on the outdoor circuit only; she will concentrate on the long jump and sprints.

National junior college triple-jump record-holder Renita Robinson is expected to fill the vacancy left by Pendleton after going 42' 1 1/2" at El Camino Junior College.

"We're hoping Renita will take up right where Pendleton left off," Pepin said.

Other jump contributors are expected to be indoor Big Eight long jump champion Karen Kruger, who also competes in sprints and hurdles, high-jumper Tammy Thurman and Texas State Champion high jumper Kim Guthrie.

Karyn Szarkowski, who competed in the Goodwill Games in Moscow this summer, is one

of the top javelin throwers in the country. Junior college transfer Toyia Barnes will add depth at all three of the throwing events after her first-, second- and third-place finishes in the shot put, discus and javelin, respectively, at the California State Junior College meet last year.

Pam Brown, a freshman, also comes in with the third best discus mark in the American high school ranks last year.

Jamaican Sharon Powell won four national junior college titles at Eastern Oklahoma State last year and should be a key addition to the middle distance and relay events.

"She's a terrific prospect in all areas, from the 400 through the 800," Pepin said.

Freshman Valerie Bongo and redshirt sophomore Susan Samuels are among the top sprinters, while Pepin also looks for improvement from Michelle Miller.

Angela Jones, Linetta Wilson, Michelle Milling and Belvia Moody are other holdover sprinters.

Among the hurdlers returning, Kruger, Vicky Johnson and Stephanie Thomas boast the most impressive credentials, Pepin said.

Beth Webster, a sprinter-hurdler, will be a welcome addition to the track team following her three Delaware state high school championships.

Middle distance runner Carol Nunnally also returns, as do distance specialists Mary Amen, Karlene Erickson and Allison Laack.

Newcomers Michele Marthaler and South African junior champ Juliet Prowse also will be major factors in the long distance events.

In addition, former All-American Laura Wight returns from injuries that kept her out of competitions last year.

Another former All-American attempting a comeback is high jumper Heather Smith.

"We're keeping our fingers crossed with her," Pepin said.

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1986-87 line-up announced

The Campus Recreation Department has announced the following upcoming events:

Flag football officials are needed for the intramural program. The first meeting for flag football officials is scheduled for Tuesday at 8:30 p.m. in Henzlik Auditorium.

The intramural men's, women's and coed cross-country meet will be Wednesday at 4:15 p.m. at Oak Lake Park. Runners can enter at

the site. The entry deadline for men's and women's tennis singles and co-rec tennis doubles is Wednesday. Entries must be submitted to the Campus Recreation office at 1740 Vine St.

Men's, women's and coed Punt, Pass and Kick is scheduled for Thursday at 4 p.m. at the Cather/Pound Intramural Fields at 17th and Vine streets. Participants may enter at the site.

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