

Record-setter wants new challenges at championships

By Kyle Schurman
Staff Reporter

Junior Linetta Wilson won two different events at the NCAA track and field championships last season, but she is not satisfied.

She said she wants to run at least as fast as she did last season, and even faster if possible.

"If God gives me the strength, I would run a lot faster than I did last year," Wilson said. "I'm going to train a lot harder than I did last year and keep a real positive attitude."

Wilson said improving on last season won't be easy because she won the 500-meter dash at last year's NCAA indoor championships and the 400-meter hurdles at last year's outdoor national championship meet. She also set the collegiate indoor 400 record, the world indoor 500 record, the Big Eight meet outdoor 400 record, and Nebraska records as a member of two relay teams in 1987.

But Wilson said she is ready for new challenges.

"This is a new year and I'm going to take (last year) as a really good experience," Wilson said. "I'm going to try to move on."

Wilson said she has had help in getting motivated for this season from Nebraska assistant track coach Mark Devenney.

"(Devenney) just motivates me," Wilson said. "He always has something positive to say. Some people are just good for each other, and coach Devenney and I are good for each other as far as competing is concerned."

Wilson said she considers herself a team motivator rather than a team leader.

Nebraska track coach Gary Pepin agreed.

"She's well-liked on the team," Pepin said. "They respect her hard work and competitiveness. When they see someone who tries that hard and who is that competitive, they also try harder. She has been a big asset to

our team."
In Nebraska's quadrangular meet Saturday, Wilson won the 800, but she said she did not enjoy running in that event.

"For conditioning it was OK," Wilson said, "but I'd hate to have to run that in a meet where I'd have high competition. I'll stick with the 400 and 500."

Pepin said the Nebraska coaches did not know what to expect from Wilson when she came to Lincoln after graduating from John Muir High School near Los Angeles.

"She had outstanding credentials out of high school," Pepin said. "We expected her to be an excellent runner, but she surpassed our expectations. She has outstanding athletic ability and great drive and competitiveness."

Wilson said she did not expect to have the success she has had when she graduated.

"A lot of people said I could do it, but I really didn't believe them," Wilson said. "I guess you never believe you can do something until after you've done it."

Wilson said adjusting to the colder weather in Nebraska was the toughest thing she had to do. She said Nebraska is a good place to go to school and run track.

"If you have any crazy social life, though, you won't have any here in Nebraska," Wilson said.

Wilson said she is going into the Army after she graduates. She is currently in Nebraska's ROTC program.

"I like the discipline, I like the training, and I like the career opportunity," Wilson said. "After college I don't have to worry about a job — I already have one."

Wilson said she is confident about making a return trip to the NCAA championships in 1988.

"The training is there; it's just a matter of going and doing it," Wilson said. "I feel real positive about being there and competing well."



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Wilson



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