

Coach calls tournament location a plus

By Darran Fowler
Senior Reporter

It may not be home but it's the next best thing.

The Nebraska volleyball team can claim the Omaha Civic Auditorium, the site of the Big Eight tournament, as its second home this weekend.

Cornhusker assistant volleyball coach John Cook said having the tournament in Omaha "most definitely" is to the Huskers' advantage.

Not so much because the location is more beneficial to Husker fans, but because at this point of the season the less time a team spends on the road the better, he said.

"Last year in Salina (Kan.), we still had more people than any of the other schools," he said. "I think having it in Omaha will be an advantage because it is so close and the city of Omaha is so excited about having it."

"Any time you save on travel time, missing classes and things like that it's a real big advantage."

Nebraska, which is the No. 1 seed, and No. 4 seed Iowa State open the

tournament at 6 p.m. Friday. That match will be followed by an 8 p.m. contest between No. 2 seed Colorado and No. 3 seed Oklahoma.

The championship match will be at 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

Another advantage to playing in Omaha is that Husker players also have the chance to spend Thanksgiving with family and friends, something not possible in the past.

The Huskers leave for Omaha Thursday night and will practice Friday at 8 a.m.

"We get Thanksgiving Day off," senior middle blocker Virginia Stahr said. "The coaches gave us a break this year."

But not too long of a break.

"We're at the point of the season where we're not even thinking of taking a break," Stahr said. "Other times, in the past, we would be thinking that the season's almost over. We don't want that. We're real focused right now."

Nebraska and Colorado met in last year's conference final, which the Huskers won in four games.

Stahr expects another NU-CU title match-up this year.

"That would be my guess," she said. "I would be real surprised if it wasn't."

"I'll tell you what, though. They can beat us if we don't play well and we know that."

This year, Nebraska claimed its 14th-straight regular-season conference championship in finishing 12-0 in the Big Eight. The Huskers have won the tournament 12 of the 13 years its been held, losing to Oklahoma in 1987.

"We're excited we went through the Big Eight undefeated. That's important. That was one of our goals," Stahr said. "Last year we didn't do that."

"We have a lot of pride in winning both the Big Eight conference and tournament. We also need to end up No. 1 going into regionals."

The winner of the conference tournament receives an automatic bid into the NCAA's 32-team tournament. Nebraska currently is the top-ranked team in the Mideast Regional,

and probably will receive an at-large bid if it loses.

Because of the automatic bid, Colorado will have a lot of motivation to win the conference tournament, Cook said.

"Nebraska has everything to lose and the other teams have a whole lot to gain," he said. "Other teams can just cut loose."

"Colorado should be the most motivated because they're real close to getting in the NCAA. If we beat ISU, I think we'll be playing in the finals against Colorado."

Colorado suffered losses to Texas and Colorado State over the weekend, but Cook expects the Lady Buffs to be ready.

"I know the players on that team and they're competitors and they'll fight," he said. "If that's who we play in the finals, they'll play as hard as they can play with the type of kids they got. I mean they'll battle."

"I think they play their best matches against Nebraska. There are a lot of individual rivals on both teams and that brings out the best in

the competition."

Notes:
● Reserved tournament tickets are \$6 per day. A tournament pass, good for both days, is \$10. General admission tickets are \$4.

Tickets are on sale at Civic Auditorium.

● The Nebraska sports information office announced that if the NU Coliseum is chosen as a site for a NCAA first-round volleyball match, tickets for that match will go on sale Nov. 27.

Tournament sites will be announced at 7 p.m. Nov. 26.

If Nebraska is selected to play at home, tickets will go on sale at the South Stadium ticket office at 9 a.m. A total of 2,500 will be available, and will cost \$5 for adults and \$3 for children.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln students who present their student ID cards will not be admitted for free.

The match, between Nebraska and another team from the Mideast Region, would be played at 2 p.m. Dec. 2.

Nebraska basketball players to 'hunt' Kangaroos during Thanksgiving break

By Cory Golden
Staff Reporter

While normal hunters in the state will be looking for pheasant or quail, the Nebraska men's basketball team will set its sights on gunning down kangaroos.



Nee

The Cornhuskers will open their regular season Saturday against the University of Missouri-Kansas City Kangaroos.

The game begins at 7:35 p.m. at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Nebraska coach Danny Nee said his team is ready to forego Thanksgiving turkey for a Kangaroo shoot.

"This will be a really long week," he said. "We're all anxious to start playing."

Nee said he doesn't know what to expect from Missouri-Kansas City. The Kangaroos opened their season by posting a 109-73 exhibition victory against Windsor, Canada.

"They've got a lot of young talent and Lee Hunt's a good coach," Nee

said. "He used to be an assistant at UCLA."

"But, other than that, we don't know a lot about them because we haven't played them."

The Kangaroos return five lettermen, including three starters, from last year's 9-18 team. Two of those returning starters, center David Robinson and guard Frank Mulak, combined for 55 points in the win against Windsor.

Nee declined to name a starting lineup for the Missouri-Kansas City contest. He said Nebraska will have a flexible lineup, depending on the situation.

Nee said opponents' defense will determine who starts at guard. He said sophomore Chris Cresswell will start when Nebraska needs a sharp-shooting guard who serves as a zone buster, while Keith Moody's quickness could be used against a pressure defense.

Nee said Clifford Scales will be switched between point and off-guard with Cresswell, and senior Ray Richardson could move from small forward if the Huskers need more

height.

"We want to use our versatility," Nee said. "We plan on utilizing all our personnel. Starting is more important to the players than a coach."

In addition to depth, Nee said Nebraska's other true strength is putting points on the board.

"We have the ability to be a good offensive ball club," he said. "I think that we have a lot of versatility there as well. We have a lot of guys who can do a lot of different things."

After reviewing tapes of his team's play during its 104-90 exhibition win against the Athletes in Action, Nee said the Huskers' defense is their primary concern.

"We have to work on transition defense," Nee said. "Athletes in Action got too many easy baskets. We have to work on our individual defense on and off the ball, too."

Nee said Nebraska's primary goal against Missouri-Kansas City is to record a victory.

"We want to win -- that's the main objective," Nee said. "We have to find a way to win."

McDermott says he will stay at NU until Big Eights are won or longer

By Paul Domeier
Staff Reporter

Nebraska men's tennis coach Kerry McDermott said some Florida schools sent out feelers to him this summer about leaving Nebraska.

But McDermott said he isn't done at Nebraska.

"When I got this job, I said I wanted to win a Big Eight championship," he said. "I probably won't leave 'til I win a Big Eight title."

Even then, he said, he would likely stay with the Cornhuskers.

"I like Nebraska too much to leave," McDermott said. "I like the change of seasons."

McDermott, a Grand Island native, is a former Nebraska No. 1 singles player. He became an assistant to Coach Jim Poirier for one year, then took control of his alma mater in the fall of 1981.

Since he became coach, his teams have improved to a best-ever second-place finish in the Big Eight in 1989, and Husker player Steven Jung finished second in the NCAA singles tournament last spring.

Jung returned to Lincoln last weekend, and dropped an exhibition match to Matthias Mueller. Mueller

is Nebraska's No. 1 singles player.

McDermott said Jung's performance and the nine individual Big Eight titles his players have won are nice, but he is looking for more.

"I want the team to continue to do well and not just have a couple of players doing well," he said.

Some members of McDermott's team will play at the Drake Invitational, an optional singles tournament, that begins Wednesday. The tournament concludes Sunday.

The Huskers who will compete include Scott Randolph, Karl Falkland, Joseph Rahme, David Moyer and Andy Auch Moedy. The five Nebraska players will face a variety of competition, as anyone is allowed to compete.

This meet is the last action the Huskers will see as a team until February 24, when the team plays Creighton. Until then, the squad has three months of practice, which McDermott said should help his team improve.

"The boring stuff you do -- the drills, the patterns -- is what makes you a better player through repetition," he said.

The schedule remains so constant, he said, that when Jung went to prac-

tice Friday, he correctly predicted the agenda.

McDermott credited assistant coach Scott Jacobson for his help with training the players.

"Scott is my drill sergeant in practice," McDermott said. "He's better than I am at teaching technique. I think I'm better at the mental aspect."

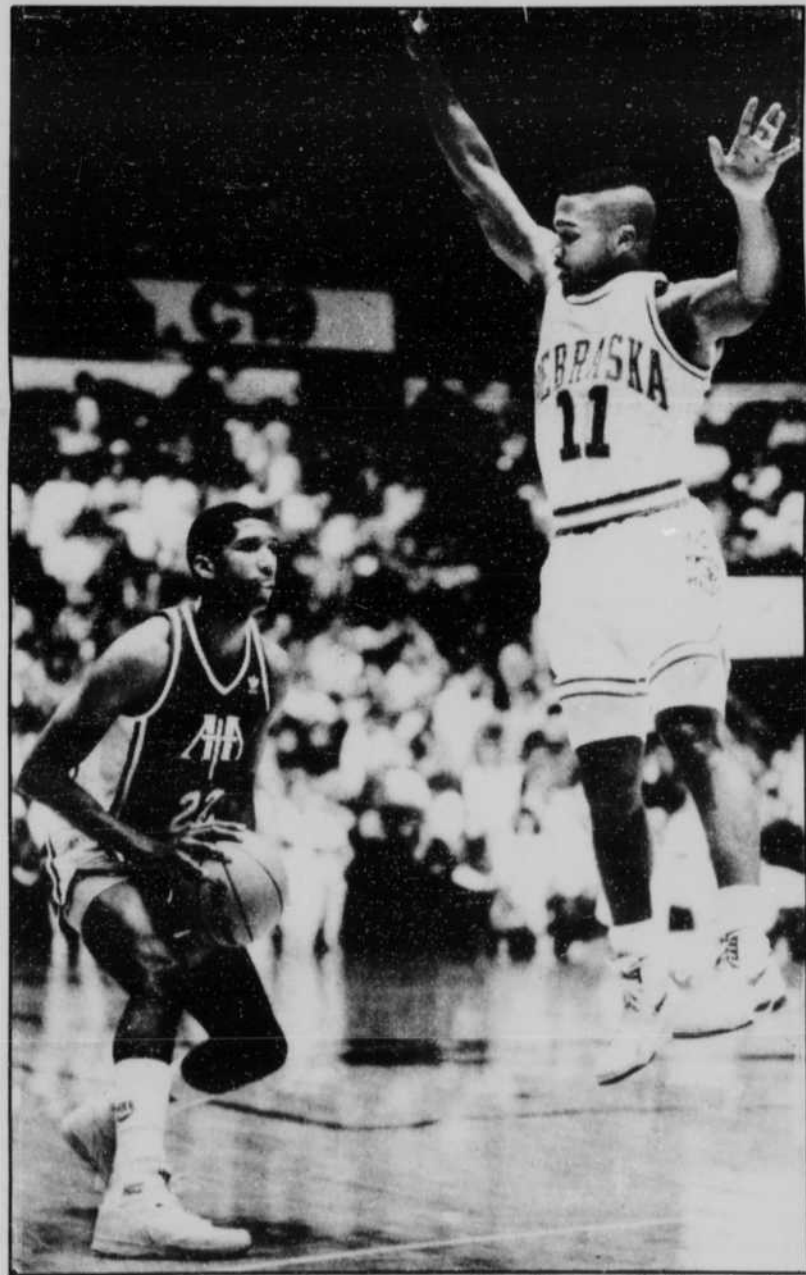
And McDermott handles the recruiting, the biggest part of any successful collegiate program in any sport.

From California, he recruited Steven and Stuart Jung. From Europe he recruited Robert Sjolholm and Mueller. From New York he recruited Ken Feuer.

"These guys are starting to have a lot of success nationally," McDermott said.

McDermott said as the program advances, the team gets proven tennis players instead of untrained athletes. Then he and Jacobson can polish instead of teach.

"We can take guys like Matthias Mueller and Ken Feuer and push them further," McDermott said. "The top-20 programs are only working with naturally talented kids."



Al Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Keith Moody leaps into the air while trying to defend against Athletes in Action's Rod Foster.

in brief SPORTS

Husker wrestler wins weight class

Nebraska's Jason Kelber defeated Chris Bollin in the finals of the 126-pound weight class to highlight the Cornhusker wrestling team's participation in the St. Louis Open.

Kelber won his decision against Bollin in overtime. In addition to Kelber, the other

top Nebraska finishers were Dave Droegmueller, Paul Herrera, Scott Chenoweth and Joe Malecek. Herrera finished second in the 150-pound weight class after dropping an 11-3 decision to Oklahoma State's Todd Chesbro, while Droegmueller, Chenoweth and Malecek all finished fourth.

Gymnasts to compete in Colorado

The Nebraska men's gymnastics team will not have much time to enjoy its Thanksgiving break this week, as it will travel to Colo-

rado Springs, Colo., to compete in the Rocky Mountain Open on Saturday.