

KU game important for softball team

By Darran Fowler
Staff Reporter

Nebraska softball coach Ron Wolforth's thoughts have been on Kansas for some time, and now is the time for the Jayhawks to be on the minds of his players.

The 15-11 Cornhuskers travel to Lawrence, Kan., for a 2 p.m. double-header Saturday against their rivals in what will be the conference debut for

both teams.

Nebraska will remain in Lawrence until Sunday for a non-conference game against Pittsburg (Kan.) Gorillas.

Wolforth said he and his coaching staff have been thinking about Kansas since they convened for spring practices Jan. 16.

During an interview Wednesday morning, he said he hoped that immediately following Tuesday's double-

header against Wisconsin-Green Bay, his players would switch mentally to the Jayhawks.

"These are going to be two of the biggest games that we play all year," he said. "I think there are eight to 10 really crucial games for us this year, and these are two of them. I'm not so sure that any of those are any bigger than this one."

Neither team currently is ranked, although Nebraska surged to No. 6

earlier this season.

The conference does have two ranked teams in Missouri at No. 12, and Oklahoma State, the preseason conference favorite, ranked fifth. Nebraska split with Oklahoma State earlier this season with neither of those games counting towards the conference standings.

Wolforth said Missouri is good, but he is concerned less with the Tigers than Kansas and Oklahoma State. And

because he feels Nebraska matches up well with Oklahoma State, he said Kansas causes the Huskers "more trouble than anybody" in the Big Eight.

"I'm puzzled that they are not in the rankings because they are a very, very talented team," he said.

Wolforth's thinking about the Jayhawks dates back to last season

See THOUGHTS on 8

Beck says pressure led to OU basketball reinstatement

By Jeff Apel
Senior Editor

The on-again, off-again Oklahoma women's basketball program is on again, and Nebraska coach Angela Beck couldn't be happier.

Beck said she was ecstatic when she learned that Oklahoma officials would reinstate the Sooner women's basketball program. The program was reinstated Thursday, nine days after it was suspended because of low attendance figures.

Oklahoma averaged less than 100 fans for each of its home games last season while finishing with a 9-21 record.

Beck said she never understood the decision because Big Eight women's basketball is at an all-time high in terms of attendance. She said the 1989-90 women's conference tournament in Salina, Kan., turned a profit this year, while Nebraska averaged a league-high 1,500 fans for each of its home games.

"The decision was so old-fashioned," Beck said. "We had to show that this was the '90s and they could not get away with this."

Beck said she felt like she won a major battle when she learned the Oklahoma program was reinstated. She went through a battle to help get

the program back in place, as she was one of 1,800 members of the Women's Basketball Coaches Association who issued a strong statement of protest after the original decision was made.

The Women's Basketball Coaches Association, which was meeting in Knoxville, Tenn., in conjunction with the women's Final Four at the time of the original decision, protested the suspension by threatening Oklahoma officials with a lawsuit. Beck said the basis of that suit would have been Title IX, which outlaws discrimination based on sex or race.

WBCA members contended that Oklahoma's decision was discriminatory, because the Sooner men's

basketball program was not affected by the decision.

Beck said she didn't hide her emotions when she learned Oklahoma officials voluntarily reinstated the women's program.

"I was cheering," she said. "I felt like I was a winner."

Beck said the WBCA attacked Oklahoma's decision by holding a strategy session at 6:30 a.m. the day after it was announced, then holding a press conference that was attended by 200 media members at 10:15 a.m. She said the fact that the suspension was announced while WBCA members were all in Knoxville rather than spread out across the country was

critical.

"I think it was a very timely decision in our favor," Beck said.

Beck said it is obvious that Oklahoma buckled under the pressure. In addition to the heat applied by the WBCA, the Oklahoma State Legislature also voiced its disapproval of the suspension, as it announced that it was unanimously opposed to it.

Beck said the suspension and reinstatement could leave a scar on the Oklahoma athletic department.

"It reflects the lack of quality they have around that situation," she said. "I think Oklahoma has a lot of deficiencies in sports programs, unlike we have here."

Sports slashing provides solution to money loss

Now that Nebraska athletic director Bob Devaney has admitted that his department is losing money, it's time to begin slashing sports.

That's right -- not drop. Slash. Consider that in the 1989-90 fiscal year, the Nebraska athletic

dept.

Extensive travel means only one thing -- money. And it's money that shouldn't be spent on a sport that most students don't even know exists at Nebraska.

A sport that is just as guilty in terms of no interests and financial wastes is swimming. If Devaney is faced with the hard prospect of chopping one sport, this should be it.

In the 1987-88 year alone, the Nebraska men's swimming team lost \$331,053. That's far too much to pay for any program, let alone one that is considered nothing but a nuisance.

Devaney's feelings towards swimming are well known -- athletic department officials will tell you that he refers to the Devaney Sports Center pool as that "damned pool" -- and they should be relinquished by dropping the sport. At least one reporter would breathe a sigh of relief if this sport was vanished off the face of the earth.

If Devaney followed these suggestions and continued to implement his 5 percent across-the-board cut for other sports except men's basketball and football, the financial picture would begin to look better.

Consider that Devaney would save at least \$500,000 previously wasted dollars by cutting the swimming programs, and probably could save around \$200,000 by dumping the golf and cross country programs. Implement the 5 percent cut, and it's safe to say that at least \$850,000 would be saved, if not more.

If more money needs to be saved, chop additional sports. The next likely candidates, in order, would be men's and women's gymnastics (both BIG money losers), tennis (ouch) and my beloved baseball and softball programs.

Of course, it is unlikely that any of these suggestions will be implemented, as Devaney has remained adamantly opposed to cutting any sport. That's a dangerous position to take, especially considering the current financial situation of the Nebraska athletic department.

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Jeff Apel

department lost \$1.8 million. That's a considerable hunk of change even for a domain where the football program raked in \$9,783,161 in the 1987-88 fiscal year.

To solve this problem, Devaney should announce that Nebraska is going to drop several sports. No, the Cornhuskers shouldn't follow Oklahoma's sexist lead and cut a woman's sport while leaving their male counterparts alone -- if one sport goes, so does the other.

The sport which commands the most attention in terms of monetary waste is track. The Nebraska track program lost more than \$500,000 in 1987-88 -- that figure is sure to increase this year -- largely because its season begins in September with cross country and ends in May with outdoor track.

If the NCAA Presidents Commission hasn't figured out already that year-round competition is too much for athletes, Devaney and fellow athletic directors should. This could be accomplished by prohibiting athletes from competing in cross country and indoor and outdoor track in the same season, or, better yet, drop cross country all together.

Cross country is nothing more than an extension of the track season. Sure, there's a few meets thrown in to waste some money on, but asking the athletic department to support cross country in a time of financial need is absurd.

Another sport that needs to be dropped is golf. The Nebraska golf teams are at a disadvantage because they are based in the Midwest, which means they have to travel extensively in order to com-

Winners and Losers in the UNL Athletic Dept. for 1987-88

EARNERS
Men's Football

earned: \$9,783,161
spent: \$6,125,883
outlays: \$84,688
NET: \$3,572,389

Men's Basketball

earned: \$2,347,418
spent: \$1,343,660
outlays: \$44,552
NET: \$952,206

LOSERS

*includes men's & women's cross country and indoor & outdoor track

-\$546,394

-\$331,053

-\$291,779

-\$305,018

Andy Manhart / Daily Nebraskan

Upcoming meet tough but beneficial for NU tracksters

By Sara Bauder
Staff Reporter

For most of the Nebraska track team, Saturday's Crimson Classic will mark the beginning of a new season.

But for 21 Cornhuskers who opened their outdoor season with last week's Florida Relays, it will be a continuation of a campaign that will be capped off by the upcoming Big Eight and NCAA championships.

Nebraska will move closer to those competitions by traveling to Tuscaloosa, Ala., to compete in Saturday's meet. In addition to Nebraska and Alabama, the teams that will compete include Virginia and Colorado State.

The meet begins at 10:45 a.m. with the women's shot put and men's discus. The first running event, the women's 5,000-meter competition, starts at 11 a.m.

Nebraska track coach Gary Pepin said the meet will be beneficial even though no team scores will be kept. With no team scoring, Pepin said athletes can concentrate on individual efforts and also compete in events that they normally would not enter. Pepin said he is anticipating a tough meet.

"Alabama is always a real good team and Virginia will be good, too," he said. "Colorado State has some good athletes, but they probably don't have the depth they need."

Pepin said he is expecting several athletes to respond to Alabama's warmer weather by recording quicker times.

"You just don't ever see real fast sprint times run in cool weather," he said. "All the good sprint times are run in moderate or warm weather. You just can't get loose in cold weather."

The returning meet champions for the Nebraska women include distance runner Sammie Gdowski and javelin thrower Nora Rockenbauer. Gdowski captured last year's 5,000-meter title in a school-record time of 16:17 minutes.

The returning champions for the Nebraska men are Dieudonne Kwizera in the 800 and 1,500 runs, Kevin Coleman in the shot put, Jeff Hooper in the discus and Dwight Mitchell in the triple jump. Those performances helped the Husker men unofficially capture the team title at last year's meet.