

Improved defense needed to win UNO doubleheader

By Todd Cooper
Staff Reporter

Although Nebraska's softball team sputtered defensively this weekend, Coach Ron Wolforth expects improved fielding against the University of Nebraska at Omaha today.

If there is improvement on defense, it will complement the Cornhuskers' offensive production.

Nebraska and UNO play a 6 p.m. doubleheader in Omaha today.

"Basically, we were a steamroller without much defense," Wolforth said of Nebraska's 4-2 record and second-place finish at the Kearney State Invitational.

The Huskers' 69 runs during their six games at the tournament was the highest total a Wolforth-coached team has engineered. "We were simply very productive," Wolforth said. "I think we had at least ten hits in every game. I've never had a program do that."

But it was a lack of defensive execution this weekend that concerns Wolforth going into today's game.

"Offense wins games, but defense wins championships," Wolforth said. "We were simply sub-par. I felt our defense would be outstanding at the beginning of the season and they still can be, but we need a lot of work."

Work will have to be done in various areas, Wolforth said.

"I felt going into the season that our shortstop (Shae Sloan) and second baseman (Michelle Cuddeford) would be one of the best double-play combinations in the nation, but they were sub-par this weekend.

"We just have to get it together." The pitching of Huskers Stephanie Skegas and Marie Bowie also was sub-par, but that could have been because of nagging injuries that both pitchers have been experiencing, Wolforth said.

"Our pitchers are not 100 percent, but we need improvement in both of them," he said. "They're the same pitchers that pitched against Oklahoma State and Kansas last year, so they're very capable."

Wolforth said he's concerned about how his team will respond to playing another smaller school after winning by big margins over the type of schools at the Kearney State tournament.

"UNO has no serious threats, but they're a scrappy ball club," Wolforth said. "It would make their whole fall if they beat Nebraska. I just hope they don't catch our kids with our guards down."

The Huskers could find themselves posting several blowouts this season, Wolforth said.

"They can help you if you don't focus on the score and try and get as many runs as you can," he said.

Soccer club gains two victories

From Staff Reports

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln women's soccer club opened its season with a pair of victories at Iowa State over the weekend.

On Saturday, UNL beat Northern Iowa 2-1. Scoring goals for UNL were Kristi Halik, who scored unassisted. With less than two minutes left in the

game, Kim Phillips scored with an assist from Ann Smith.

On Sunday, UNL beat Iowa State 2-1. Amy Smith scored an unassisted goal, and Phillips scored on a penalty kick.

This weekend the team plays at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. In addition to UNL and Kansas, Oklahoma and Kansas State will compete.

Coach will miss assistant

By Scott Stempson
Staff Reporter

It looks like Nebraska has lost to Miami again.

The University of Miami announced last week that its new track coach will be Rodney Price, the women's sprints and hurdles coach at Nebraska.

Sam Jankovich, Miami's athletic director, announced that a search committee had completed a "rigorous nationwide search to arrive at the best possible candidate." The committee decided that Price was the right man for the job.

"We're extremely pleased to have Rodney as our new track and field coach," Jankovich said. "I am confident that he will be a valuable asset to the University as we continue our commitment to provide the finest programs of academics and athletics in the nation."

What's Miami's gain is Nebraska's loss.

"I have mixed emotions about it," said Gary Pepin, Nebraska's track coach. "We hate to see him leave, but an opportunity to get a head coaching position at a school like Miami doesn't come around very often."

Pepin said he knew Price was looking for a coaching job, and he put his name in for consideration to several schools.

"I thought it would be a great experience for him at least to get interviewed by some of these schools," Pepin said.

Price coached Northeastern Oklahoma Junior College from 1986-88 prior to coming to Nebraska. He said he's looking forward to getting back into that position.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge," he said. "I wanted a

good Division I program that needed some building but had the potential and Miami was one of those schools."

Price cited many reasons making it tough to leave Nebraska including his family who he said "love it here," but he said the toughest thing would be leaving the athletes he coaches.

"I've really formed a bond with these people," he said. "That will be tough to leave."

Pepin said Price's duties will be divided up among the staff. The women's sprints and hurdles will be coached by Steve Rainbolt, currently multi-events and men's hurdles coach.

"I'm really excited about my new duties," Rainbolt said. "I was a bit under-utilized last year, so I think the busier I am this year the better."

Price officially becomes Miami's coach Oct. 1.

Runner back on track after accident

By Cory Golden
Staff Reporter

Saturday could not have gone much better for Kevin Clark.

The redshirt sophomore from Auburn, who finished sixth for the Nebraska men's cross country team at the Woody Greeno-Nebraska Invitational at Pioneer's Park, said he was pleased with his time and his team.

And there wasn't a truck in sight. Last season, Clark was having a fine season before a freak accident ended his season a week before the Big Eight meet.

"I was crossing the street on the bike path," he remembered. "And a truck turned left on 40th Street. He didn't see me. I stopped running and tried to jump back but he got my right hand and my right foot."

"It didn't break any bones, which was pretty much a miracle, but it did some cartilage damage."

Clark was on crutches for a time, he said, and didn't run for a while. He returned to run -- though not up to par, he said -- the 5,000 and 10,000 meters during the track season.

The pain in his foot all but gone, Clark logged about 80 to 90 miles each week over the summer to prepare for cross country, he said.

"It's kind of hard to come back, but I eventually made it," he said. "I'm definitely in a lot better shape and running better this year."

While the memories of being hit by a truck still brings a kind of embarrassed laugh from Clark, Saturday's return to competition drew a smile from his lips.

"I was really happy to get out here

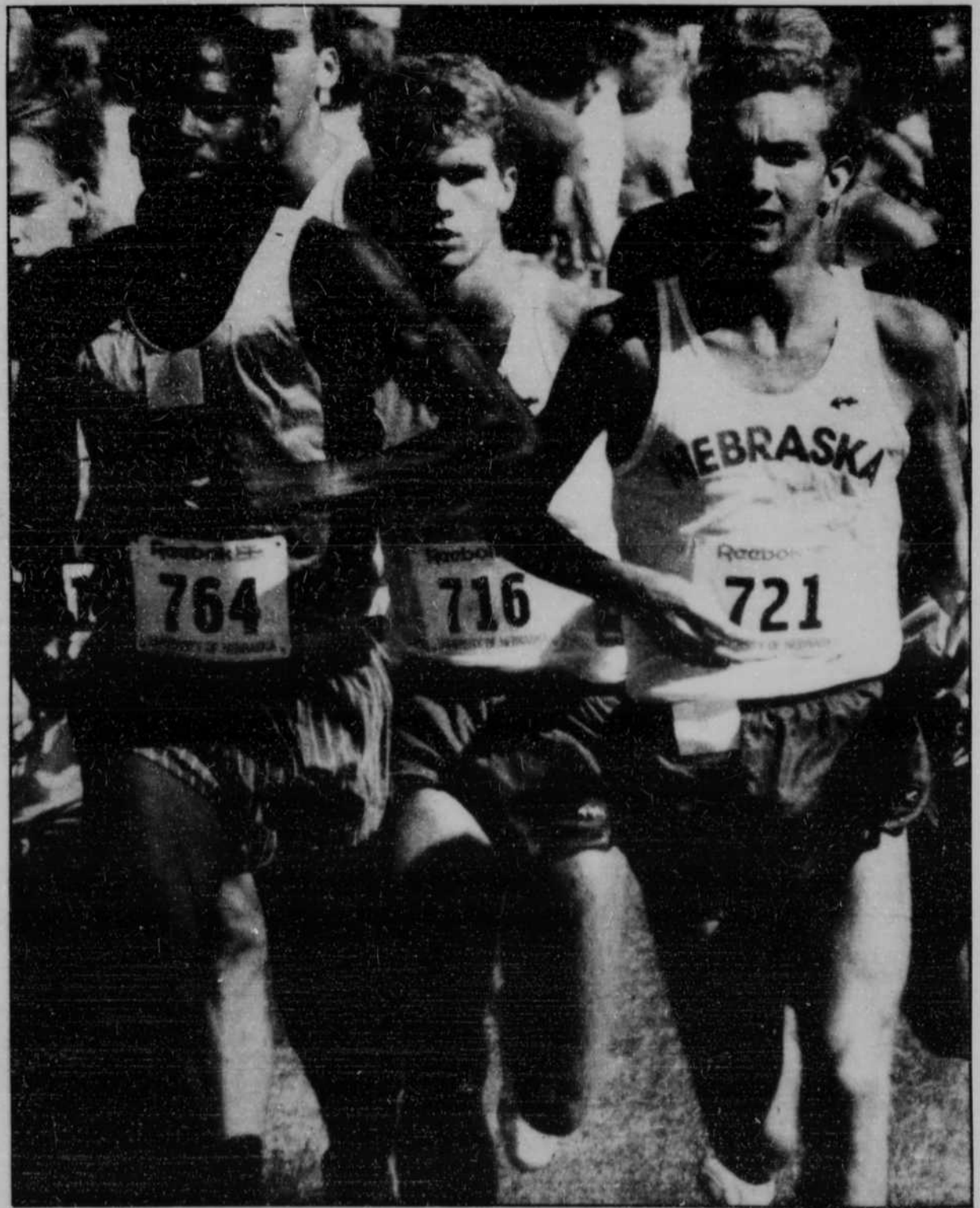
and race because I haven't done it for so long," he said, explaining that much of the competition consisted of fine runners from smaller schools.

"Even running with them is a big accomplishment for me," he said. "It makes me feel good that I can actually run with them."

Clark, who lives and trains with senior All-American Joe Kirby, hopes to someday be a Big Eight champion in cross country or track and wear the title of All-American like his roommate.

As for this season, he is hoping to finish in the top 10 at the conference meet.

"Kevin's going to be really important to how his team does," Coach Jay Dirksen said. "He's doing a great job so far."



Kevin Clark (716) finished sixth at Saturday's Woody Greeno-Nebraska Invitational at Pioneer's Park. Cornhusker Joe Kirby (721) won the race.

Shaun Sartin/Daily Nebraskan

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