

KU meet last chance for swimmers

By Vicki Burge
Staff Reporter

Members of the Nebraska men's swimming team will get a last chance to make NCAA qualifying times today. The Huskers will meet Kansas today at the Bob Devaney Sports Center pool at noon.

One week after the Big Eight Championships, Paine said the Huskers have been continuing their taper in preparation for the NCAA Championships.

"Some of the sprinters needed another week to sharpen up," assistant coach Rick Paine said. "This should give them a new lease on life."

"It's now or never. And really, if they couldn't make it (qualifying marks) by this weekend, then they shouldn't even go."

The team is in its fourth week of tapering, and Paine said if too much time is spent resting, they will lose the momentum gained during that

time, including winning the conference meet.

And with this being the last chance to qualify for nationals, the Cornhuskers will swim for times, not points.

"Kansas will swim their prime events and we'll swim ours," he said. "But we're really not concerned with what the score will be."

With the possibility of making qualifying standards, Paine recommended they shave, but left the final decision up to them.

"I think if they want to shave they can go ahead," he said. "They certainly don't have anything to lose by doing it."

The 200- and 400-yard medley relay teams will be among the swimmers going after their lifetime bests. Paine said swimmers in the 200 freestyle would be teamed to form the 800 freestyle relay team.

Senior Ryan Bell and sophomore Peter Giraudeau will swim

for a qualifying time in the 100 butterfly, junior Martin Hewes the 100 backstroke, senior Richard Johansson will swim a leg of the 800 freestyle relay team and junior William Campbell the 400 individual medley, 200 breaststroke and a leg 400 medley relay.

Freshman Justin Switzer will go after a U.S. National qualifying time in the 1,650 freestyle.

To qualify for the NCAA meet, swimmers must compete in a legitimate collegiate dual between two conference teams. Paine said because all swimmers are different, the time they need to taper to reach their peak varies.

So for some the timing of the Big Eight Championships was off. Today's meet will give some the opportunity to rebound from their Big Eight performance, Paine said.

"It happens all the time," he said. "Richard and William are good examples of that. They both are looking better this week than last."

Jays to play Seton Hall Creighton upsets 15th-ranked Aggies

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Creighton's Chad Gallagher scored 18 points as the Missouri Valley Conference champions beat frigid-shooting, 15th-ranked New Mexico State 64-56 Thursday in the first round of the West Regional.

Duan Cole scored four points and Latrell Wrightsell three in the final 1:16 to preserve the Bluejays' first NCAA tournament victory since 1974.

Cole scored 17 and Bob Harstad 13 as Creighton (24-7) won its eighth in a row and 16th in its last 17 games.

Gallagher, the player of the year in the Missouri Valley Conference, scored six during an early 11-0 spurt that gave his team the lead for good, then kept the Bluejays in control with three consecutive baskets late in the second half.

Randy Brown was the only New Mexico player in double figures with 12 points, all in the second half.

The Bluejays play 13th-ranked Seton Hall in Saturday's second round. The Pirates advanced with a 71-51 victory over Pepperdine.

New Mexico State (23-6) finished the season with two straight losses. The Aggies were beaten by Fresno State in the first round of the Big West Conference tournament.

New Mexico State, which shot 31 percent from the field for the game and 22 percent in the first half, never

led after the first five minutes in a game mostly marked by offensive futility. Creighton was just 41 percent from the field.

An 11-0 run gave Creighton a 21-9 lead with 8:16 left in the first half, but the Bluejays didn't score another field goal before halftime.

Still, the Bluejays held on to the lead because the Aggies had offensive troubles of their own.

New Mexico State, which went nearly five minutes without scoring during the Creighton run, scored seven straight points to pull within five late in the first half. But the Aggies missed several opportunities to get closer before intermission.

Creighton outscored the Aggies 11-5 to start the second half, building a 35-24 lead. After that, New Mexico State got no closer than 40-37, on Michael New's rebound basket with 11:18 remaining.

Brown's late scoring kept New Mexico State close. The Aggies still were within four, 58-54, after Brown made two free throws with 1:04 remaining.

But Wrightsell sank two free throws with 45.9 seconds to go to boost the lead back to six. Brown's two free throws sliced the margin to four again, then Cole wrapped up the Creighton scoring with two more free throws and a basket on a goal-tending call.

Underdogs challenged to make history

Associated Press

Towson State, Montana, Northeastern and Georgia State will try to do something today that's never been done before — beat a top seed in the opening round of the NCAA tournament.

Since the field was expanded to 64 teams in 1985, no No. 1 or No. 2 seed has lost its opening game. Six No. 3 seeds have fallen in the first round under the current format, including Missouri's shocking loss to Northern Iowa last year.

Although Montana is 23-7 and champion of the Big Sky Conference, no one gives the Grizzlies much of a chance in the West Regional against defending NCAA champion UNLV, which is riding a 41-game winning streak.

"If we lose, that's what everybody expects," Montana guard Roger Fastig said. "But if for some strange, weird, once-in-a-lifetime shot we should win, it would be one of the greatest upsets in sports history."

It won't be the first meeting between Montana and UNLV in the NCAA tournament. The last time the Grizzlies were in the tournament, in 1975, they lost to the Runnin' Rebels in the consolation game of the West Regional.

"I don't know anything about Montana," UNLV coach Jerry Tarkanian said. "We'll get some film of them."

Towson State (19-10) knows that Ohio State (25-3), its first-round opponent in the Midwest Regional, enters the tourney on a two-game losing streak. But even a slumping

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If we lose, that's what everybody expects.

Fastig
Montana guard

Big Ten power is expected to beat a challenger from the little-known East Coast Conference.

"I think mentally we've been prepared to play," Ohio State coach Randy Ayers said. "I just don't know if we're not a little tired at this point."

North Carolina (25-5) has won 10 of its last 11 games, including a 22-point rout of Duke in the final of the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament. So North Atlantic champ Northeastern (22-10) has little or no chance when they meet in the East Regional.

"We're heavy underdogs, no question," Northeastern coach Karl Fogel said. "If we're going to beat (the Tar Heels), they have to contribute. They can't play their best game."

North Carolina has reached the final 16 nine straight years, but the Tar Heels haven't been to the Final Four since 1982, when James Worthy, Michael Jordan and Sam Perkins led the school to its second NCAA title.

"We've been in the final eight several times and the final 16 about every time, but we're not thrilled just to get there," North Carolina coach Dean Smith said. "There's something magical about reaching the Final Four."

Georgia State (16-14) is a million-

to-one shot to win the NCAA tournament and the odds of beating Arkansas (31-3) in the Southeast Regional aren't much better.

"The Omni is just three blocks from the campus," assistant coach Ken Roth said. "This is a great opportunity for the people of Atlanta to get a chance to see us play and for our kids to get some national exposure."

Restrepo

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she said. "I guess I passed out and got really sick after the race. For a long time after that, I had sort of a phobia for the 400."

What happened was that she won the race, and in a record time of 55.8 seconds.

But it took a while before she found the drive to run it again. Although her high school coach kept badgering her to run the 400, it wasn't until she began collegiate running that she was back in the event.

Restrepo grew up in Medellin, Colombia, which just happens to be considered the locale of the biggest drug cartel in the world. That label of her homeland doesn't bother her.

"It's like anything else," she said. "At first everyone complains about it, but after a while you get used to it."

"If they say you can't go out on Fridays because it's too dangerous, then that's fine. I just won't go out — no big deal."

Restrepo competed in track and field in high school, running the 100, 200 and 400. She also was captain of the basketball team.

High school track was kind of a drag until Restrepo started to make a name for herself.

"I didn't like it at the beginning," she said. "I thought it was kind of boring."

Boring until she was chosen for the Colombian national team, and was named the most valuable performer in her first international meet. In 1986, at age 17, Restrepo, competing against athletes of national teams that included Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia and Panama, won the 200 and shared a leg on the winning 400 and 1,600 relays. She avoided running the 400.

"It was nice to compete for my country," she said. "I was really young and internationally I won three gold medals. It was really exciting."

Restrepo realized her talents, and her boredom became just a phase. She went on to compete in the Junior Pan American Games and the Junior World Championships, but without a coach.

"In Colombia, they don't really help you out with working out and going to school at the

same time," she said. "I realized I had to work hard to be good, so I started training about twice a week on my own."

In 1988, Restrepo competed in the Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea where she was a little ahead of her time.

"I knew I didn't have the opportunity to do anything," she said. "I said, 'I don't belong at this place' so I wasn't nervous at all."

Nebraska sprints coach Dave Harris discovered Restrepo, called her and got her to check out Lincoln. She was impressed.

"At first, I hated the cold," she said. "But the facilities for the athletes were very nice. Plus, they gave me a full scholarship, so that helped."

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If I can make good money running, I won't start working immediately. There's going to be some big changes in my life this year, so I'll have to wait and see.

Restrepo
senior on NU women's track team

Also Nebraska track coach Gary Pepin had no qualms with Restrepo bringing her high school coach, Emperatriz Gonzales, to help her train. Restrepo and Gonzales shared dreams of making the finals of 1996 Olympics together, and didn't want to be separated for four years.

"I talked to coach Pepin and he said, 'As long as you perform, we don't care who you work out with,'" Restrepo said.

Gonzales stayed for one season; the distance from home got to be too much, Restrepo said. The two still remain in contact with Gonzales sending Restrepo her workouts.

It was when Restrepo became a Cornhusker that the 400 again became a part of her life. And without much choice: The Husker coaching staff, realizing her potential, stuck her on the 1,600 relay team and subsequently, the open 400.

"When I found out I had to run it (400) twice in one day," she said, "I thought 'No way.' but I've gradually gotten used to

it."

At last year's outdoor championships, Restrepo qualified for the 200 and 400, but reinjured her hamstring and only competed in the 400 because it was less stressful on the injury, she said.

"I was so nervous at this meet," she said. "Also, I was running a race (400) I really didn't like and I was scared of how terrible I would feel after the meet. I don't think I was mentally or physically prepared for this race."

Not physically for sure, especially after re-pulling the hamstring she injured during the indoor season, which kept her out of the Big Eight and NCAA Championships.

"I could hardly walk after that injury," she said. "I spent a lot of

time on the couch. In a way, it was better that way, though. I got to rest for a long time and I was just as strong when I came back."

She was strong enough to place fourth in the NCAA outdoor meet with a time of 51.64, the third fastest time in school history and a Colombian national record.

Restrepo is a senior broadcast journalism major and will graduate in May. At this point, she said, she is like most seniors and really doesn't know what the future holds. One option is to go into TV broadcasting. Or she could turn professional.

She plans to run in the Grand Prix Circuit in Europe next season.

"If I can make good money running, I won't start working immediately," she said. "There's going to be some big changes in my life this year, so I'll have to wait and see."

And then, of course, there is the Olympics.

"Hopefully, I'll advance a few rounds in the Olympics this time," she said.

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