
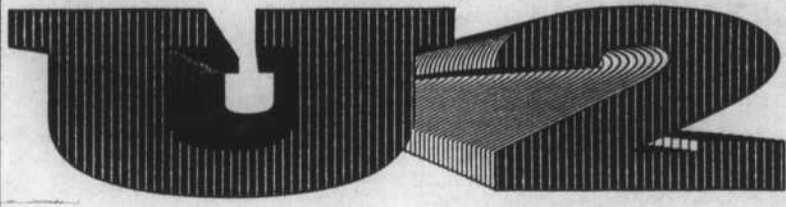


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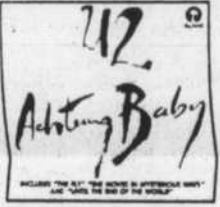
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# Women favored to win Huskers heading to districts

By John Gardner  
Staff Reporter

Circumstances will be very similar to the Big Eight championships held two weeks ago when the Nebraska cross country teams travel to Wichita, Kan., this weekend.

The NCAA District V Championships, which are qualifying meets for nationals, will have seven Big Eight teams competing in the Gateway Conference district championships. Those teams include: Iowa State, Oklahoma State, Kansas State, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Nebraska. Colorado is not a member of the Gateway Conference.

Coach Jay Dirksen said the Cornhusker women are favored to win the title again. Kansas State will be the Husker women's biggest competition. Kansas, formerly a threat, lost its No. 3 runner, so it will be tougher for them to get close.

"Obviously, (the Wildcats) will have to run better than they did in the

Big Eight meet to beat us," he said.

From this meet, the top two teams qualify for the NCAA meet in two weeks. Dirksen said he conceivably sees Nebraska as one of them.

"We would have to have a pretty big letdown to not have a chance to qualify," he said. "If we do what we're capable of doing, we should place in the top two."

Nebraska will be running the same seven as at the Big Eight championships. They are Fran ten Bensel, Lisa Graham, Stephanie Quandt, Julieanne Campbell, Michele Schaefer, Theresa Stelling and Sylvia Veit. Once again, Nebraska will be without Katie Fletcher, who is injured. Dirksen said Fletcher, if healthy, would probably be his No. 3 runner.

"That's what is so good about this team," he said. "We have so much depth."

As usual, the women will be led by ten Bensel and Graham. Dirksen said Graham is really coming on and ten

Bensel is coming off a big win. Ten Bensel won the Big Eight title quite handily, putting her in position to win the individual title.

"I don't really see Fran running away with it, but she is definitely the favorite," Dirksen said. "We don't want to kill her going into the national meet, though."

The competition is so stiff, Dirksen said, that the top five or six places could go on to place in the top 25 at the national meet.

"There are a lot of good runners from this conference," he said.

Iowa State is the heavy favorite to win on the men's side. Nebraska's men, still going through a rebuilding period, will probably place anywhere from fourth to sixth, Dirksen said. The Husker men are only taking five runners — Tom Banks, Kevin Clark, Rennie Henning, Kevin Miller and David Itteffa — to the meet.

"Those five have unquestionably been the best ones," Dirksen said.

# Husker volleyball team to concentrate on improvement, assistant coach says

By John Adkisson  
Staff Reporter

On paper, tonight's Nebraska-Missouri volleyball match looks like a mismatch of gigantic proportions. It might look the same on the court.

The Cornhuskers, 20-3 and ranked ninth by the NCAA, will try to extend their 13-match winning streak when they face the Tigers at 8 p.m. at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Meanwhile, Missouri is again plodding along in the Big Eight basement. The Tigers have lost 20 of their past 21 conference matches, including nine straight this season.

That all adds up to a blowout, right?

Not necessarily, according to Nebraska assistant coach Brian Begor.

"They don't have any pressure coming into the match," Begor said. "They can play relaxed and come in and do some good things."

Nebraska has been doing good things over the last 13 matches. In that span, the Huskers have won 39 of 41 games and clinched a share of the Big Eight championship.

Tonight, a win would give the Huskers their 16th-consecutive outright conference title.

Begor said the Huskers will be concentrating more on improvement than on Missouri.

"The issue in the match won't be the University of Missouri," Begor said. "The issue will be us working on things on our side of the court and just trying to get better."

Saturday night, Nebraska will try to close out a perfect Big Eight regular season when it faces Oklahoma, 14-14 and 5-5. The Sooners are the last team to have won a game from Nebraska, taking the third game in a four-game loss to the Huskers in late October.

Saturday's match will start at 7:35 p.m. at the Sports Center.

Oklahoma coach Miles Pabst said his team, which will play tonight at Iowa State, is just trying to get into the four-team Big Eight tournament.

"If we don't beat Iowa State, the Nebraska match is pretty much meaningless in terms of us getting in the tournament," Pabst said.

Begor said that in the first Husker-Sooner match, Nebraska had some trouble with Oklahoma's tall middle blockers.

"Their middles did a little better job than we anticipated going into the match," Begor said. "It took us about two and a half, three games to make that adjustment."

Pabst said that the Sooners' serving and serve reception will be important if Oklahoma is to have a chance Saturday.

"In the first match, we got into a serve-receive that we just couldn't handle," he said. "But if we serve tough and pass well, we can stay with them."

# Coaches say Huskers to face strong teams

By Thomas Clouse  
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska men's and women's swimming and diving teams will pound the water against strong competition at home today and Saturday after three meets on the road.

The women's team takes on Colorado State tonight at 7 and Wyoming at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Bob Devaney Sports Center Pool.

Coach Ray Huppert said Nebraska's young team should match up well with a young CSU squad.

"To date, we are very similar in how we're swimming. It's always a great meet with Colorado State," Huppert said. "We have had a marvelous rivalry."

The women's team also faces Wyoming on Saturday. The Cowgirls are coming off a loss to Colorado State.

The Nebraska women's record dropped to 1-3 after losing to Kansas last week.

Huppert said he doesn't want to focus on the team's dual record, because it has no bearing on the Big Eight or NCAA meets.

"There is no one more competitive than I," Huppert said. "We know we have to do a lot of work to get our athletes ready by February."

In the last four years, the winner of the Kansas-Nebraska dual has finished second to the winner of the meet in the Big Eight meet, Huppert said.

"I'm not banking our chips in yet," Huppert said. "With such a young team, our emphasis is to work hard and swim fast at the end of the year."

The Nebraska men's team will split the waves against Wyoming and Iowa in a double dual at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Devaney Sports Center Pool.

The men's team is 2-1 in dual competition after beating Kansas 123-120 last week.

Coach Cal Bentz said he doesn't have much information about Wyoming, but Iowa "is always a strong team."

The Hawkeyes are ranked 12th this week.

"Iowa is strong up and down the line," Bentz said. "It will be quite a challenge."


The team needs to take this opportunity to compete as well as it can, Bentz said.

"To try to play strategy games wouldn't be wise," he said. "We need to go right at them."


Bentz said he is pleased with his team's performance this season.

"I think we have an excellent program," he said. "We're coming on."

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**Huskers**

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Kevin Caldwell, who was converted from I-back after Iowa State lost quarterbacks Chris Pedersen and Bob Utter to season-ending injuries.

"I'm not saying (Caldwell) is as good as (Colorado's) Darian Hagan, but he has some tools," he said. "He used to be a tailback so he's a pure athlete."

Caldwell changes Iowa State's entire offensive scheme from last year, Alberts said. The Huskers ran their dime defense "every play" against Pedersen and the Cyclones' passing attack last year.

"This year they'll do a lot of bootlegs," Alberts said.

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