



Cornhusker State Games



Games bring Olympic feeling to Lincoln

By Jill O'Brien
Staff reporter

After a week of rain, the opening ceremonies for the 1992 Cornhusker State Games took place July 17 under a cloudless blue canopy at Seacrest Field.

As the "Star Wars" themesong played through loud speakers, athletes paraded around the field.

Nearly 3,500 soccer players in a rainbow of colorful shirts lined up in an adjoining field, waiting their turn to participate in the procession.

Bathing beauties waved from a sailboat and muzzie loaders dressed in fringed

leather and moccasins followed participants carrying banners.

The Lincoln Community Gospel Choir, the Celebration Singers and the O'Neill Irish Dancers provided entertainment.

In addition, much to the delight of the crowd, four parachutists from the Lincoln Sport Parachute Club fell from a plane and drifted to earth as one of them held up the American flag.

Former University of Nebraska-Lincoln football coach and current Athletic Director Bob Devaney received a standing ovation from the crowd when he was introduced. After Devaney's recognition, 14-year-old Sarah Jane Moheng from

St. Paul sang the "Star Spangled Banner."

Other highlights of the ceremony opening the 8th annual games in Nebraska included brief speeches by Mayor Mike Johannes and Gov. Ben Nelson.

Nelson said that he was "proud that the Cornhusker State Games is the largest event of its kind in the United States."

"The games are truly Nebraska's family picnic," Nelson said.

The mystery torch lighter, Kim Oden, a Grand Island native and senior at Nebraska Wesleyan University, capped off the opening of the State Games.

Carrying a torch borne 900 Nebraska miles by 800 runners, Oden lit the

Olympic-sized torch stationed in the center of the field, signaling the beginning of the games.

Although the games actually started July 10, throughout the weekend of July 17-19 swimmers competed at Woods Pool, gymnasts competed at Capital City Gymnastics and equestrian competition was held at the State Fair grounds.

Seventeen thousand athletes from 86 counties competed in events ranging from archery and aquatics to volkswalking and wrestling. More than 100 basketball and softball teams and more than 200 soccer and volleyball teams ended up participating in the games.



Photos by Stacie McKee

Bottom Left to Right: A spectator hands out water to passing bicyclists during the 77-mile road race Saturday at Branched Oak Lake in Lincoln. Rachel Anschutz, 12, of Grand Island, take careful aim during archery competition Saturday afternoon at the Prairie Bowmen Archery Range. Two participants clash as they try to regain control of the ball during the senior men's soccer game Sunday at Seacrest Field.

