

Wrestlers preparing for Big Eight competition

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

Two down, one to go. That's the approach Nebraska wrestling coach Tim Neumann and his Cornhuskers have for the rest of the season.

The Las Vegas Invitational has come and gone, with Nebraska taking second place.

Last weekend, the Cornhuskers took home another second at the National Dual Meets Championship.

Now the Huskers and Neumann are looking toward the Big Eight Championships on March 6.

"We look to peak for Las Vegas, National Duals and the Big Eight," Neumann said. "In between those, we need to work on getting ready for those meets."

Neumann said the only way to improve was through practice and the six duals the Huskers had remaining on their schedule.

This Saturday, Nebraska will try to continue to improve in a dual against Wyoming at 7:30 p.m. at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Neumann is not predicting an easy match, partly because of the Huskers' new national respect.

"Wyoming is a young team. They're young but talented," he said. "If anybody knocks us off, it'll be a big win, but our guys are seniors. They know what they have to do."

After last weekend's National Duals Meet, Neumann said the Huskers were healthy going into the last part of the season.

"This is the first time that we didn't have any injuries coming out of national duals," he said. "We're as healthy as we've ever been, and we have as good of an attitude as ever."

Senior Tony Purler, at 126 pounds, is healthy after injuring his big toe in the dual against Iowa Jan. 23.

The only injury the Huskers have is senior Tommy Robbins, who has been bothered by a rib injury suffered at the Great Plains Invitational on Jan. 9.

"(Robbins) will probably be out a couple of more weeks," Neumann said.

Neumann said that he hoped his team could learn from its performance at the National Duals.

"I'm looking for improvement on the technical aspects," he said. "Where we were weak against Iowa and Penn State is where we've been trying to improve in the last few days."

Neumann also said that the Huskers needed to improve their endurance and get in better shape to be successful at future meets.



Staci McKee/DN

Nebraska's Jamar Johnson drives past Kansas State's Deryl Cunningham in a game last weekend. The Cornhuskers, 1-3 in conference play, will play 3-0 Missouri at the Bob Devaney Sports Center Saturday.

NU to face underestimated Tigers

MU's good start not surprising, coach says

By Jeff Singer
Senior Reporter

Nebraska and Missouri, two teams expected to go in different directions, have changed courses and have gone against preseason predictions.

The Cornhusker men's basketball team was ranked in the majority of preseason polls, while the Tigers were expected to falter from their usual perch among the top of the Big Eight teams.

But early in the conference season, Missouri has surprised and Nebraska has faltered. The two teams will collide at 1:10 p.m. Saturday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

The game will be televised live by Raycom and is a sellout.

While the Huskers are off to a 1-3 mark in conference play, the Tigers are undefeated with a 3-0 record after beating Iowa State, Colorado and Oklahoma State.

And this comes after the loss of Anthony Peeler, last year's Big Eight player of the year, to graduation.

But Nebraska basketball coach Danny Nee said it shouldn't be any shock that the Tigers were doing so

MEN'S BASKETBALL PROBABLE STARTERS

NEBRASKA

	PPG	RPG
F Terrance Badgett	7.4	4.2
F Bruce Chubick	8.6	5.9
C Derrick Chandler	9.4	7.2
G Eric Piatkowski	15.8	5.9
G Jamar Johnson	10.3	3.4

MISSOURI

	PPG	RPG
F Jevon Crudup	15.6	8.6
F Jeff Warren	9.1	5.9
C Chris Heller	8.2	6.1
G Melvin Booker	15.4	4.8
G Jed Frost	0.3	1.8



Scott Maurer/DN

well.

"I'm not surprised at all — I feel they're a very good team," Nee said. "Missouri always plays fundamentally sound, they never beat themselves and they play good defense."

Nee said there shouldn't be any question as to how good this year's Tigers are.

"I don't know why they don't get the respect — in the power ratings, they're ranked 30th in the country," he said. "They're really good, they just have not got the respect yet."

The list of players that are helping

13-4 Missouri gain notoriety is headed by forward Jevon Crudup and guard Melvin Booker.

The junior tandem is leading the Tigers in scoring, with Crudup averaging 15.6 points per game and Booker posting 15.4. Crudup is also leading the team in rebounds, averaging 8.6 per game.

Conversely, the Huskers are coming off of their first Big Eight win last Monday at Colorado.

In the win over the Buffaloes, Nee continued to use a different starting lineup than he had used earlier in the

season.

Freshman Terrance Badgett has been getting the starting nod at forward, with Eric Piatkowski, Nebraska's leading scorer with 15.8 points per game, as the Huskers' starting shooting guard.

Nee said he is happy with the new lineup, one that gives Nebraska a little more height among the five starters, even though it doesn't make that much of a difference who gets the starting nod.

"I'm always satisfied with my starting lineup; if I wasn't pleased with the starting lineup I'd change it — and I'm not changing it," he said. "But I don't think the starting lineup is going to make the game or break the game."

Nebraska forward/center Amos Gregory said he is hoping the new lineup will produce more conference wins for the Huskers.

"I think we're in a situation now that we have to win every game," Gregory said. "We have to go out and play teams hard like we did against Colorado."

He said he hopes the effects of starting league play at 0-3 have worn off, and that it's time for Nebraska to start a Big Eight winning streak.

"Some of the games we lost we should've won, and that kind of frustrates the team because we know we can play better," Gregory said. "But after that game with Colorado, I think we're on our way up the mountain."

Unbeaten gymnasts face first road meet of season

By Phil Carter
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska men's gymnastics team hasn't been tested on the road this season — until now.

This weekend, the Cornhuskers will travel to Columbus, Ohio, for one of their biggest meets of the season against Ohio State.

"They've got a good team together, but most importantly it should be a tremendous test for our kids on the road," Nebraska coach Francis Allen said. "We've been scoring very well lately and the Ohio State meet should help our younger kids as we get a chance to go on the road."

After three meets this season,

the Huskers remain unbeaten and are on pace to break a school and NCAA scoring record they set a year ago.

Last weekend, the Huskers scored 280 points in a win against Oklahoma and Iowa State at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"With the exception of the high bar last weekend, we would have scored 282," Coach Allen said. "By scoring big points this early in the season, we want to send a message to other teams around the country."

The Huskers as a team are sending the message, but individually, the Husker men want to send a message of their own.

See ALLEN on B

Track teams get ready for meet following one of best starts ever

By Chris Hain
Staff Reporter

When the Nebraska track teams compete in the Illinois Quadrangular on Saturday, they will be coming off one of their best-ever performances to start a season.

The Huskers will travel to Champaign, Ill., to compete against Illinois, Indiana and Purdue in their first scored meet of the season.

Cornhusker coach Gary Pepin said his main concern is not scoring but preparing for next month's Big Eight Championships.

If last weekend's Nebraska Open is any indication, the Huskers are right where they should be.

Pepin said the men turned in more than 40 indoor personal bests, and

“The men are a lot better in the short sprints than we thought.”

—Pepin
NU track coach

both the men and women turned in a number of NCAA qualifying marks.

"It was certainly one of, if not the best, indoor meets we've ever started off with," Pepin said.

Junior Shanelle Porter, freshman Paulette Mitchell, freshman Riley Washington and senior Kevin Coleman all turned in either provi-

sional qualifying or NCAA qualifying marks.

"As a whole, the meet was a good start," Pepin said. "The men are a lot better in the short sprints than we thought."

Pepin also said his team is healthy one week into the season.

The women's team will also pick up senior dual-sport athlete Cris Hall for the first time at Illinois. Hall missed the Nebraska Open last weekend, attending "Cris Hall Days" in her hometown of Chanute, Kan.

Saturday's quadrangular will give the Huskers a chance to compete against teams and athletes they don't normally face. One athlete the Huskers will face is Illinois sprinter and hurdler Tonja Buford, who was a 1992 Olympian in the 400-meter hurdles.