

# Softball team confident, primed for victory in season opener

By Trevor Parks  
Staff Reporter

This year's Nebraska softball team has a new attitude — an attitude that should help when the Cornhuskers play in the season-opening games at the second annual Pepsi-Cola InterCollegiate Classic this weekend.

Nebraska plays Stephen F. Austin and Iowa State Friday in the first day of the tournament in Grand Prairie, Texas.

On Saturday, Nebraska will face Northeast Louisiana and then begin bracket play.

Coach Rhonda Revelle said her team had the right attitude to win the 15-team tournament, even though Nebraska had not practiced outdoors this year.

"We're excited to get outside," Revelle said. "We think we're capable of winning the tournament. Anything short of that and we will be disappointed."

Revelle said Nebraska wouldn't be the only team that hadn't had the chance to practice outside.

"Half the teams haven't been outside, so that won't be a big problem," Revelle said. "The toughest thing will be seeing the ball against a live sky."

"After the first few innings we should be all right."

Because of that, Revelle said there was no major advantage for teams that have been playing outside.

"We will all probably be on the same level since these are the first games for everybody," she said.

## Nebraska Softball Roster

No.	Name	Ht.	Yr.	Pos.	B/T
2	Ali Viola	5-4	Fr.	SS	R/R
3	Heather Hanselmann	5-6	So.	INF	R/R
5	Lila Kephart	5-4	Jr.	OF	L/R
6	Amy Offenbacher	5-8	Sr.	OF/DP	R/R
7	Jenny Smith	5-9	Fr.	C/DP	R/R
12	Karla Knicely	5-4	Jr.	OF	R/R
14	Cody Dusenberry	5-7	Jr.	P	R/R
16	Angela Blackwood	5-10	Fr.	P/1B	R/R
17	Gloria Von Rentzell	5-7	Jr.	3B	R/R
18	Sarah Sinclair	5-6	So.	OF	L/R
19	Stacie Stafford	5-4	Jr.	P	R/R
20	Sherry Allcorn	5-4	So.	OF	S/R
21	Tobin Echo-Hawk	5-6	Jr.	3B/SS	R/R
23	Sandra Brown	5-6	Sr.	2B/OF	R/R
24	Rachel Dunham	5-7	So.	C/1B	R/R
25	Melanie Raimondi	5-6	So.	P	R/R

Nebraska will be bringing in a high level of confidence not only for this weekend, but for the whole season after a successful fall.

The Huskers were 15-1 in the fall season and won the Big Eight Fall Classic.

Revelle said her team picked up a lot from that performance.

"We're drawing a lot off that," Revelle said. "However, at the same time we know we can continue to get better."

One player who excelled in the fall season was junior pitcher Stacie

Stafford.

Stafford had an ERA under one, and Revelle said she probably would be the staff ace for the season.

Also, junior Cody Dusenberry and freshman Angela Blackwood should see time on the mound as well this weekend, Revelle said.

Revelle said this year's Husker team had bigger expectations than last year's 25-31 team.

"The expectancy level is totally different from last year," Revelle said. "We have a high level of confidence, and that will help."

## Baseball

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Long mid-season losing streaks in 1993 and 1994 left the Huskers in need of Big Eight Tournament titles to gain the automatic berth into regionals.

The Huskers failed in their attempts to steal the crown from Oklahoma State's 14-year grip, ending their seasons early.

If the Huskers are going to better last year's 32-28 record, they will need improved pitching.

Last year, Nebraska's pitching staff had a 5.41 ERA, but Sanders said increased depth should help the Huskers this season.

In 1994, Nebraska had only 12 pitchers, and the staff's ace, Troy Brohawn, missed more than a month with a broken foot. Craig Sanders also was limited after missing the 1993 season because of a knee injury.

This season, the Huskers have 14 healthy arms.

"I think the pitching staff has more depth than we have had in some time,"

Sanders said. "I also think it will be more role-definite. Before we lacked depth and we had to stretch our starters too far. This year we will be able to set up and close."

Although Sanders said the roles of each pitcher may be more clearly defined this season, he was not sure which pitchers would be playing which roles.

Alvie Shepherd is the only pitcher who knows when he will be throwing.

The 6-foot-7 junior right-hander, who was picked as the 21st-best college prospect by Baseball America, will be the Husker closer after spending the last two seasons primarily as a starter.

Senior Cody Winget and sophomore Jeff Strasser will probably be starters, but Sanders said he planned on using the opening games of the season at the Arthur Gallagher Tournament in San Diego next week to experiment with the pitching staff.

Although the rotation is a mystery, senior catcher David Crain said the uncertainty could help the Huskers.

While Sanders is unclear about the

rotation, he is fairly certain about who will be in the starting lineup.

Crain and sophomore Patrick Johnson return at catcher.

Freshman Todd Sears, who was picked by Baseball America to be Big Eight Freshman of the Year, will be the first baseman. Shepherd, who will be the starting designated hitter, may also see some action at first base.

Seniors Scott Wulfin and Darin Petersen return at second base and shortstop, respectively.

Senior Jed Dalton moves from center field to third base.

Junior Darin Erstad, picked as the top college prospect in the nation by Baseball America, will anchor the outfield in left. Juniors Eugene Jenkins and Matt Meyer are the other probable outfield starters.

Sanders may get an earlier-than-expected look at the Huskers this weekend.

Nebraska's game against Nebraska-Kearney scheduled for March 1 may be moved up to Sunday or Monday because of the forecast of warm weather.

# Huskers beat Tigers; Neumann 'rolling now'

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska wrestling completed its second-best regular season in Coach Tim Neumann's 10 years with a 33-6 victory over Missouri Wednesday night.

The third-ranked Cornhuskers lost just two matches against the Tigers to improve their record to 17-3, the team's best mark since a 21-2-1 record in 1989-90.

The Huskers were aided by pins from Darin Giese at 118 pounds and

Steve Baer at 126 pounds. The pins gave Nebraska a 12-0 lead.

"We're kind of rolling right now," Neumann said. "Our guys are wrestling to win instead of not to lose. We are sitting in perfect shape two weeks before the Big Eight Tournament."

Neumann said the win capped off a very impressive dual season.

"For what was supposed to be a setup year for the next couple seasons," he said, "this didn't turn out to be too bad of a dual year."

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