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NU track plans to claim Big 8 throne

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Nebraska track and field coach Gary Pepin doesn't expect it to be easy for the men's and women's track teams to continue their dominance over the Big Eight this weekend.

The Big Eight Conference Indoor Championships, which will run today and Saturday in Manhattan, Kan., have been owned by the Cornhuskers in the past.

Nebraska claimed both the men's and women's titles last year to give the women their 15th straight indoor title, while the men have captured six of the past 11 Big Eight titles.

The Husker women's team's 15 consecutive indoor titles have helped it earn 30 straight Big Eight championships — indoor and outdoor.

Pepin said the results of the Big Eight coaches' poll indicated that Nebraska's chances to repeat were good.

"The Big Eight coaches' poll is out, and the Big Eight coaches voted us," Pepin said. "But you can't vote for your own team. If I could vote for our women, I would. On the men's side, it was a tie between Iowa State and ourselves. If I could vote, I would vote for our men's team, also."

"So I feel pretty good. We're still going to have to go down there and have a good meet. We can't have a lot of errors or have people get sick or hurt. I think we'll be contenders for the titles."

In the poll, the Husker women received six first-place votes and one second-place vote. Nebraska and Iowa State each received four votes on the men's side.

As Nebraska's women continue to extend their championship winning streak, it becomes more difficult each year, Pepin said.

"Sometimes you wonder how you're going to react when you lose one, because eventually you're going to lose one. We feel like this year, going into the women's meet, that it is going to be a tough year for us."

But Pepin said injuries and the pressures of the winning streak shouldn't be enough to knock Nebraska off its Big Eight throne.

"We're still going to the meet with the idea that we're going to win it, and I think we probably will win it," he said.

"We have balance, quality and depth. We probably have better balance than anyone else in the conference. That's probably what we've had since the middle '80s."

Husker golfers begin season in Sunshine State

From Staff Reports

Spring break comes early this year for the Nebraska men's golf team as it travels to Tampa, Fla., for the South Florida Invitational.

Nebraska will compete against teams from the southeast and Big Eight rival Kansas this weekend.

The invitational will be a three-round tournament, played at South Florida's 6,750-yard par-71 course.

"It will be a good tournament to begin the year," Coach Larry Romjue said. "It's a competitive field, with the majority of the teams from the southeast, so they've had a little more time to play."

Returning as the Cornhuskers' No. 1 golfer is sophomore Trent Morrison. Morrison posted a 73.25 scoring average during the fall campaign.

The rest of Nebraska's lineup this weekend includes senior Steve Reiter, sophomore Jacques Paiement, junior Henrik Johansson, and freshman Ryan Nietfeldt.

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Masters Classic, ailments will test gymnastics team

By Trevor Parks
Staff Reporter

After a one-year absence, one of the country's premiere women's gymnastics meets returns to the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Sunday.

Nebraska will play host to UCLA, George Washington and North Carolina State in the Masters Classic at 2 p.m.

Coach Dan Kendig said this weekend should test his team.

"I feel really good about the competition we have," Kendig said. "It's our premiere event, year in and year out."

Kendig was hired last year, and said he would have tried to hold the meet, but he wanted to wait until Nebraska could schedule some good competition and not just throw the meet together.

This year's competition should be good, Kendig said.

UCLA comes into the meet at 10-2. The Bruins competed at the Masters Classic in 1989 and 1990.

George Washington comes into the meet with a 16-5 record.

North Carolina State will be looking to avenge its only loss of the year.

The 7-1 Wolfpack lost to Nebraska at the Hearts Invitational in Raleigh, N.C., on Feb. 10.

The twelfth-ranked Huskers are coming off a loss at Iowa State.

Kendig said his team may have had to sacrifice that meet to get prepared for the Masters Classic.

"We felt that this meet at home this weekend was more important than a dual meet, then say at Iowa State," Kendig said. "The thing we're facing more than injuries, and wearing them down a little bit, is the fact that this flu is going around."

Those ailments may force Nebraska to compete with only seven gymnasts, Kendig said.

"We're going to lose a couple of more meets the rest of the year because of the fact that we're a small team," Kendig said. "We're going to need to rest some people periodically."

New Mexico

Continued from Page 7

that go another month and a half just for one meet."

On Friday against the No. 16 Sooners, whom the Huskers defeated soundly on Feb. 4, Allen said, Christie will probably be used sparingly.

The Sooners, one of six teams to qualify for nationals a year ago, are struggling this season, Allen said.

Sophomores Jeremy Killen and Casey Bryan, the Sooners' top two all-around performers, have not been able to compete at full strength for much of the season. Allen said the formidable duo would again be hampered on Friday.

Boyce

Continued from Page 7

conference teams, as he averaged 17.5 points in his six games against the Huskers.

In Nebraska's 100-86 victory over Colorado in Boulder on Feb. 8, Boyce scored 23 points. One factor behind Boyce's low point output has been Nebraska's Erick Strickland and Jaron Boone. Another has been Husker coach Danny Nee.

"Coach Nee really stresses for their guys to keep me from driving the lane," Boyce said. "It seems like there's always a hand in my face when we play Nebraska. Of course, they have quicker guards than most teams. Strickland and Boone are probably a little quicker than me, so that makes it tougher."

Nee said just because Boyce hadn't had any huge nights against the Huskers, it was still possible.

"Donnie Boyce is the real deal," Nee said. "He can light it up for 40 points on any given night. He is a

tough competitor."

Even though the Nebraska crowd is fun, Boyce isn't disappointed that Saturday will be his last visit to the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"I don't think I've ever played good in that gym," he said. "It's a tough place to play. The crowd is right on you, and with the love-hate relationship that Nebraska and Colorado have, people say some interesting things to you."

Boyce, who missed the Buffaloes' 67-64 win over Washington Wednesday because of an illness in his family, said the love-hate relationship was felt on the Colorado side of the border as well, which added pressure to beat Nebraska.

"Everyone in Colorado wants to beat Nebraska no matter what sport it is — football, basketball, volleyball, whatever," Boyce said.

"They should remember it's not football. But I guess people look at it like, 'It's not basketball, it's Nebraska.'"

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