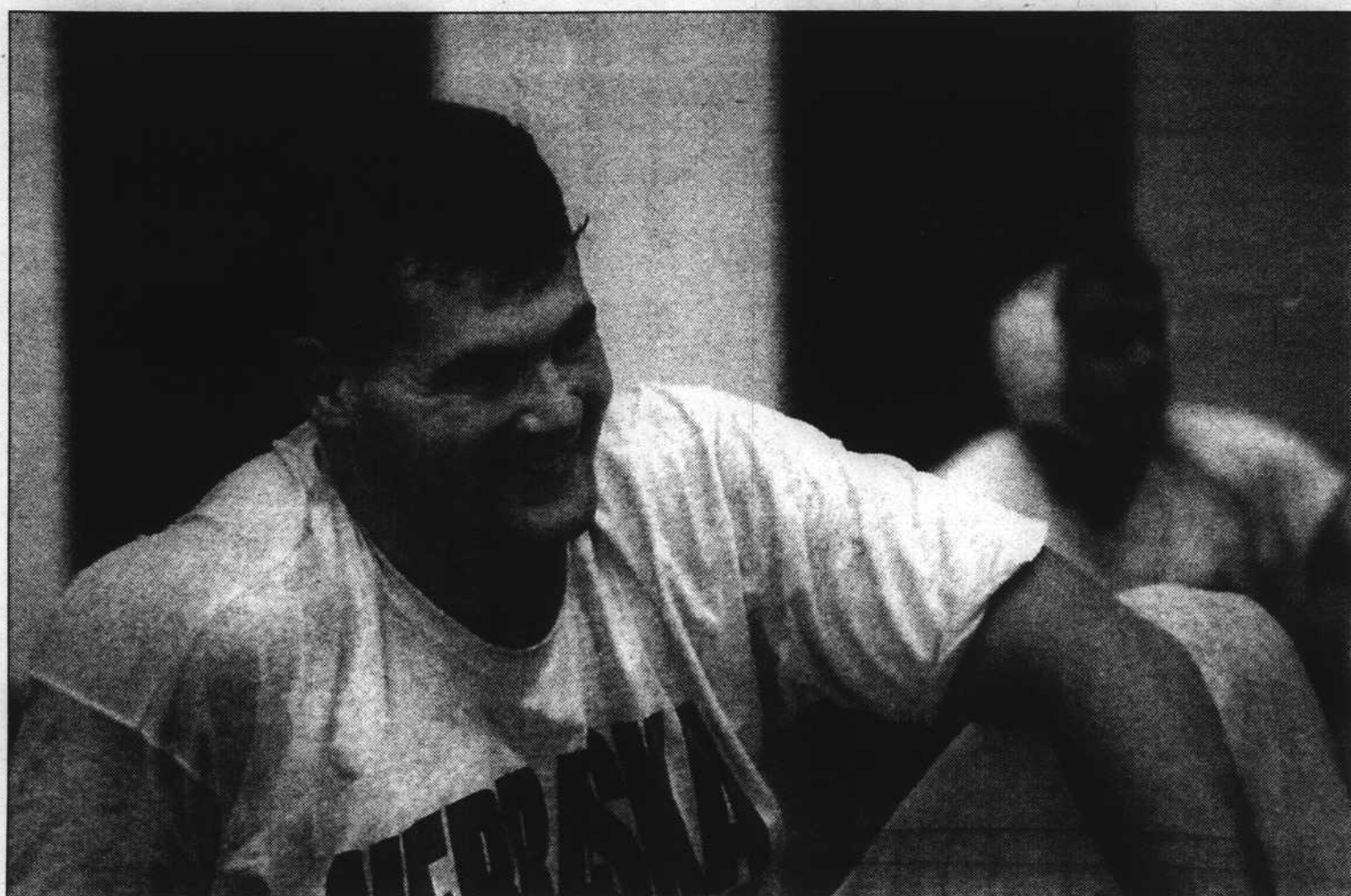


SPORTS WEEKEND

Friday, January 19, 1996

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Nebraska heavyweight Tolly Thompson will lead the Cornhuskers into battle Saturday and Sunday at the Devaney Center. Thompson, a junior, is the nation's top-ranked heavyweight and the defending national champion.

National Duals with top teams to test Huskers

By Antone Oseka
Staff Reporter

Nebraska coach Tim Neumann paced back and forth across the practice mat like a general preparing his troops for battle. In essence, that was just what he was doing.

Neumann gazed intently at the wrestlers, spotted a mistake and moved in to fix it. Then he paced again, spotted again and fixed again.

This week is not like last week and won't be like next week. Third-ranked Nebraska faces the toughest competition it will see until March at the NCAA Championships in Minneapolis. The Cornhuskers will wrestle in the Cliff Keen National Dual Meet Championships at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

First-round matches begin Saturday at 9 a.m. The semifinals start at 8 Saturday night. The finals will begin at 2 p.m. on Sunday.

"I can't tell if these guys are tired or they're hungry. They're focused," Neumann said.

Focus, intensity and technique are drilled every day to produce one outcome: that the team believes in itself and each individual wrestler.

"It's important that they believe," Neumann said. "We can say it until we're blue in the face, but unless they believe they can win, it's irrelevant."

Nebraska has to face a field that includes top

See **DUALS** on 8

Eierman returns to team

By Nikki Markota
Staff Reporter

In September, senior wrestler Mike Eierman, an NCAA All-American as a freshman, was dismissed from the Nebraska wrestling team for breaking team rules.

But the new year brings a new chance, and Eierman, a 142-pounder, is back on the team and may see action this weekend at the National Duals.

Eierman knows he made a mistake, he said. He paid the price by missing an entire semester of school and a half-season of wrestling.

"It was a reality check," Eierman said. "I know I messed up, and I definitely want it more now."

After being dismissed, Eierman spent time in Missouri, where he trained with his brothers, one of whom wrestles for a Division-II school. Eierman said he wrestled in a couple of open tournaments.

"He needs to meet certain academic goals that have been set for him," Cornhusker coach Tim Neumann said. "That and a minor change in lifestyle are essential for his return to the team."

Neumann said he didn't reinstate Eierman to help No. 3 Nebraska if it gets a shot at Iowa this weekend and later at the NCAA Championships.

"That is not an issue at all in this situation," Neumann said. "Our primary concern is to keep Mike in school so he can graduate this year."

Eierman said he was happy to have the chance to contribute again.

"I am going to work my hardest to make sure he does not regret his decision to reinstate me," he said.

NU hopes to end Stillwater slump

By Gregg Madsen
Staff Reporter

It was 1987. Ronald Reagan was president and the Bangles were at the top of the music charts. It was also the last year that the Nebraska basketball team won at Gallagher-Iba Arena.

In his first year as the Cornhusker coach, Danny Nee marched into Stillwater, Okla., and defeated Oklahoma State 79-77 in overtime.

Since then, Nebraska is 6-13 against the Cowboys, losing by an average margin of 17 points away from home, including a 40-point defeat last season.

The Huskers will face the Cowboys at 7:05 Saturday night. Senior forward Erick Strickland said the Huskers were ready to end the 10-year drought and avenge last year's humiliation.

The 10-4 Cowboys have struggled to an 0-2 conference start this season. They lost by seven points at Iowa State and were soundly defeated by Kansas at home by the score of 76-61.

A loss on Saturday would give the

Cowboys their worst conference start since the 1989-90 season, but the Huskers are under pressure to win as well.

"I think we're back on the wall too," Strickland said. "We lost a heart-breaker down there (at Oklahoma last weekend), so we feel we've got to get a road win somewhere."

"They're a physical team. They play good defense and the crowd helps them a lot. You have to play really solid against them, and you have to be really focused and stay focused for 40 minutes."

The Cowboys' trio of Chianti Roberts, Maurice Robinson and Jerome Lambert, which has averaged a combined 34.9 points per game, may not be a big factor Saturday.

Oklahoma State coach Eddie Sutton said Robinson, a 6-foot-7 junior, was doubtful for Saturday with a foot injury and Lambert, though he will play, is recovering from tonsillitis.

That leaves the majority of the scoring responsibility on the shoulders of Roberts, a 6-6 junior who averaged 9.5 points per game in two games

Basketball Starters

Gallagher-Iba Arena
Saturday, 7:05 p.m.
Stillwater, Okla.

Nebraska	Ht.	Wt.	Class	PPG	RPG
G Tyrone Lue	6-0	165	Fr.	8.8	2.9
G Jaron Boone	6-6	195	Sr.	17.1	2.8
F Erick Strickland	6-3	210	Sr.	15.4	4.8
F Bernard Garner	6-7	225	Jr.	10.3	6.4
C Mikki Moore	6-11	205	Jr.	9.4	5.3
Oklahoma State					
G Adrian Peterson	6-4	190	Fr.	9.7	2.2
G Andre Owens	5-11	180	Sr.	8.4	3.9
F Chianti Roberts	6-6	222	Jr.	12.5	4.8
F Jerome Lambert	6-8	215	Sr.	10.8	6.2
F Jason Skaer	6-7	215	So.	8.9	6.3

against the Huskers last season.

The Cowboys also will depend on guard R.W. McQuarters, a true freshman who started at cornerback for the Oklahoma State football team. He has averaged 10.5 points per game in the past two games.

But sometimes desire is more im-

portant than scoring, and Nebraska center Mikki Moore said the team with the most heart would win this game.

"We don't expect them to give it to us," Moore said. "We want a good fight, and they will give us a good battle."

Illinois recruit to fill hole on NU defense

By David Wilson
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska football team received its 13th verbal commitment Wednesday from linebacker Carlos Polk, a USA Today All-American from Rockford, Ill.

In his three seasons at Guilford High School, Polk accounted for 441 tackles, setting a new conference record.

"He's a quality player and will definitely make a big impact with Nebraska," Guilford coach Rich Infusino said.

The graduation of middlelinebackers Phil Ellis and Doug Colman will leave a hole in the Cornhusker defense next season.

But Infusino said middlelinebacker was not an easy position to fill. And the transition from playing high school football to one of the top college pro-

grams in the nation is a big step, he said.

Infusino said Polk, a 6-foot-2, 220-pounder, was built like a linebacker and could easily put on 20 to 25 pounds.

Infusino said Polk was "on the bubble" academically, but the coach was sure his player would qualify to play as a freshman.

Polk also considered Illinois, Iowa, Iowa State and Wisconsin, but decided on Nebraska after his visit to Lincoln last week.

Polk, who runs a 4.65-second 40-yard dash, posted 152 tackles this season, including 17 sacks. He led Guilford, an Illinois class 5-A high school, to a 7-2 record. Polk blocked three kicks and scored a touchdown after one of his three fumble recoveries. He is also a starter on the basketball team.

Players can sign national letters of intent beginning Feb. 7.

NU Verbal commitments

Name	Hometown	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Daniel Alexander	Wentzville, Mo.	6-0	230	FB
Sasho Becvarovski	St. John, Ind.	6-5	255	OL
J.R. Edwards	Lincoln Southeast	6-2	180	WR
DeAngelo Evans	Wichita, Kan.	5-9	210	RB
Justin Ferrell	Mission, Texas	6-4	285	DL
John Gibson	Papillion-LaVista	6-0	180	WR
Russ Hochstein	Hartington Cedar Catholic	6-4	245	OL
Loran Kaiser	St. Paul	6-5	245	LB
Willie Miller	Bellevue West	6-0	230	FB
Carlos Polk	Rockford, Ill.	6-2	220	LB
Eric Stevenson	Crescent, Okla.	6-3	245	FB
Steve Warren	Springfield, Mo.	6-2	290	DL
David Webber	St. Louis, Mo.	6-3	270	OL