



From left, Sharon Herbst, 29, Ruth Nunez, 20, and Susan Hagel, 40, rush for the basketball at the U.S. Women's Paralympic Basketball scrimmage Saturday night. Herbst earned gold medals at the 1988 Paralympics and 1990 Gold Cup. Nunez was named Most Valuable Player of the World Cup Champion in England in 1994. Hagel took 10th place in archery at the 1992 Paralympic games and was captain of the 1988 Paralympic basketball team.

Paralympic team aims for gold

By Michelle Delka
Staff Writer

A basketball team headed for the Olympics was in Lincoln for training this past weekend.

No pro basketball stars, no media circus.

But this team has dreams.

The 1996 Women's Paralympic Basketball Team was on the UNL city campus for three days last week attending a training camp.

After practicing and scrimmaging with local groups, the 13 members of the women's team held an intra-squad game on Saturday night.

Athletics

"This is a great program and experience," said Frank Brasile, a University of Nebraska at Omaha professor and assistant coach. "I want to bring this into my community."

The Paralympic Games, which will be held in Atlanta from Aug. 15-25, will be host to more than 102 nations. More than 4,000 athletes with physical disabilities will take part in the festivities, including 15 Olympic sports.

But make no mistake about it, these athletes are serious about winning.

"I want to help get the gold medal back again," team member Susan Hagel said. Hagel, a native of Minneapolis, Minn., will be competing in her sixth-straight Paralympic Games.

In 1988, she helped captain the gold-medal basketball team. Then in 1992, she competed in archery and placed 10th. But Hagel has decided to focus on basketball again for this year's games.

"It was hard to choose which sport to do," Hagel said, "but I wanted to help out since we got the silver in 1992."

Please see PARALYMPICS on 7



Christina Ripp, 16, competes in a scrimmage of the 1996 U.S. Women's Paralympic Basketball Team Saturday at the UNL Coliseum.

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