

Bowlers hope to challenge for title

Top newcomers should add to talented teams

By JOSH FUNK
Senior staff writer

The Nebraska men's and women's bowling teams are preparing to strike down the competition as they make a run for another national championship.

With two strong recruiting classes and an experienced corps of returning players, both teams are set to contend for a national title, NU Bowling Coach Bill Straub said.

"The people are in place to challenge for the title," Straub said. "The tough part is getting everyone together on the same page."

The women's team lost only two players from last year's team, which finished fourth at nationals.

"The team looks really, really strong," junior Kim Claus said.

Senior Jen Daugherty, a three-time

first-team All American, has the chance to earn that honor a fourth time this year.

Since the award originated in the 1982-83 season, no other woman has ever earned the award four times.

The men return with the heart of last year's team intact but ready to be infused with fresh blood.

"The guys struggled a lot last year," senior Adam Cardwell said. "We're ready for a fresh start."

Cardwell had to sit out last year after transferring to UNL.

And Straub has been able to attract some of the most sought-after recruits from across the nation.

"This was the best year ever for recruiting on both sides," Straub said.

Bowlers from Florida, Chicago and California have come to try out for the opportunity to play for Nebraska.

With such a strong group of players, it will be tough for Straub and Assistant Coach Paul Klempa to pick 15 players for each team, Straub said.

During the next two weeks, players will get a chance to work with the coaches before tryouts Sept. 12-13.

After the initial tryouts, regular team practices will begin. Two weeks later, coaches will choose the top 10 players on each team for the A teams.

"It's going to be a tough race for the A team," Cardwell said.

The top 10 players on each team receive scholarships, though the women's scholarships are larger thanks to athletic department funding.

The bowling season gets under way in October and continues through nationals in April.

Teams qualify for nationals by winning bid tournaments during the year.

ACC

Bowden seeks perfection

Florida State is the team to beat in ACC

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — There aren't many things left for Bobby Bowden to accomplish at Florida State — except an undefeated season.

But time is running out for the affable coach, who turns 69 in November.

Could this be the season the six-time defending Atlantic Coast Conference champions, who have won 10 or more games 11 straight years, give Bowden perfection with his fastest team ever?

"This football team would qualify as one that has the potential," said Bowden, second in wins (281) among active coaches to Joe Paterno's 298. "We have a lot of putting together to do. One thing you know is we've got the pieces sitting out there."

Despite his age, Bowden remains as competitive and sharp as ever. He was 88-28-3 (.752) in the 1980s, but has reached another level in the '90s. His 85-11-1 record over the last eight years is good for an 88.1 percent winning mark.

"It has always been there," Bowden said when asked about his drive for success. "I don't feel like I've lost one dime of it. I'm about as excited now as I've ever been going into a season. When I lose that, I'm out. I guess one of these days I'll wake up and not want to go."

No need for concern this year. Florida State's cumulative 40-yard dash times this spring were the program's best ever. In fact, wide receiver Laveranues Coles ran under 4.2 seconds. Bowden and his staff didn't believe it, and made Coles line up and run it a second time, and then a third. He broke the 4.2 barrier all three times to beat Deion Sanders' 4.21 mark as the fastest player in school history.

"Right now they are the dominant team — not only dominant in the ACC — but the dominant team in the country," said North Carolina Coach Carl Torbush. "That's not to take anything away from Nebraska or Michigan, but we're talking in a 10-year period a team that has been in the top four in the country every year. That's unbelievable."

The Seminoles are 47-1 in ACC games after six years in a league noted more for basketball than national football powers.

"When the team wins people are praising you, and when the team loses people want to tear you up."

CHRIS WEINKE
FSU quarterback

One of Bowden's few concerns is at quarterback, where 26-year-old Chris Weinke will run one of the nation's most sophisticated passing attacks. The 6-foot-5, 240-pounder originally signed with the Seminoles in 1990 and is back after a failed minor league baseball career.

"Being a college quarterback, especially at a program like Florida State, all the pressure is on you," said Weinke, who inherits the job after projected starter Dan Kendra injured a knee.

"When the team wins people are praising you, and when the team loses people want to tear you up."

Weinke will be passing to Coles and Peter Warrick, one of the game's breakaway talents, while Travis Minor averaged 5.6 yards per carry as a freshman last year.

Florida State's defense lost ACC player of the year Andre Wadsworth and consensus All-America linebacker Sam Cowart, but Defensive Coordinator Mickey Andrews has other talented players to fill the gaps.

"Florida State has a perception of throwing the ball every down, but when they won their first national championship (1993) they played tremendous defense," said Clemson Coach Tommy West.

The rest of the conference will try to crack that defense.

North Carolina begins its first season in a decade without Mack Brown as head coach. Brown departed for Texas, so Torbush inherits a program that was 11-1, finished sixth in the country and was hot on the heels of the Seminoles.

Virginia, Georgia Tech, Clemson and Wake Forest also should field solid teams and battle for one of the ACC's four guaranteed bowl spots.

Many believe the Virginia Cavaliers could be the ACC's sec-

ond-best team with nine starters back on defense and quarterback Aaron Brooks and tailback Thomas Jones heading an improved offense.

N.C. State has one of the ACC's best offenses, but once again has a suspect defense. Wide receiver Torry Holt is one of the nation's best at his position, scoring five TDs against the Seminoles last year.

Maryland and Duke are expected to bring up the rear. The Blue Devils have lost a record-tying 18 straight league games — and it won't get any easier: Duke's first ACC game this season is Sept. 19 at Florida State.

As for the Tar Heels, they lost seven players from a defense that ranked second in the nation in total yards allowed and fifth in scoring defense last season.

Three of those players — Greg Ellis, Brian Simmons and Vonnie Holliday — were taken in the top 19 picks of the NFL Draft.

Returning at cornerback, however, is two-time consensus All-American Dre Bly, a junior who has 16 interceptions in 22 regular-season games.

Despite inexperience, Torbush is confident Brown left him well-stocked on the defensive side of the ball with talented players who have been in the system two or three years.

"They want to prove to the world they are as good as what just left," Torbush said of his new defensive unit. "That is good, that's going to make them play better. That's not going to be easy, but I like that mentality."

On offense, quarterback Oscar Davenport is one of the more dynamic players in the ACC, but he is injury-prone. The school's leader in pass completion percentage broke an ankle in the Florida State game last season and missed North Carolina's 42-3 Gator Bowl win over Virginia Tech.

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