

Freshmen look to compete

BY LINDSAY GRIESER
Staff writer

Competition for playing time can be fierce — and according to Cornhusker women's basketball Head Coach Paul Sanderford, his five starters for this season have yet to be decided.

Let the battle between the freshmen and the veterans begin.

"The key to this season is depth," Sanderford said. "The freshmen are going to be challenging returning players for playing time."

"This is the best team I've had at Nebraska. Putting them together and finding the right chemistry is a challenge for any coach."

In order to attain some playing time, Paige Sutton, a 6-foot-2 forward/center recruit from Las Vegas, said she will have to take destiny into her own hands.

"No one has a secured spot," Sutton said. "I think that's the way it should be. It pushes you past mediocrity."

Adjusting to multiple practices each day has been the toughest component for the six incoming freshmen, four of whom will not likely redshirt.

"Most of the time we have four

workouts a day: lifting, conditioning, individual and then a workout with three other players," Sutton said. Isha Kelley has also seen the differences.

"College and high school (training) are completely different," said Kelley, a 5-foot-9 guard from Lincoln Southeast.

However, practices have been a smoother transition for Sutton and Stephanie Jones, a new addition from Omaha Benson. Both began conditioning this summer. All of the freshmen had the chance, but Jones and Sutton were the only two to participate.

"(The summer is) a whole different level of training — the demand is so high," Jones said.

Outside of their required individual practices, Sutton and Jones said they do some shooting on their own time.

Jones said: "I always go shoot a lot. When coming into a big program with so many good people in front of you, you have to work so much harder."

Playing with NU veterans like Nicole Kubik and Brooke Schwartz can definitely make for intense competition, Jones said.

Jones, despite an ankle injury this summer, is now fully recovered.

"Her size and athleticism, and her ability to rebound will cause her to be a

challenging player right from the get-go," Sanderford said.

Jones was recently named a third-team Preseason Freshman All-American, and she was also the first player from Nebraska to play in the Nike/WBCA All Star Classic, scoring 14 points.

Kelley was a second-team All-State selection, and her record of 6.6 assists in high school led Class A.

Sutton was a two-time first-team All-State representative and led Bishop Gorman High School to a 29-5 record as state runner-up.

Another freshman with playing potential is 5-foot-9 forward Shahidrah Roberts from Blue Valley North in Overland Park, Kan. As the first player in the high school's history to score 1,000 points, Roberts earned first team All-State honors and led Blue Valley North to a state runner-up finish.

The remaining two freshmen, Amanda Buchholz and Margaret Richards, will redshirt this year.

This season, NU is ranked No. 19 in the Women's Basketball News Service poll.

"Since they ranked us in the Top 25, I hope we can live up to those expectations," Sanderford said.

NU women runners ranked nationally

BY JASON MERRIHEW
Staff writer

Though Nebraska Cross Country Coach Jay Dirksen says the Cornhuskers have yet to reach their potential, the women's team is now ranked 15th in the country.

The Nebraska men's and women's cross country teams will travel to Emporia, Kansas, for the Emporia State Invitational tonight.

The women's team is ranked in the top 25 for the first time this season after a fourth-placed showing last weekend in Minneapolis.

"Rankings are nice because it means you have a pretty good team," Dirksen said. "There over 300 schools in the country with a cross country team."

Dirksen will use the Emporia State Invitational to rest the top seven runners on both teams and to let some younger runners gain experience.

On the men's side, the top finisher for the Huskers will earn the seventh spot on the roster for next week's meet at Penn State.

The Emporia State Invitational will be the first time Ian Gray, a freshman from Eugene, Oregon, competes.

"We're looking forward for him to run," Dirksen said.

Freshman Hunter Kosman, a Scottsbluff native, placed the highest last weekend among runners on this weekend's men's roster.

Freshman James DeBruhl, who battled sickness last week, will try to regain his form at Emporia. DeBruhl placed 206th in 28:00 at the Roy Griak Invite last weekend.

Junior Todd Tripple will also try to improve his time from last weekend. Tripple placed 209th in 28:06 — the last Husker to finish the Roy Griak Invitational.

On the women's side, Dirksen was going to take six runners, but the roster may be trimmed to four because of illness.

"We were scheduled to have six runners, but Melissa Drozda was real sick this week, so she is not going, and Stephanie Stewart is also sick, so she is questionable," Dirksen said.

Jenna Lucas, who placed 102nd in 19:21 at the Griak Invite, will lead the women's team.

Amie Finker also will compete for NU tonight. Finker finished 115th in 19:31 last weekend.

Deb Osteen, who finished 161st last weekend, and Christy Linnell comprise the rest of the women's team.

The women's race will start at 5 p.m., while the men will start a half hour later.

Noetzel set to swing into higher ranking

BY DAVID DIEHL
Staff writer

When her time at the T. Rowe Price National Clay Court Championships was through, Sandra Noetzel had triumphed over two higher-ranked opponents and clawed her way into the quarterfinal round.

Noetzel, the Cornhusker's No. 1 singles player, was ranked 58th nationally entering the tournament, held Sept. 23-24 in Baltimore. After defeating the 23rd- and 34th- ranked women in the country, her national position should be on the rise — as high as 30th, Noetzel has heard. But that's not what's on her mind.

"I don't really pay attention to the rankings," she said. "I just want to play."

Noetzel breezed through the first round 6-2, 6-1 over 23rd-ranked Erica Perkins from Washington State.

Her second round match went three sets, but she finally prevailed 6-4, 4-6, 7-5 over Auburn's 34th-ranked Andrea Piski.

Noetzel's tournament ended when she lost to 16th-ranked Celeste Fry from Mississippi, 6-2, 6-4.

Women's Tennis Coach Scott Jacobsen said it is an honor to have somebody as talented as Noetzel on his squad.

"It's a great thing for her. I'm really proud of her," Jacobsen said.

Noetzel was surprised at the quality of her game this early in the season.

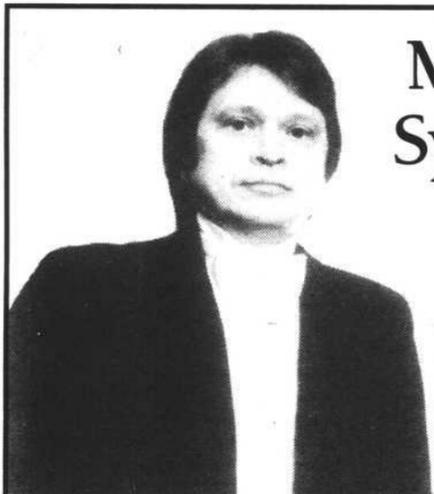
"It is good to know that in two to three weeks I can be in the top of the country," Noetzel said.

Despite this, Noetzel said she wasn't even in her best playing shape and really wasn't in a rhythm.

If she nails a quarterfinal bid without being in top playing shape, where can she go when she is in top form? Noetzel is humble on that subject.

"I don't have any expectations," she said. "I just want to feel good and play well."

"It's my last year. I just want good opponents to play, good tournaments, to travel a lot and have a good time."



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