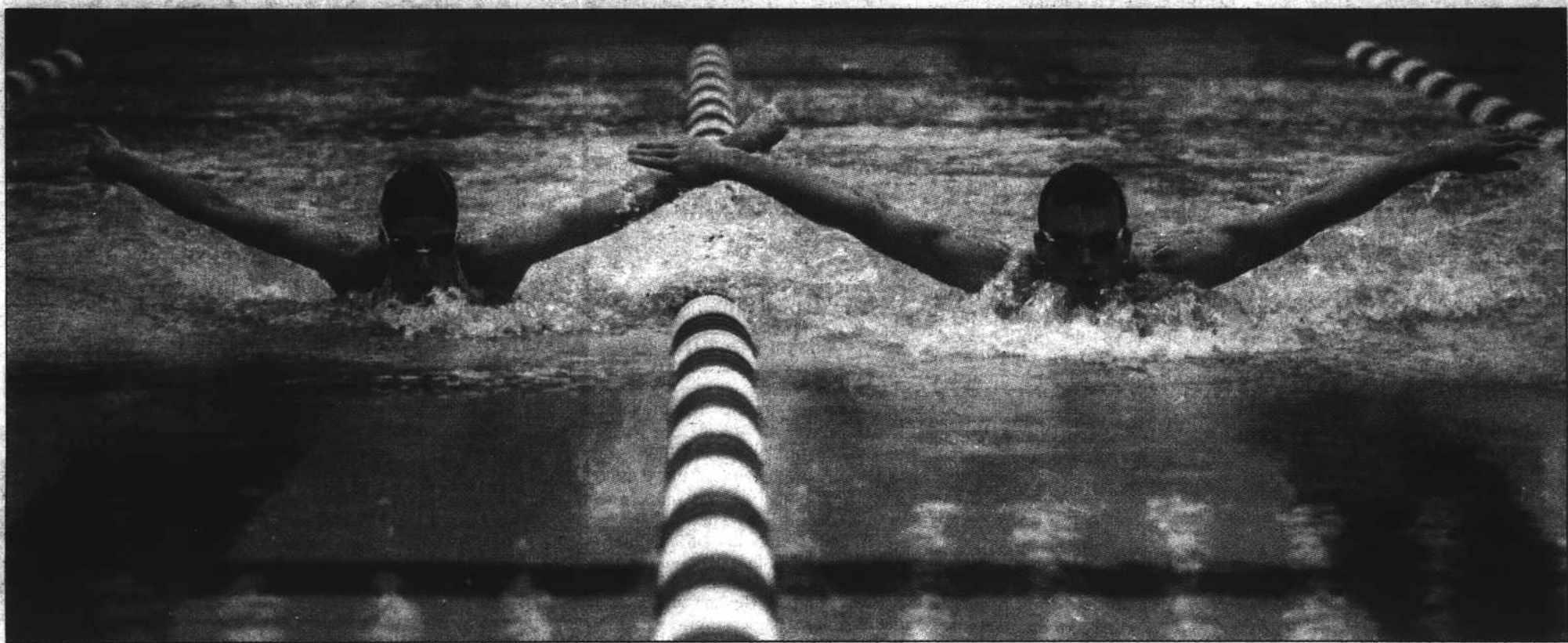


# Winter Sports Preview

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ADAM PINE, right, and his wife, Sasha Van Hamburg-Pine, NU swimmers, run a practice lap together.

Story By Brian Christopherson

Photo By Josh Wolfe

## aqua the couple

“The only real difference this year is that we can room together on road trips. That's pretty weird.”

**SASHA VAN HAMBURG-PINE**  
Nebraska swimmer

### Pines balance marriage and sport at Nebraska

Nebraska swimmer Adam Pine is a workaholic in the pool, driving to make national championship dreams and Olympic hopes become reality.

Then he goes home and forgets the sport he loves. He goes home to his wife, Sasha, whom he married July 31, 1999. And they aren't in any hurry to talk about swimming at the dinner table.

Sasha swims for Nebraska, too.

“We very rarely talk about swimming at home,” Pine says.

Sasha offers a carbon-copy answer.

“Definitely not, we try to leave the swimming stuff at the pool,” she said.

It was a relationship that started nearly six years ago in their homeland of Australia and climaxed with the wedding this summer, after an engagement late in 1996.

Coaches say the marriage has changed nothing in the way either swimmer goes about practice.

Assistant coach Keith Moore works with Adam on an individual basis every day and says

no major impacts have been felt at the practice facility because of the marriage.

“Sasha trains with another coach, usually at a different time,” Moore says. “Of course, after the wedding, we have to get used to calling her by her new name now: Sasha Pine.”

Adam says he and Sasha, whose maiden name is Van Hamburg, both have their own ways of training and competing and try to respect that.

“We both know what the other one likes to do,” Adam says. “The men are often split from the women at competitions, anyway.”

Head Coach Cal Bentz wouldn't expect much to change in either person's behavior.

“Both Adam and Sasha are very intelligent and both focus on what they have to do,” Bentz said.

Both swimmers, who are now in their senior year,

were a great recruiting steal for Bentz. It turned out to be a two-for-one deal when both Adam and Sasha signed with NU.

“We met at an Olympic training center and got together,” Adam said. The two dated for several years and then followed each other to Lincoln for college.

“It was a chance for both of us to come to school and swim and be on scholarship while we get our education,” he said. “You can't do that in Australia, because swimming is all club teams over there.”

“And then we both went to Nebraska over other universities because they have such a good men's and women's program.”

At Nebraska, Adam has made a name for himself quickly, ranking among the best in school history in the butterfly and freestyle events.

Two second-place finishes at the NCAAs in the butterfly event have him thinking about the national title going into this season.

“It's been frustrating coming so close at the NCAAs, 'cause obviously I'd like to win, but it is one of my main goals this season,” Adam said.

He is a newlywed with so much more on his mind than most young married men. He's facing the key year of his swimming career as he shoots for the Olympics.

“This year is a difficult year for Adam because he has his goals at the NCAAs, but he also has goals of making the Australian Olympic team for the games next summer,” Moore said.

“He has all these expectations and goals, but he also has every opportunity and potential to make them happen.”

The Olympics are extra special to a couple like the Pines, considering the summer games will be held at Sydney, Australia, next year.

“Definitely, it is important to qualify for the Olympics,” Adam said. “It would be such a great feeling to swim in front of that home crowd.”

The Olympics might even bring a little swimming talk to the Pine family table.

For now though, both Sasha and Adam are content to stick to their routines, and nothing much will change. It is business as usual for Mr. and Mrs. Pine in their approach to swimming.

“The only real difference this year is that we can room together on road trips,” Sasha said.

“That's pretty weird.”

## INSIDE



Page 16

### Neumannator

Tim Neumann leads his wrestling with a fire rarely seen in coaching



Page 17

### Ballin

It's a whole new game in Lincoln as the Huskers welcome newcomers.



Page 18

### Up front

Nicole Kubik and Brooke Schwartz are key part of the NU women's basketball team this season.