

# NU swimmers ready for busy weekend

By Brian Christopherson  
Staff writer

The Nebraska men's and women's swimming and diving teams are piecing a puzzle together right now, and Coach Cal Bentz is watching the picture coming together.

The coach might have the puzzle completed after his team's trip to Kansas and Missouri this weekend.

The 16th-ranked NU women and 18th-ranked Husker men will come in favorites against both the Jayhawks and Tigers, riding the momentum of last week's dominating performance over Iowa State.

"With no disrespect to our opponents, we expect the KU women to give us a better challenge than their men, and the Missouri men to give us

more of a challenge than the women," Bentz said.

Sure enough, the statistics prove Bentz is probably right. The Kansas women are a respectable 4-4 in dual meets, while the Jayhawk men are a bleak 0-5.

However, Saturday afternoon's meet in Columbia against the Tigers might prove to be a difficult task after competing not even 24 hours earlier.

Bentz wants his team to use the back-to-back competitions to their advantage and thinks it should give them no trouble.

"We swim three days in a row at the conference meet, so the two days shouldn't bother us too much and could help us prepare for later on."

The Tigers are 6-2 and 5-1 in dual meets on the women's and men's side

respectively.

The Tigers could be dangerous, but Helene Muller says that while dual records may be important at Missouri, it is just looked upon as a preparation meet for the conference and NCAA meets at Nebraska.

"Some teams are dual teams, and some teams are like us and use those dual meets to prepare for the conference and NCAAs," Muller said.

"Teams like Minnesota for example, always get us in duals, but we almost always get them at the NCAAs, because we're ready for that."

However, NU plans on holding no one out for this weekend's meets.

"We're going to do what we have to do to score as many points as possible," Bentz said. "We're still putting

the team together for the conference meet."

A Swedish connection named Karin Larka posted the team's top time of 1:04.07 in the 100-meter butterfly last weekend against the Cyclones and could be an added impact.

Larka arrived at semester from her home in Stockholm, Sweden.

"We will have to wait and see how people fit, but we're definitely taking a look at her," Bentz said.

Along the winding road of the season, the Huskers will continue to try to qualify more swimmers and divers for the NCAA meet.

As of Thursday, senior captain Michael Windisch was the lone automatic qualifier in the 400-meter individual medley with a time of 4:14.22

*"We're going to do what we have to do to score as many points as possible."*

**Cal Bentz**  
Nebraska swimming coach

at the European Short Course Championships in December.

Five Nebraska divers have qualified in the Zone D Championships, including Tamara Bernth and Erik Cook, who swept the 1- and 3-meter springboard events against Iowa State.

## Jets give Patriots OK to talk with Belichick

FOXBORO, Mass. (AP) — The New York Jets today gave the New England Patriots permission to talk to Bill Belichick about their coaching job.

Patriots spokesman Stacey James confirmed that the teams had reached agreement on compensation should the Patriots hire Belichick, who resigned as Jets coach one day after being elevated to the position.

"We did receive permission to speak to Belichick," James said. Although the amount of compensation was not immediately available, the Jets reportedly had been asking for a first-round draft pick.

The announcement means an end could be in sight for one of the NFL's strangest soap operas. But it's not done yet: The Patriots still have to decide if they want Belichick, who was their defensive coordinator when they went to the 1997 Super Bowl but left with Coach Bill Parcells for the Jets.

Belichick's contract made him heir to the New York head coaching job when Parcells stepped down. But when Parcells retired after this season, Belichick decided he didn't want the job after all.

He resigned in a bizarre news conference just a day after being given the job. He filed a grievance with NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue trying to break free from his contract and, when that didn't work, he filed a federal lawsuit. Belichick was rebuffed on both fronts.

The Patriots continued to interview prospective coaches, in recent days zeroing in on Jacksonville defen-

sive coordinator Dom Capers. The former Carolina Panthers head coach had a four-hour interview with New England owner Robert Kraft on Wednesday.

The Patriots also had interviewed Tom Donahoe, the former director of player personnel for the Pittsburgh Steelers and a Capers friend, to be their general manager. They want Belichick to be both coach and GM.

It's an interesting turnabout for a team that saw Parcells walk after a Super Bowl year because the Patriots wouldn't let him pick his players. Instead, Kraft gave that job to vice president of player personnel Bobby Grier and hired Pete Carroll as coach.

The Jets had to give up four draft choices to get Parcells out of the final year of his New England contract.

The Patriots got worse in each of Carroll's three years. The defending AFC champions went 10-6 in his first season, 9-7 in his second and finished 8-8 and in fifth place in the division in his third.

Carroll was fired the day after the season, with two years left on his contract. Before the Patriots could get permission to talk to Belichick, Parcells resigned and Belichick was automatically made head coach there.

Belichick decided he didn't want the job.

When Tagliabue said Belichick was stuck with the Jets, he filed an antitrust lawsuit. But that failed on Tuesday when a federal judge refused to free Belichick to negotiate with other NFL teams, saying he had created his own problem.

## Florence says UT game stopped slump, looks to get game on track

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points, and Florence ended the game 4-for-12 from the floor.

From then on, Florence looked to be in a daze.

"I was thinking too much and putting too much pressure on myself," Florence said. "I was making it bigger than it had to be. I just have to re-track my roots and let basketball take care of itself."

In a one-point home loss to Iowa State, Florence shot six of 18, missing the game-winning shot on consecutive tries as time expired.

Three more poor performances followed, culminating with a 2-for-16 effort against visiting Texas Tech on Jan. 19. NU Coach Danny Nee's comments after the game showed how much Florence meant to the team.

"If Larry plays at all," said Nee, whose team won by three points, "we have control of the game."

Florence worked with a shot doctor and put in extra time in the gym. Belcher even suited up the

Baylor game to "pump Larry up."

But none of that seemed to help. Then came Texas on Tuesday night.

Nee said before the game that Nebraska's chances of winning were slim to none if Florence continued his funk.

Florence must have been listening. He hit for eight early points in the first half and finished with 10 for the game shooting five of nine.

But it didn't really matter in a game where few Huskers shined in a 27-point beating from the Longhorns.

Still, Florence looked to be back into the groove.

Is he out of the slump?

"I started to, but I sat out the last 9½ minutes. It stopped it a little bit," Florence said. "I wanted to stay out there and get back into it, but the game was already out of reach."

Florence will try to regain his form again Saturday night when the Huskers get their long-awaited rematch against Kansas State at 7 p.m.

## NU women's rifle team shoots up in ranking in second season

By Jamie Suhr  
Staff writer

In fewer than 18 months, the Nebraska women's rifle team went from not existing to a top ten team nationally.

NU is ranked ninth in the NCAA rifle poll — the highest ranking in its history.

Coach Karen Anthony said bigger and brighter things are ahead.

"We're evolving as a team," Anthony said. "We have high expectations. We're on track to get better."

Earlier in the season, the Husker rifle team got a chance to see how far it had come when the team competed against No. 2 West Virginia and Alaska-Fairbanks, the No. 1 team and

*"We're evolving as a team. We have high expectations."*

**Karen Anthony**  
NU rifle coach

defending national champions. Though NU placed ninth in the invitational, Anthony said, the tournament gave her team a chance to prove it belonged.

"Sometimes you can be intimidated by a team with that reputation," Anthony said. "Shooting shoulder to shoulder helps you lose that intimidation."

NU will be competing at the Roger Withrow Invitational Sunday at Murray State. Alaska-Fairbanks is

also in the tournament. Anthony said the team is capable of being top five in the country next year. She said she expected the team to become a national power, but not this quickly.

For proof of Nebraska's meteoric rise, NU surprisingly received a letter of intent from Heather Bissos from Whelling, W.V. Bissos is considered one of the top recruits in the country, and was thought to be staying in West Virginia.

## Husker women at home

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be available for the dual. Wilkinson was unable to perform last weekend at the Bermuda Triangle Challenge because of illness.

Nebraska will be led by senior All-American Heather Brink, who is coming off back-to-back individual all-around titles at Bermuda and Iowa State.

Junior Amy Ringo and Senior Arica Lamb should also play big roles to try to extend Coach Kendig's home-win streak. Kendig has never lost at home during his stint with

Nebraska. "We're geared-up to have our best meet of the year this weekend," Kendig said.

The meet is scheduled to begin at noon on Saturday. This will be the only meet in which the women's team will compete at the same time with the men's team.

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