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NU's Johnson hopes A&M takes away UT points

JOHNSON from page 16

before, and she knows it is an entirely new situation."

Johnson's wins are a must this weekend, in a meet that Bentz says could swing easily between the top teams.

"Every point is going to be important, and you need to make the best use of your opportunities to win," Bentz said. "Texas and Texas A&M are tough competition, but overall, I think the whole conference is improved from top to bottom, which is going to make it interesting."

Both Johnson and Bentz sense a

more focused team for conferences this season, compared to the team that came up just short in a second-place finish last season to the Longhorns.

"I think we're focused and ready to swim faster," Bentz said. "We're just getting adjusted to being down here right now."

Perhaps the team that will cause the most ruckus this weekend, regardless of its final finish, is the home team Texas A&M Aggies.

"It's going to be really close, and A&M is going to be up there," Johnson says. "A&M might split

some of the events and take some points away from Texas, which could help us."

Johnson says a switch from yards to meters at the pool in Lincoln may come up big for Nebraska in this three-day marathon, because most teams still maintain yard distances in their pools.

"Swimming meters instead of yards is going to help us here and at NCAAs and hopefully will make us a little bit stronger," Johnson said.

Johnson and senior Helene Muller will most likely prove to be Nebraska's bread winners this year in

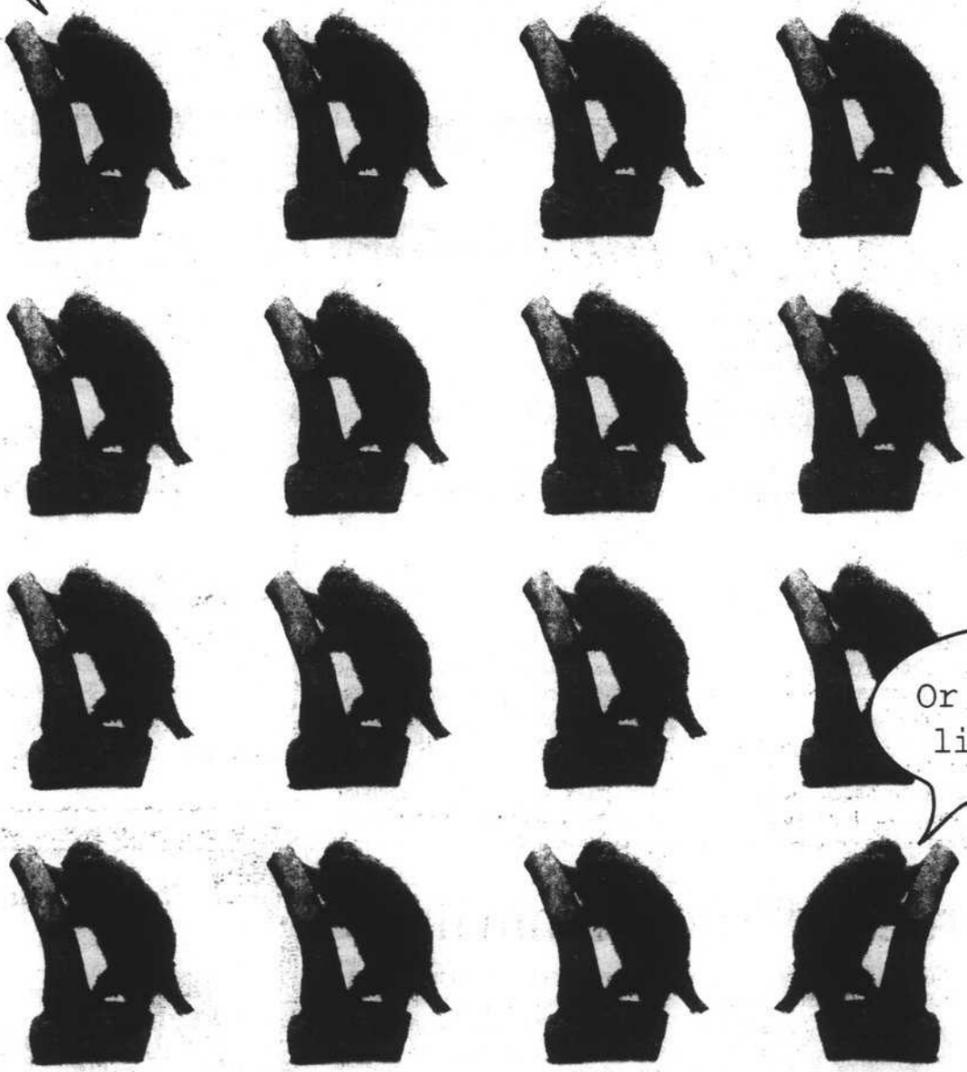
the points category. Muller says the conference meet always becomes a matter of mentality and heart rather than just the skill aspect on the final day.

"On that third day, you just need to get out of bed and push yourself to get it done," Muller said.

Johnson said the conference trophy could be coming back to Lincoln, and she senses an added intensity to this year's team.

"We're more focused on the Big 12 this season," she said. "We want to do our best, and we could really put it together this weekend."

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