

NU anticipates solid NCAA showing at Arkansas meet

TRACK from page 16

biggest and best bullet – shot-putter Carl Myerscough.

He will be staying at home and practicing until a hearing is held in the United Kingdom to determine his eligibility in international competition. Myerscough allegedly tested positive for a banned substance.

His absence will cost the Huskers a probable first-place in the shot put.

Pepin said the national meet wasn't indicative of how good a team was. He said the teams that do the best are usually those that have most quality at the top rather than the most athletes.

The NU women outscored Texas at conference, yet the Longhorns are the favorite at nationals.

"It's a lot different from conferences," Pepin said. "There you work for matchups. It takes a great individual to get to nationals."

The Husker women will have nine women competing. Six-time All-American Dalhia Ingram lead the experienced group of women by fighting for points in both the long jump and triple jump.

The senior was named the USTCA Midwest region athlete of the year. She is tied for the second-best mark in the country with a leap of 44 feet, 6 inches in the triple jump. There, Ingram will have the opportunity to rematch Louisiana State's Keisha Spencer, who set a Bob Devaney Sports Center Track record by jump-

"I have to run the preliminaries like they were the finals ..."

Chris Chandler
sprinter

ing 45-10 at the Frank Sevigne Invitational.

The Huskers' youngest woman competitor is freshman Emily Waibel, who is coming off a second-place finish at the conference meet where she ran a 8.28 in the 60-meter hurdles.

Last week, Waibel competed in the National Indoor Track and Field Championships, where she bowed out after preliminaries.

Despite the disappointing showing, Waibel said, the experience will help her at the NAAs.

"I didn't run like I wanted to, but it'll make me less nervous for nationals," Waibel said.

The Huskers have two high-jumpers in the field who have cleared 6 feet. Senior Carrie Braness and junior Jessica Thompson are ranked fifth and twelfth, respectively.

NU also boasts the No. 3 women's weight-thrower in the country. Junior Melissa Price has a personal-best throw of 66-2 1/4.

BASEBALL

Huskers look to improve over eight-game stretch

■ NU hopes to rebound after a 1-2 conference start at Kansas State.

By Dane Stickney

Staff writer

While most university students will be enjoying their spring breaks, the Nebraska baseball team will enter an important stretch of their schedule.

The Cornhuskers (7-5) need to win a large percentage of their eight games over the break against Kansas State, Arkansas and Oklahoma, NU Coach Dave Van Horn said.

"We're at a crossroads in our season right now," Van Horn said. "We need to get some wins under our belts now to pick up momentum."

Last weekend, the Huskers lost two of three to Oklahoma State in their first Big 12 series. Texas and Baylor are sitting atop the conference with 5-1 records.

The Huskers, 1-2 in the conference, will look to climb back into the top of the Big 12 this weekend when they go to Manhattan, Kan., to face Kansas State for three games.

KSU is 3-10 overall and 0-6 in the

Big 12, but Van Horn said the Wildcats will be fired up to face the Huskers.

"They're a real hungry team," he said. "This will be their first home series, and their backs are against the wall."

Van Horn said this weekend's series is important for Nebraska.

"This is big for us," he said. "We need to go on the road and sweep them."

Sophomore Shane Koline will pitch Friday, freshman Jaime Rodrigue will pitch Saturday and senior Chad Wiles will go Sunday.

After the three-game stand against KSU, NU will travel to Fayetteville, Ark., to face Arkansas on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Huskers defeated Arkansas 13-2 on Feb. 22 in what Van Horn called Nebraska's best game of the season.

"That was the best we've played this season," he said. "Everything came together, and we looked great. But they're a lot better team than they showed against us the first time."

The Razorbacks are 11-6 and riding a six-game winning streak.

On March 17, Nebraska will return to Lincoln for its first home series in Big 12 play against Oklahoma.

The Sooners are currently 11-5 overall and 3-0 in the Big 12 after sweeping KSU last weekend.

Van Horn said the OU series will be a big series because it is the Huskers' first Big 12 home stand of the season.

"OU's always a strong team, and if we can get some big wins against them here at home, it'll really give us some confidence," he said. "But that's a long ways down the road. We've got some tough games ahead of us before we come home."

R.D. Spiehs, a sophomore relief pitcher, said the team isn't looking past KSU.

"We're just concentrating on sweeping Kansas State," he said. "We know beating Arkansas and Oklahoma will be tough, but we're set on being ready for K-State."

Rob Childress, Nebraska's pitching coach, said the pitching staff will have to be a big factor during the eight games over spring break.

The staff's depth and prior success should propel them through the coming games, he said.

"I think our pitchers will hold up," he said. "We've got six or seven guys who can go out and give us three to four solid innings."

NU hopes for individual wins

By David Diehl

Staff writer

If there was any suspense about how the Nebraska wrestling team will fare when they take the mat at the NCAA Championships next Thursday, Tim Neumann has already killed it.

"We're not going to win the national title," Neumann admitted. "It became apparent before Christmas that we weren't going to win the national championship this year."

Teams like Iowa and Big 12 Conference foes Iowa State and Oklahoma State should be favorites to take home the trophy, Neumann said.

Whereas the favorites qualified between eight and 10 wrestlers apiece, the Cornhuskers qualified six for the Championships, to be held in St. Louis, Mo., next Thursday through Saturday. The limited number of wrestlers makes the Cornhuskers' chances slim.

Paul Gomez at 125 pounds, Todd Beckerman at 133, Joe Henson at 149, Bryan Snyder at 157 and Brad Vering at 197 all earned automatic bids by placing third or higher in the Big 12 Conference Tournament. Charles McTorry finished fourth at 184 pounds but earned a wild-card berth to Nationals.

Snyder and Vering are ranked second and third in their respective divisions and look to be NU's best shots for individual titles.

Vering probably will have to get through OSU's Mark Munoz to win his national title. Vering is 3-6 against his rival in his career and three of those losses have come this year.

"I've paid my dues," Vering said. "I've worked hard and (beating Munoz) is going to happen sometime. But we both have to wrestle four other times before we'd meet, so a lot of things can happen."

Despite not taking an entirely loaded gun with

"We're not going to win the national title."

Tim Neumann
wrestling coach

him, Neumann said, he still has hope that individuals can be successful.

If everyone gets on a roll, who knows what could happen.

In 1996, Iowa State finished fourth in the conference, qualified only five wrestlers and finished in second place, Neumann said.

Neumann said he felt very comfortable with the group that will be competing next week. Despite only having six grapplers, he said having all six of them seeded eased any doubts in their performances.

When NU brought nine or ten guys in the past, Neumann said, there were always a couple that he knew would go 0-2 and be out of the tourney, which isn't so

this year. "Every single guy we're bringing I think can place," Neumann said. "If we come back with six All-Americans, that's the most Nebraska's ever had."

Henson comes into the national tournament after a strong showing at the Big 12 meet, where he upset Oklahoma's Jared Frayer and put up a strong fight in the finals before losing to OSU's Reggie Wright.

Henson said that primarily the focus is on individuals for nationals.

"I think you need to be focused on what you're going to do," Henson said, "and on how you're wrestling right now. Having those other guys really doesn't matter because you have to focus on yourself."

Gymnastics faces back-to-back duals

■ NU celebrates 25 years of women's gymnastics against Iowa.

By Jason Merrihew

Staff writer

While the majority of Nebraska students begin their downward spiral, that is spring break, the fifth-ranked NU women's gymnastics team will try to remain focused on taking care of business.

The Cornhuskers will participate in two duals on back-to-back days at the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Sunday, March 12, and Monday March 13.

Sunday, the Huskers will be involved in a border war with the Iowa

Hawkeyes that will begin at 4 p.m.

NU is as red hot as the color they wear. In the past two meets, the Cornhuskers have broken the school-record team score. The current record is now set at 196.80.

"It'll be real interesting," NU junior Amy Ringo said. "I've never faced Iowa before."

The Hawkeyes come into Lincoln after posting a season-low 190.275 team score in the Corvette Cup in Columbia, Mo.

"They've (the Huskers) been so good about getting themselves up for every meet regardless who our competition is," NU Coach Dan Kendig said.

During the Iowa duel, the Huskers will be celebrating the 25th year of women's gymnastics at the university. Monday's duel against 10th-

ranked Brigham Young University will mark the last time seniors Nicole Wilkinson and Heather Brink set foot into the Bob Devaney Sports Center competing for the scarlet and cream.

"Monday will be fun because it is Senior Night," Ringo said.

The Cornhuskers already have scored a victory against the Cougars this season when they faced each other last week in the Shanico Invitational. BYU placed third behind Oregon State and NU in the quadrangular.

The previous victory over the Cougars and Senior Night should give Nebraska extra motivation to compete well against the fellow top-10 foe.

"This should be a good practice for what is in store for us," Kendig said.

The duel against BYU will begin at 7 p.m. on Monday.

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