

Weekend pitches NU into Big 12 play

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Nebraska baseball's fourth trip southward adds a little importance to the weekend - Big 12 Conference play begins.

The No. 12 Cornhuskers (6-3) face Texas Tech Friday through Sunday in Lubbock, Texas, as both teams segue from their non-conference slate into league play. Both NU and Tech had the week off when the Red Raiders' (12-6) doubleheader against Texas Christian was rained out on Tuesday.

Shane Komine, coming off a strong outing in a 6-3 win over Louisiana-Lafayette, will get the start in Friday's 7 p.m. game. Jamie Rodriguez starts Saturday after pitching seven relief innings in a 8-7 win over Wichita State. Sunday's starter is not yet known.

The Red Raiders return only two starters from last year's team and have displayed a strong penchant for stealing bases (43 of 51 attempts completed so far) while hitting .311 at the plate. Tech just won two of three from New Mexico; the Huskers beat the

Lobos earlier this season in an Albuquerque, N.M., tournament.

Nebraska hasn't won in Lubbock since 1991, but signs point to a reversal this weekend, especially if NU can stay hot at the plate. The Huskers are hitting .365 through nine games, which is best in the Big 12 (Tech is second), with three players, Matt Hopper (.471), Jeff Blevins (.471) and Jeff Leise (.429) past the .400 plateau. Hopper, a Morrison, Colo., sophomore, leads NU with two home runs and 15 RBI.

Following the series in

Lubbock, the Huskers will fly to Cedar City, Utah, and await their doubleheader with Southern Utah on Tuesday.

In other college baseball news, the big series this weekend pits No. 2 Louisiana State against one of the nation's hottest teams, No. 3 Arizona State in a three-game set in Tempe, Ariz. It's possible the winner could leapfrog Georgia Tech to the No. 1 spot in the polls after the Yellow Jackets lost their top player, John Texeria, to a broken ankle for eight to nine weeks.

Huskers find depth will be an advantage

BY VINCE KUPPIG

The Nebraska women's tennis team will once again look to use its depth to its advantage when it heads to the court this weekend.

The No. 59th-ranked Cornhuskers (8-2, 0-2) will attempt to pick up its first conference win of the season when they face Missouri (8-2, 2-2) on Saturday at 10 a.m. at Woods Tennis Center. They also take on Southwest Missouri State (4-3) on Sunday at 10 a.m. at Woods.

NU's depth nearly led to an upset over fifth-ranked Texas last weekend. Losing at No. 1, 2 and 3, the Huskers picked up wins at the bottom three singles spots in the 4-3 loss.

Junior Amy Frisch, who usually plays at the No. 4 or No. 5 singles positions, said NU's depth helped prepare the team for competition.

"Our depth has helped us a lot through this year," she said. "It helps us in the practice because we're all good hitting for each other."

"For some teams, once you get towards the bottom, the play-

ers aren't quite as good. For our team, we have a lot of strong, good players no matter where you go."

The unranked Tigers, who are off to their best start in school history, also have that advantage. Their bottom three singles spots have a combined 25-5 record.

Also unranked, SWMS enters this weekend's match with four consecutive wins, including a win over 65th-ranked Kansas. All three of its losses have come from ranked opponents.

Coach Scott Jacobson said he expected this weekend's matches to be good challenges.

"It's going to be a tough weekend," he said. "We'll find out what we're made of."

In men's tennis action, NU (5-3, 0-1) plays at 17th-ranked Oklahoma State on Saturday before heading to Lawrence, Kan., to play 56th-ranked Boise State on Sunday morning.

"It's a big weekend with two ranked teams," Coach Kerr McDermott said. "We need to get some wins over some ranked opponents to start making some noise."

Mills back at No. 1 spot after injury

MILLS from page 10

three-set thriller over the No. 1 player from 20th-ranked Csorong Bibza from Baylor, 7-6, 5-7, 6-4. He provided NU's lone point in a 6-1 loss.

With hopes of cracking the top 50 individually, Mills will have his toughest challenge of the year this weekend when he likely faces 53rd-ranked Matt Prentice of Oklahoma State.

But it is the team that Mills is most concerned about, NU Coach Kerr McDermott said.

"He's a great team player," McDermott said. "He loves for the team to win. He's kind of a player-slash-coach when he's not playing himself. He gets the team fired up."

Mills is determined to help get the Huskers into the top 40 by the season's end. The ultimate team goal for NU's new No. 1 is an NCAA Tournament berth.

So far the Huskers are off to a decent start at 5-3, with two losses against top-50 teams.

But Mills said the Huskers were due to upset a top-ranked opponent.

With Mills' work ethic, McDermott said Mills might be able to help direct the Huskers to that upset. He said Mills was the type of player who gave his all regardless of the situation.

"He busts his tail off," McDermott said. "When he steps out on the court to play, it's always 100 percent and fight to the end. That, in itself, just keeps rubbing off on the rest of the team. That's what we missed so much last year."

But maybe missing last season wasn't so bad. Mills said he now appreciated being able to play even more.

"After sitting out a year, it really fuels the fire to come out here and work really hard to win," he said.

Men look to regroup

BY KRISTEN WATERS

The Nebraska men's gymnastics team is looking to make a 180-degree flip this weekend after suffering two losses to two top-ranked teams last weekend, as it plays host to No. 17 Air Force at the Devaney Center on Sunday.

NU swallowed its second loss of the season after a 206.575-202.575 score against No. 7 Iowa last Friday in the Huskers' first home meet held at the Pershing Auditorium.

Nebraska then traveled to top-ranked Oklahoma on Sunday where they hit only 48 percent of their routines, according to Coach Francis Allen, and scored a 200.950, marking the lowest team score of the season.

"Last weekend was a big eye-opener for us," senior Jason Hardabura said. "We just need to put that behind us and learn from it."

Goss: 'No stopping team'

BY JASON MERRIHEW

The HuskerVision boards will be filled with high-flying action that hasn't been seen in the Bob Devaney Sports Center in quite some time.

The sixth-ranked Nebraska women's gymnastics team will provide some action in the Devaney Center for the first time since Feb. 3, when they go head to head with 10th-ranked Florida on Sunday.

Although the Huskers competed in Lincoln last weekend at the Masters Classic, they competed at the Pershing Auditorium because of a scheduling conflict.

"We really enjoyed competing at Pershing, and it turned out to be a really good event," NU Assistant Coach Rhonda Faehn said. "But Devaney is our home, and we like to compete there."

On the way to a Masters Classic win, the Huskers shattered the school record, which has been previously broken twice this season, scoring a blistering 197.325.

Despite the fact that Nebraska scored the ninth-highest score in the nation this season, the NU coaching staff believes that there is room for improvement.

Lubbock, the Huskers will fly to Cedar City, Utah, and await their doubleheader with Southern Utah on Tuesday.

In other college baseball news, the big series this weekend pits No. 2 Louisiana State against one of the nation's hottest teams, No. 3 Arizona State in a three-game set in Tempe, Ariz. It's possible the winner could leapfrog Georgia Tech to the No. 1 spot in the polls after the Yellow Jackets lost their top player, John Texeria, to a broken ankle for eight to nine weeks.



DN File Photo
Keyuo Craver and the Nebraska track team have one more chance to qualify for the NCAA Championships this weekend.

Meet will decide NCAA spots

TRACK from page 10

small fraction of time to any performance at the NU track.

"What they've tried to do is make it all fair," Pepin said. "It's probably not, but they're getting as close as possible."

Pepin explained that a

women's 200-meter qualifying time at a normal track is 24.45 where a 24.25 is required at Devaney.

Events at the meet get underway at 10 a.m. at the Devaney Sports Center. Running events starting at 11 a.m.

The Lincoln League of the National Adult Baseball Association

Individuals sign up meeting dates for playing or managing in Lincoln's premier adult baseball league for ages 18 and up.

Tuesday, March 6th, 7:00 PM
Thursday, March 15th, 7:00 PM

Meetings will be held at the National Guard Armory (1776 North 10th Street) in Lincoln. Please enter building from the east side. For additional information:

email: nabalincoln@hotmail.com
website: www.ebamz.com/nabalincoln
phone: 402-6301, 467-3202, or 423-5191

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD

BECOME A MENTOR
Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters
Trailblazers

We are seeking adult volunteers for this specialized mentoring program serving youth with special emotional needs.

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

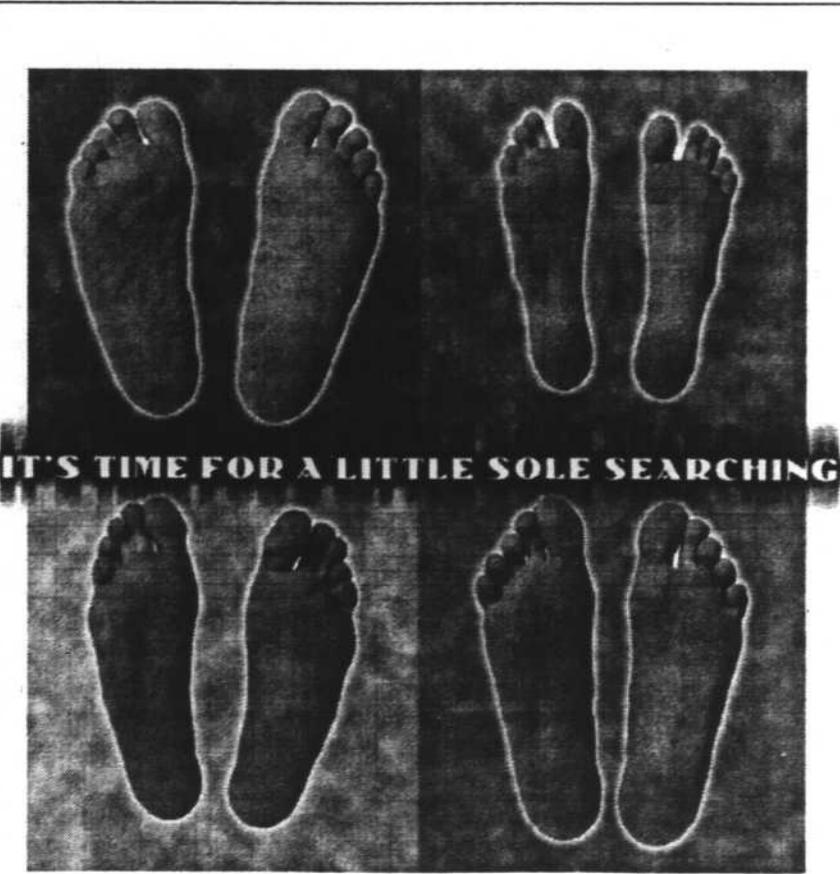


CALL TODAY FOR MORE INFORMATION

402-464-2227

HEARTLAND BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS
6201 HAVELOCK AVENUE

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS



As you consider career choices, think Podiatry. With the aging population, the need for Doctors of Podiatric Medicine has never been greater. For more information on this growing field, and to get a toehold on a great career, visit the website of the school of Podiatric Medicine nearest you.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS:

BARRY UNIVERSITY | DES MOINES UNIVERSITY | SCHOLL COLLEGE | OHIO COLLEGE | TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

FLORIDA www.barry.edu/podiatric

IOWA www.dmu.edu/cpmcs

ILLINOIS www.scholl.edu

OHIO www.ocpm.edu

PENNSYLVANIA www.temple.edu

Win a \$1,000 scholarship Enter the Sole Searching Essay Contest

Enter online at www.solesearchessay.com, but hurry, the contest ends April 30th.