

## Byrne, swimmers at odds about cut

■ NU's athletic director formally announced the demise of the sport during a press conference Monday.

BY MATTHEW HANSEN

The formal announcement that men's swimming would be cut, which came on Monday afternoon at an Athletic Department press conference, felt like a showdown.

On one side, Nebraska Athletic

Director Bill Byrne sat in front of a microphone explaining his reasons for eliminating the sport.

On the other, approximately 35 members of the now-defunct team and the women's swimming team sat watching, clearly dismayed by what they were seeing and hearing.

To Byrne and Chancellor Harvey Perlman, who accepted Byrne's recommendation to cut the program on Friday, the decision came down to the bottom line, which showed the

Athletic Department more than \$200,000 over budget last year.

"Resources are being outstripped by demand ... institutions will be increasingly faced to make difficult decisions and priorities about what (they) want to do and what (they) want to excel at," Perlman said at the press conference.

"It's unfortunate that this has an impact on student-athletes and their families, but it's something I think was a necessary decision," he said.

While the budget came first, Byrne said looming NCAA sanctions, a result of alleged recruiting violations committed under former swimming Coach Cal Bentz, factored into his decision to eliminate men's swimming.

Byrne revealed that the school's internal investigation, which prompted the suspension of Bentz and ultimately the resignation of the longtime Husker coach and his assistants, had uncovered "major viola-

tions."

The school must appear before the NCAA in September to learn what sanctions will be placed on the men's and women's swimming teams as well as the wrestling team, which is also under continued investigation.

While Byrne and Nebraska's institutional representative Josephine Potuto said it was unclear how the school would be punished for any

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## Home sweep ends long road trip

BY VAN JENSEN

After 33 games on the road, the 18<sup>th</sup>-ranked Nebraska softball team was ready to play at home.

The Huskers (26-9, 2-0 Big 12) took two games against Colorado State (3-25), winning the first 4-1 and the second 14-0 in a five-inning run rule game at the NU Softball Complex.

"After seven weeks on the road, I don't care who we're playing. We could've been playing some junior high team and it would've been exciting," NU Coach Rhonda Revelle said.

The Huskers used their usual balance of dominant pitching and decent hitting to take the first game.

Freshman pitcher Peaches James pitched a complete game, scattering four hits and allowing one run. The win is the fourth straight for James (5-4). Second baseman Leigh Suhr led the Nebraska offense with two hits, two runs and one RBI from the leadoff spot.

The weather cooled considerably for the late game, but the Nebraska bats caught fire. The Huskers belted a

season-high 14 hits, and the 14 runs also were a season high.

"It was nice to open up and get some hits," Revelle said.

Third baseman Cindy Roethemeyer busted out of a 2 for 17 slump to lead the team with three hits in three at-bats. She also scored three runs and had four RBIs.

"It's just being determined," Roethemeyer said of breaking the slump. "If you can do something and you're not getting it done, you take it personally."

Three other Huskers had at least two hits, and outfielder Kim Ogee tied Roethemeyer for the team lead with four RBIs.

Junior pitcher Penny Cope improved to 5-0 on the season with the victory. Cope allowed only two hits in the game, in large part because of spectacular defensive plays.

In the second inning, with the Huskers up 1-0, Roethemeyer prevented a hit with a diving grab and pinpoint throw to first. Later in the inning, Ogee made an over-the-shoulder catch at the wall to steal another hit.

One more victory will tie the consecutive wins mark for Nebraska at 17, but next on the schedule is a game on Friday against Oklahoma (27-5, 2-0 Big 12). The Sooners, last year's national champions, defeated NU 6-5 in extra innings earlier this season.

## Porter leads NU's struggling golf team



Derek Lippincott/DN

Junior Nebraska golfer Seth Porter is the only upperclassman on a team with 11 sophomores. NU is trying to improve on a dead-last finish in the Big 12 last year.

BY LINCOLN ARNEAL

For most of his golfing career, Seth Porter has known nothing but success.

Now, for the first time in his golfing life, the junior has been forced to deal with loss as the brightest star on an inexperienced and unsuccessful Nebraska golf team.

Porter had won tournaments as a child. He was a four-year letterman at Hastings High School. He was named the state's Junior Player of the Year in 1997 and 1998. He finished second in the Class B golf tournament in 1998.

Success followed Porter to college where, in the 1998-99 season, he played on a Nebraska team that finished 14<sup>th</sup> at the NCAA championships - it's best finish ever.

However, both team and individual success were hard to come by last year as Porter found himself the team's lone returnee. A young sophomore himself, Porter was surrounded by inexperienced newcomers, and the season became a disas-

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## Rover lone question in secondary

BY DAVID DIEHL

Nebraska Secondary Coach George Darlington is quick to point out that you can't always believe what you see, and that was the case when reviewing statistics from the 2000 Nebraska defense.

The Nebraska secondary yielded a less-than-stellar 208 passing yards per contest last season, just good enough to crack the top 50, and gave up more than 250 yards through the air on five occasions.

Seem like a problem? Not as much as one would think, according to Darlington. When those stats are factored in with other numbers, the picture becomes a lot rosier.

"Passing yards are really meaningless," Darlington said, pointing out that a pass efficiency defense rating is a more valid tool to judge a secondary's ability.

In 2000, the Cornhuskers' pass efficiency defense, which is formulated stressing completion percentage, yards and touchdowns allowed, ranked seventh in the nation with a 97.79 rating.

"Pass efficiency is the whole key," Darlington said. "It's a formula related to how you're doing, not yards. You could give up 80 yards passing but if three of the passes were touchdowns, your pass efficiency is horrible."

Cornerback Keyou Craver, who will be a three-year starter in the fall, said that although last year Nebraska's secondary was susceptible to the big play with its aggressive style, the unit was a good one in 2000.

"With our style that's just the way it is," Craver said. "There were a lot

of things we could build off of to make us a lot better, so I think it was more of a learning experience for us."

Craver, who has started every game each of the past two seasons, returns along with a majority of the secondary that helped NU attain such a stingy defense against the pass.

Nebraska returns four secondary members with starting experience - Craver, junior DeJuan Groce and senior Erwin Swiney at cornerback and senior Dion Booker at free safety. The only question mark the coaching staff has had to address is the hole staring at them from the rover position. The Huskers lost four-year letter winners Joe Walker and Clint Finley from last year.

To accommodate, former I-back Josh Davis has been moved to rover, although Darlington said chances to evaluate Davis have been limited because he was coming off a torn ACL. Freshman Lannie Hopkins, a former linebacker, also has been moved to rover to possibly provide depth along with junior Aaron Terpening and senior Wes Woodward, neither of whom have started a game at NU.

The rover, who plays a combination cornerback, strong safety-type role, takes some time to learn, Darlington said.

"It takes a special type of athlete, too," he said. Aside from the gap at rover, NU's defense figures to be in good shape when the football gets into the air. Besides just having four returnees who combined to make 30 starts in 2000, Craver said, each is another year wiser this spring.

"We got a lot of guys coming back this year," Craver said. "So along with that aggressiveness we'll be more disciplined, so that will help us out a lot."

## Men's gymnastics to miss nationals

■ Despite a strong finish, the team's score was not good enough for the championship.

BY KRISTEN WATERS

The Nebraska men's gymnastics team season came to an early end as notice was given Monday that it did not qualify for the NCAA Championships.

"It sucks that we're not going," senior Jason Hardabura said. "Especially in my last year here."

Despite the Huskers' strong third-place finish during the weekend at the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation, where they outscored No. 11 Stanford, the score of 205.325 was not high enough to bump NU up two spots for a team bid at a national title.

It has been three years since the Huskers have failed to qualify for nationals as a team.

"In 1998, we didn't make nationals, but it was the top six

teams that went," Hardabura said. "This year, the top 12 teams go. But we finished 14<sup>th</sup>."

Having only eight gymnasts, including only two seniors, coupled with a new scoring system that required more difficult routines may have been contributing factors in the Huskers' early demise, Hardabura said.

"The lack of depth on the team and the uncertainty of the new scoring system could have played a role in why we didn't go to nationals," he said.

Nebraska will find out today which gymnasts qualified to compete individually at nationals. Hardabura believes almost every NU gymnast will qualify in at least one event. However, the atmosphere will be different for those who go, Hardabura said.

"The dynamics are different now," he said. "We're competing for individual success and not team success. You're there by yourself. It makes it harder when you don't have the guys backing you up."