

# Kids share 'Big Red' dream

Life-long dreams. They're something everyone has, but rarely are they shared by large numbers of people. One exception, however, is the life-long dream shared by thousands of boys all across Nebraska. That dream is of someday playing football for the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Of course, I also experienced this dream throughout my childhood and well into my high school years. An ankle injury at the start of my senior football season, however, finally ended any hopes I had of walking-on to play at Nebraska. Even though my career at Nebraska was washed up before it ever started, I knew there must be kids out there somewhere with the same dreams I had when I was their age. At last week's annual Nebraska football photo day, I found a few.

## Chuck Green

Jim and John Kresnik of Omaha, both 8, said they hope to play for Nebraska someday.

"I think it's a neat team," John said. "My next-door neighbor plays football for Nebraska and I think it would be a good experience to start doing stuff like he does."

Nebraska offensive guard John McCormick is the next-door neighbor John spoke of. Though they'd like to, the Kresnik brothers said they usually don't have the chance to get any neighborhood football games going with McCormick.

"He's just never home," Jim said. The twins, who will be third graders at St. Peter's and Paul's school in Omaha, said they have never attended a Nebraska game, but that they never miss a Nebraska game on television or on the radio.

"Well, maybe we miss a few," Jim admitted. Despite their age, the Kresnik brothers have already set some big goals for themselves.

"I'll probably join the football team at Gross (High School), become a wide receiver, go to Nebraska and then become a pro wide receiver," John said.

Jim, who wants to become a quarterback, has equally high hopes.

"I have this dream that I get the ball and I'm running and running," Jim said, "and this big guy comes up in front of me to run me down, so I throw the ball to my brother. He catches it and runs it in for a touchdown to win the game."

Tommy Dolan, 13, of Lincoln, said he hopes to someday play for Nebraska to pay for his college education.

"It'd be fun and a good way to pay for



Linda Story/Daily Nebraskan

Marc Munford autographs a football for Jim and John Kresnik of Omaha at Wednesday's Photo Day at Memorial Stadium. On the cover: Tony Kucera practices his moves at last season's New Mexico game. His father, Wray Kucera, said he'll be a linebacker at Nebraska some day.

school," Dolan said. Dolan, like myself, comes from a family of Husker football fanatics. His father, Tom, is one of the most loyal Nebraska fans in Lincoln, as is Tommy's oldest brother, Terry. Terry and I have attended Nebraska football games since our junior year at Lincoln Pius X High School. I could tell plenty of stories about out post-game activities, but that may land us in prison for a long time.

Tommy said his favorite Nebraska player of all-time is Mike Rozier, because "he was fast and scored a lot of touchdowns."

"He was fun to watch," Tommy said. Omaha's Ken Taylor, 11, also picked Rozier as his favorite player.

"I saw him play when he was here," Taylor said, "and he was really something. I hope I can run like him someday."

Taylor, who will begin sixth grade at Meadows Elementary School, said he wants to play I-back for Nebraska someday.

"I want to be just like Mike Rozier," he said.

Ken's brother, Michael, 7, agreed.

"Mike Rozier was the best running

back I've ever seen," he said. "He ran past everybody and when he didn't, he just ran over people. It would be a dream come true to play like he did."

Michael will be a first grader at Meadows Elementary this fall.

There are several reasons for the common interest in Nebraska football among kids. One obvious reason is the fact that the love for Husker football is passed along from generation to generation as the family football tickets are. Another reason is due to the media coverage Nebraska receives across the state. Since it's the only Division I football team in the state, Nebraska is the team in-state college football is measured by.

Perhaps the biggest reason for the state-wide admiration of Nebraska football is the atmosphere the kids are exposed to at Memorial Stadium when they finally see their first Husker game.

When I saw my first game in 1972, it was love at first sight. Bob Devaney was in his final year as coach, Nebraska had just won two national championships and my father had always told me how much fun the games were to see. He was right.

Since that first game in 1972, I have

missed only two of Nebraska's home games — the Oklahoma State game in 1980, because I was at the World Series in Kansas City, and last year's Oregon game. I missed that one because I was in Minneapolis covering a gymnastics meet for the Daily Nebraskan. Aside from the home games, I have attended nearly 40 away games and have been to six of Nebraska's bowl games.

I guess you could say I've been raised on Nebraska football. I've seen a lot since I started going to Husker games 14 seasons ago. I've seen some close games and quite a few routs. There have been some great come-from-behind Nebraska victories and some heartbreaking losses. I also saw the last home game Devaney coached, as well as the last game of his career, one month later in Miami. I also saw the first game coached by Tom Osborne. It seems like I've seen it all — almost.

But, even with football memories to last for the rest of my life, I'll always wonder what it would have been like to play football for Nebraska, and I'll always wonder how many kids who have the same dream will someday get their chance.

Some dreams just never go away.

### ENCLOSED MALL

- American Love Affair
- Asian Treasures
- Athlete's Foot
- Backstage Shoes
- Barb's Hallmark
- Brass Buckle
- Brauns
- R.C. Burgess
- Casual Corner
- Cheryl's
- Christian Science
- DeCosta
- Dirt Cheap
- Duling Optical
- East Park 3 Theatres
- Elizabeth's Lingerie
- Ginny's Candy Jar
- Glo Shoppe
- Goldstein Chapman
- Habitat
- Hangups
- His Royal Highness
- Hobby Town
- J & L Lee Books
- Landon's
- Maurices
- Pet Ark
- Photo Quick
- Tailored Woman
- A.T. Thomas Jewelry
- Toy Room

### MALL FOOD VILLAGE

- Central Park
- Chartreuse Caboose
- Dagwood's Deli/Sluggo's
- Dragon Palace
- Kuzu's Kebab
- Piece of the Pie
- Runza
- Taco Ranch

### MALL WALKWAY

- Avenue Art Gallery
- Burton's Flowers
- International Tour & Travel
- Lincoln Federal

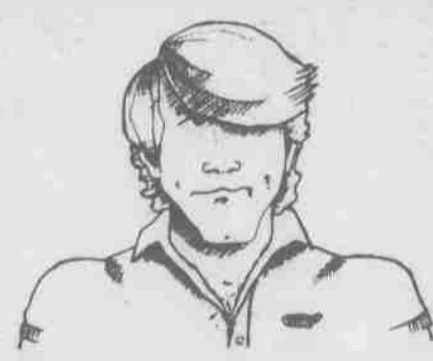
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- Best Shot Waterbeds
- Chelsea's
- Cosmic Comics
- Fashion Company
- Four Seasons
- Great Expectations
- Hair Crafters
- House of Shears
- Security Pacific
- The Phone Center
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