## Cornhusker line-up strong with or without Munford

By Chuck Green Sports Editor

One player usually doesn't make the difference between winning and losing in a football game, let alone in an entire season.

up while discussing the Cornhuskers' linebacking situation for 1986, Nebraska coach Tom Osborne may tend to senior Kevin Parsons will begin fall as

the strongest positions on defense. particularly if Marc Munford is ready," Osborne said at Nebraska's annual football media day last week. "We have plenty of talent, strength, speed and experience there. But I think how well we do this season is going to depend on a player like Munford."

Munford, an all-Big Eight selection at linebacker last season, injured his knee during the Kansas game last November. After knee surgery was complicated by kidney problems, Munford missed the entire spring practice program. He led the Huskers with 67 tackles, 43 of which were unassisted.

According to Nebraska linebacker coach John Melton, Munford's status is "not a great concern."

"He's okay," Melton said. "He practiced good this morning (Thursday) and he looked like he was at full speed. We weren't in pads and he was still running guys down. He only knows one way to go (full speed)."

Melton said he wasn't too surprised Munford recovered as quickly as he

"He's such a tough player mentally," Melton said. "He should be ready to go in the Florida State game and we'll just

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about his condition after he's able to in the short time that he's been here." put on the pads in practice and then play in a game or two."

string weakside linebacker, followed out Munford, by senior Steve Forch. Junior Blake the weak side.

In the strongside linebacker slot, certainly not hurting in experience." improve his mobility on the field.

"I'd like to be able to cover receivers are predicting that, too." crossing the field better, and also take be more tenacious on big plays. I Nov. 22. worked on that a lot last spring.'

second-team strongside linebacker to a potentially great football team, and I highly regarded by Melton.

"Leroy's fitting into the system really ago will be made in that game."

take it from there. We'll know more well," Melton said. "He's learned a lot

Both Parsons and Etienne are optimistic about how well the linebackers Munford will begin fall camp as first- will perform this season, with or with-

"I think we're physically more tal-But when that statement is brought Henning will also fit into the picture on ented," Parsons said. "We're not as experienced in some ways, but we're

"If Munford's back, we'll just be that the top choice. Parsons, a 6-3, 240- much better," Etienne said. "If not, "I think linebacking could be one of pound native of Springfield, Mo., said we'll just have to live with it. I feel we'll his main goal for this season is to have one of the top three defenses in the country, and I think the coaches

> Parsons said he thinks people will away the big play to the outside more realize how different the defense is by often," Parsons said. "Mainly, I want to the time Nebraska plays Oklahoma on

> "We have a lot of redeeming to do in Sophomore Leroy Etienne will be the that game," Parsons said. "I feel we're start the fall. Etienne, 6-1, 235, is also think some pronouncement of how much different we are than one year



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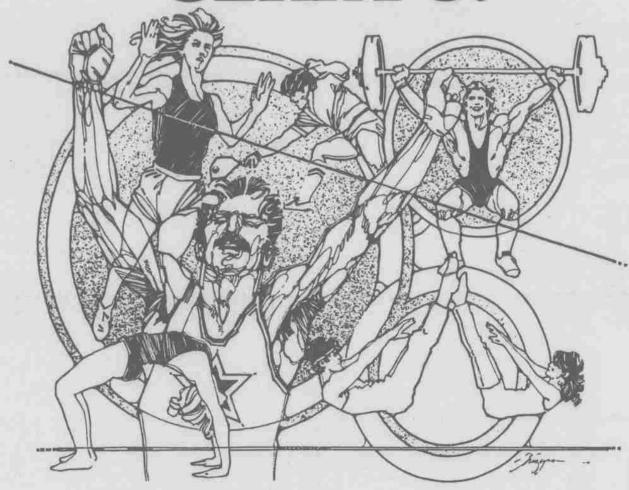
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