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## Harris to fill Alberts' position

By Mitch Sherman  
Senior Reporter

In his two years at Nebraska, Dwayne Harris has registered only 26 tackles.

Yet, as his senior season approaches, Harris is showing up on preseason All-Big Eight and All-American lists all around the nation.

So what has stood in the way of Harris posting eye-popping numbers in his career as a Cornhusker?

Trev Alberts.

For two seasons, the 6-foot-2, 225-pound outside linebacker has backed up Alberts, who was a consensus All-American and the Butkus Award winner last year.

Now that Alberts is a millionaire playing in the NFL with the Indianapolis Colts, it's Harris' turn to shine.

The senior from Bessemer, Ala., has taken advantage of his moments in the spotlight over the last two years.

Despite limited playing time as a junior, Harris posted eight sacks last season, which was second on the team to Alberts' 15 sacks.

And when Alberts was injured in the first quarter of the Huskers' 21-7 victory over Oklahoma last season, Harris stepped in and didn't miss a beat.

He tallied a career-high seven tackles, including three sacks, and his pressure forced Oklahoma quarterback Cale Gundy to throw an interception in the second quarter.

For his efforts, Harris was named ABC's Chevrolet Nebraska Player-of-the-Game, and he also earned the Big Eight Defensive Player-of-the-Week award.

Against the Sooners, Harris finally got a taste of the spotlight and since then, he has been getting hungrier by the day.

"I'm very anxious to get into this season," he said.

However, opposing quarterbacks may not be as anxious to get a piece of Harris, who admits his favorite part of the game is getting to the signal caller.

"(Sacking the quarterback) is the greatest feeling in the world," Harris said. "It adds so much momentum. It's like a trophy that you can put up on a case, separate from everything else. It's hard to explain."

One advantage Harris has over most linebackers is his ability to tackle the ball-carrier. In Husker history, only Neil Smith, who led the NFL in sacks last season, had a longer wingspan than Harris, whose arms measure 7-feet, from fingertip to fingertip.

"He doesn't even have to be fast sometimes," Nebraska outside linebackers coach Tony Samuel said. "He can just reach out and grab you."

But Harris is fast.

As a junior in high school, Harris ran a 10.9-second 100 meters and has been timed at 4.76-seconds in the 40.

He has visions of following in the footsteps of some of the other Nebraska players at his position. "It is very motivating when you look at the other players who played this position," he said. "It motivates you to try and do just as well as they did."

Samuel said success at that position is starting to become expected.

"They know the expectations," Samuel said. "It seems like every year, the expectations get higher, so kids are coming in and feel like when it's their turn, they are supposed to be one of the best in the country. They have a tendency to play like they are one of the best."

"They all saw Trev Alberts and Mike Croel and Broderick (Thomas). They saw all these guys do it. They feel like maybe Nebraska's the place to go to be an outside linebacker."

Harris said he isn't feeling too much pressure from the comparisons.

"It might add a little pressure," he said, "but it's good pressure. But if you look at it from a team standpoint, there isn't a lot of pressure."

Instead, Harris said he is more concerned with the team's number of wins than his number of sacks.

"We are pretty confident," he said. "We think we should go all the way again. We are only looking up. We think we are going to get better and better."

"Simplify, simplify."

Henry David Thoreau

"Hey, that's not a bad idea."

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