

Nose guard spot poses problem for Osborne

by Dave Sittler

With two spring football sessions under his belt, Nebraska's new head coach Tom Osborne has found some problems, but also said he's pleased with the practices.

Osborne, who took over the head job when Bob Devaney retired after last season, made his observations after viewing Husker practices Friday and Saturday.

"Our young players have been able to pick up the offense and defense we've put in, which has been very encouraging," Osborne said. "We try to use the early spring practices for evaluation, but it's tough to tell much until scrimmage."

Osborne said that the first scrimmage for his team has been scheduled for Wednesday.

"We want to start scrimmaging as soon as possible, but I think we should wait until Wednesday," he said. "We've had a little contact already and there will be plenty of hitting Monday."

One of the biggest problems for the new coach has been trying to sort through the huge group of players who turned out for spring ball.

With a bulging official roster, Osborne has had more than 30 walk-ons, who are hopeful of performing for the Big Red.

Working with such a large number of players causes difficulty for the coaches to devote time to players who need individual attention, Osborne said.

The Husker coach said he believes the Nebraska roster will start to dwindle in the next few days.

"Some of the players will just cut themselves after a couple of practices," he said. "But the coaches will have to call in some players for a talk if it's obvious they can't make the team."

While an overabundance of players does exist on the Cornhusker team, the middle guard position remains one of Osborne's dilemmas.

Senior letterman John Bell was expected to move into the starting spot vacated by all-American Rich Glover. But Bell was injured in a freak accident at a Lincoln amusement park the day before practice started.

Another middle guard, Bill Anderson from Toledo, Ohio, did not show up for practice Friday and it was rumored he had left school.

"I've had a report that he packed his bags Thursday and left town," Osborne said. "But I haven't had a chance to talk to him so I'm not sure what Bill has decided."

With Anderson's apparent departure and Bell's injury, Jeff Class of Sioux Falls, S.D., started spring practice as Nebraska's middle guard on the first-string defensive unit.

While Osborne pondered the middle guard problem, he also expressed concern over the condition of quarterback Terry Luck.

Fluid must still be taken from Luck's knee although he has had two operations after injuring the knee on the first day of spring ball last year.

"We thought they solved the problem by removing a little cartilage in the second operation," Osborne said. "But it continues to swell up so we will have to just wait and see how Terry holds up."

But quarterback Dave Humm, a starter for last year's Orange Bowl champion Huskers, was throwing both long and short passes with accuracy as was Steve Runty the 1972 back-up quarterback.

Osborne said both quarterbacks have kept themselves in top shape during the off season and were able to open spring drills at full speed.



Quarterback Dave Humm . . . opened the spring practice sessions in top shape.

Cipriano wins recruiting battle with Siegel and Seidel signings

Nebraska's basketball program may have received the boost it needs to become a consistent winner Saturday when Fairbury all-Stater Bob Siegel signed a national letter of intent with the Huskers.

Cornhusker Coach Joe Cipriano has been battling with more than 200 schools for the 6-5 basketball star.

"I'm really very, very pleased with Bob's signing," Cipriano said.

Siegel's signing came on the heels of Sidney star Rick Siedel's announcement that he also would attend Nebraska next fall.

The 6-6 Siedel was the leading scorer for the Sidney team which lost to Fairbury and Siegel in the finals of the Nebraska Class B championships last month.

"Siegel and Siedel may even be the best recruiting effort we have had in Nebraska since I've been here," the Nebraska coach said. "I think they may be better players at this stage than either (Chuck) Jura and (Mike) Petersen were when they signed (in 1967)."

Cipriano said that Siegel could very easily start as a freshman at Nebraska.

Although signing the two Nebraska players, Cipriano is not ready to write this off as the end of a successful recruiting year.

"There are some other boys we want very badly and need if we are to improve our program," he said. "Some of them are still not sure what school they want to attend so we have to keep working. "If we can get the big men we are after, our program at Nebraska will see a great change for the better," Cipriano said.

Netters will meet Kansas Tuesday

Nebraska's tennis team will meet the Kansas Jayhawks Tuesday in Lawrence, Kan.

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