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# Monte Kiffin lives football on, off field

By Dave McBride

Monte Kiffin, as a coach, can be an imposing figure on a football field. His voice can be like a cannon, his arms like a windmill, his entire personality like a man possessed by a demon as he paces the sidelines or roams the field. And his involvement, whether it is a practice or a game, is total.

Monte Kiffin, off the field, can be a completely different person. He is soft-spoken and thoughtful when he talks and his motions are relaxed, almost lazy. But his dedication to Nebraska football is the same wherever he is, because Kiffin lives the game.

He played the game well himself for Nebraska and the Canadian Winnipeg Blue Bombers, and has been coaching it now for seven years at Nebraska. This season, he is coordinator for Husker defensive plans.

The defensive coordinator, he explained, takes some of the pressure off head coach Tom Osborne and allows Osborne to concentrate on the offense.

Watching Kiffin work on the practice field, he is like a twelfth member of his defensive platoon. The players, he said, are his major responsibility.

"More than anything else, I want to win for our football players," he said. "When kids really work hard, I really want to win for them. You have to be a dedicated coach so you don't let them down.

"I think the most rewarding thing in coaching is when a boy gets done playing football for you and he really feels like you've been a part of his four years in college and respects you," he said.

He said the most difficult aspect of his job is deciding who will play.

"It's hard when kids work really hard and then don't get to play on Saturday," he said, "but sometimes it's just not possible. The only thing you can do is be honest about it."

AFTER THE GAME

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