



Photo by Kevin Higley

John Lee (69) puts a stop on Miami's Tim Morgan (27) during the Huskers 31-16 win last Saturday.



Photo by Ted Kirk

Junior Mike Fultz had another good day against Miami as above he stops Hurricane fullback Otis Anderson (47).

Walkons need extra confidence

By Scott Jones

Eight players who had less than average reason to be confident in their ability started for Nebraska's freshman football team in their season opener.

Yet these same eight players needed confidence more than most of the other freshmen players.

The eight players were walk-ons—players not deemed good enough for one of 30 available scholarships but who came out for the team anyway.

Fortunately, Nebraska's walkon starters didn't let the absence of a scholarship offer deflate their confidence.

"If I had any doubts I wouldn't have come," said Keith Steward, who gained 27 yards on six carries in Nebraska's 30-0 opening game win over Kansas State's junior varsity.

Indecision on schools

Steward, from Steubenville, Ohio, said Nebraska would have offered him a scholarship if not for his indecision.

"Nebraska contacted me and I hadn't made up my mind yet (on other schools) so I waited a little too long," he said.

Steward is now happy to be at Nebraska "because it's the best.

"Everybody up here is really friendly. I wanted to play the best football I could and get the best opportunity to play I could and so far I have."

Steward made his decision to come to Nebraska with the help of his cousin, Tony Jeter, an all-American tight end for the 1965 Husker team. Another ex-Husker from the Steubenville area, Harry Wilson, also "had a lot to do with me coming out here," Steward said.

Prove ability

Linebacker Tom Vering wanted to prove his ability by walking-on.

"I don't know if I should say this but I don't think the coaches want to be proved wrong and I wanted to prove them wrong," the former Fremont all-stater said.

Vering said he has been given an equal chance with scholarship athletes to offer such proof.

"People say they don't give walkons an equal chance, but they do," he said.

Vering and another walkon, Doug Long, from Alma, were the starting linebackers against Kansas State.

More doubts

Being from a small community may have caused Long to have more doubts than teammates from larger towns.

"I was pretty leery about coming down here the first week after the Shrine Bowl because I didn't think I was playing that well," said Long, a pre-medicine major.

"Doane was really recruiting me hard after that and I almost went there," he said, "but now that I've done it (walked-on) I have no regrets."

I-back Isiah Hipp also has no regrets, especially after leading the Husker backs in rushing with 82 yards on 14 carries against Kansas State.

Hipp was all-state at Chapin High School in South Carolina for three successive years. Still, he received few scholarship offers, even from schools in South Carolina.

"What really bothered me were the schools in my state," Hipp said. He wrote to Nebraska head coach Tom Osborne and decided to walk-on.

Iowa State

Tim Hager, all-state quarterback from Lincoln Southeast, almost decided to attend Iowa State.

"I was thinking strongly about going to Iowa State but they didn't come through," Hager said. The Cyclones had offered Hager a full ride scholarship but reneged at the last moment.

"Some guy called who they didn't think was coming and they said they were committed to him," said Hager, who completed four of six passes and scored on a one-yard run against Kansas State.

Hager said he almost received a scholarship from Nebraska. "They said if I'd been bigger, or I'd been the same size but ran the 40 faster they would have given me a scholarship. I was just on the borderline," he said.

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Photo by Ted Kirk

Huskers Jim Burrow (2) and Dave Butterfield (34) go to work on Miami's Tim Morgan. Morgan rushed for 42 yards against the Huskers.