

# First aid handy for Husker fans

By Lisa Brown

Neither rain nor sleet nor a heart condition seems to hinder Big Red fans from attending games, according to a physician who has worked at Memorial Stadium's life-support team station since its inception 10 years ago.

The station was developed to provide emergency first aid to spectators suffering heart attacks or other heart problems at the stadium, Stephen Carver, a Lincoln cardiovascular surgeon said.

According to his records, a serious emergency situation occurs at about every other home game.

Lincoln General Hospital nurses staff the unit this year, Carver said. Previously, nurses from Bryan Memorial Hospital staffed the station, but administrators there decided the community would be served better if the mobile

heart team was ready to move from the hospital to an emergency in town.

"It is necessary to have two teams of personnel and equipment present at the stadium to manage efficiently," he said. "One covers the stadium while the other covers the Lincoln area and acts as backup in case two emergencies occur at the same time."

Carver said spectators with heart conditions may realize risks involved in climbing ramps and stairs and getting over-excited during the game, but they continue to come.

Ushers, Boy Scouts, policemen and Red Cross volunteers located throughout the stadium usually are alerted to emergency situations by spectators, Carver said.

## Basic first aid

Charles Elsom, Red Cross safety program director, said his volunteers usually reach the people first and apply basic first aid to the many minor injuries that occur. This year, 48 volunteers have treated burns, fainting, falling, injuries from thrown bottles, cuts and sprains, he said.

Most volunteers have had more than 50 hours of training, some of them in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, Elsom said.

When a volunteer spots a heart attack victim, Red Cross personnel begin helping while other personnel notify life-support members of the patient's location. Emergency medical technicians then rush to the scene and apply basic first aid. The patient then is transferred to ground level where specific medical measures using advance equipment can be performed. When stable, the patient is moved to a heart unit at one of three Lincoln hospitals.

## Six nurses

The advanced life-support team consists of six nurses, each having two to seven years of coronary care experience, and one cardiovascular specialist. Other physicians are seated throughout the stadium where they can be easily contacted by Boy Scout or Red Cross personnel when an emergency occurs.

Walkie-talkie communication between the station, located at the northwest gate, and volunteers at specific locations provide coordination and coverage of the whole stadium, Carver said.

In 1965, before the unit was developed, three people collapsed and died without emergency aid at the stadium. In the eight years following, station personnel have resuscitated all but one of 18 people having either a cardiac or pulmonary emergency, he said.

No federal, state or local funds are provided specifically for the unit. Most of the personnel volunteer, UNL contracts for the ambulances, and the National Heart Association, local medical associations and hospitals have provided equipment and training for the community project, Carver said.

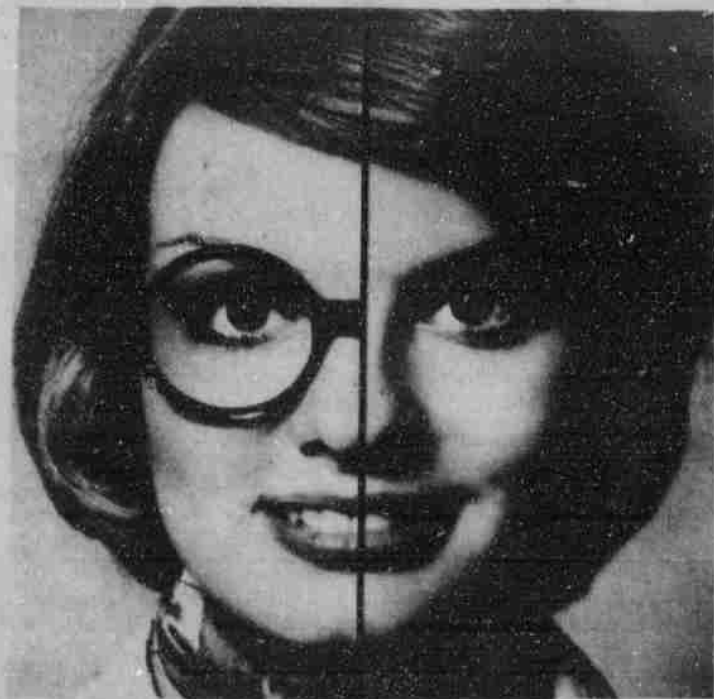


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