

Husker front line to be smaller, quicker this year

By Rob Barney

Husker football fans will see a smaller, quicker front line next season, according to UNL offensive line coach Cletus Fischer.

On the latest spring practice depth chart first team line members include guards Greg Jorgensen and Steve Lindquist, Jorgensen stands 6-foot-2 and weighs 235 lbs. Lindquist is 6-foot-6, 245 lbs.

Other first teamers are center Tom Davis, 6-foot-3 and 232 lbs., tackles Kelvin Clark 6-foot-4 and 230 lbs. and Stan Waldemore, 6-foot-4 and 246 lbs.

How could Fischer call this a small line?

Well, Clark is trying to replace two-time All Big 8 Conference and All American performer 6-foot-7 Bob Lingenfelter, 280 lbs. during his Husker playing days.

Also missing from last year's line is tackle Steve Hoins, who weighed in at 260 lbs. and guard Dan Schmidt, the small man of the line, weighing only 225 lbs.

"I think our line will compare with ones of the past,"

Fischer said. "It will be a little quicker but not as big."

"We might have to run the ball a little differently than in the past because we won't have the 260 to 270 lb.

tackles. Instead we might have to go with 245 to 250 lb. tackles."

New techniques

Fischer said the Huskers have been working on some new blocking techniques

"We have some new blocking schemes on some plays. The players are starting to pick up the plays. I think a great deal of advancement has been made," Fischer said.

Not quite enough progress has been made, Fischer said. He said the linemen have been having some problems adjusting to the big play defense of defensive coordinator Lance Van Zandt.

"The new defenses are probably causing a few more problems this year than in years past," Fischer said.

"We do have some new people. But I think they are catching on. I think in another week they'll start recognizing the plays better and will be able to handle the different situations better."

Davis and Jorgensen are the returning starters for UNL on the front line. Both are seniors, as is first team right tackle Stan Waldemore.

Leadership

"We'll be looking for leadership from our seniors. They've played a lot of good football for us and have been playing well in spring ball," Fischer said.

"Hopefully they will continue to improve and keep everybody on their toes."

Jorgensen has been switched to left guard, where he started as a sophomore.

Other changes also could be made, Fischer said. He said some thought would be given to moving third-string right tackle Kelly Saalfeld to guard, because of the abundance of tackles.

Fischer said some of the best competition is going on at the tackles position. Junior Tom Oht is battling Waldemore for the top right tackle spot. While junior Steve Glenn and senior Brett Moritz are giving Clark a run for his money.

Moritz, is a transfer from West Point Military Academy, where he started for two years.

"Spring ball is a lot different here," Moritz said. "I started two years there (at the Academy) and was maybe pushed by one guy. While here there are three or four of us that are pretty even battling for the top spot." Moritz played mostly guard at West Point, he said, but moved to tackle his final year there.

sports

Tennis squad boosts record to 16-7, will take brief rest from busy season

While the UNL women's tennis team was winning its first Big 8 Conference title last weekend, the Husker men's tennis team was boosting its record to 16-7.

The Huskers defeated Washburn University last Thursday, 7-2, and defeated Northwest Missouri State University last Saturday, 6-3.

UNL was scheduled to compete in the eight-team Oral Roberts Invitational this weekend, according to Husker player Dan Sloboth.

"The team decided not to go this weekend," Sloboth said. "We've been gone just about every weekend so we're going to take a break for some rest and studying."

UNL has competed in eight dual meets since April 1, plus the Nebraska Invitational which lasted three days.

Sloboth, a sophomore from Omaha, did not compete against Washburn but won his singles match against Northwest Missouri State.

Sloboth, the Husker's No. 2 player, was sidelined last week with a sore elbow, but head coach Jim Porter said the injury was not serious.

Sloboth's sister is a member of UNL women's tennis

team where she is the No. 2 player.

Sloboth said Washburn was a weak team and added that Northwest Missouri was tougher competition.

"We haven't played a really good team since the Nebraska Invitational," Sloboth said. "But everyone is playing well and our record is probably the best we've had."

The singles action for the Huskers is going better than the doubles play, Sloboth said.

The doubles probably isn't as good as the singles," he said. "We just have trouble finding the right combination sometimes."

However, he said he and his partner, junior Jeff Schmah have been successful so far this season.

The Husker's No. 1 player, Phil Woog, has been leading UNL in singles action followed by Sloboth, Schmah, Chris Wilcox and Russ Wiltse.

The Huskers travel to Lawrence, Kan., Tuesday for a dual against Kansas University. UNL is then scheduled to compete in the Drake Invitational at Des Moines, Iowa, April 28 through 30. The meet will include 16 teams.

Change in attitude brings success to top batsman

By Mike McCarthy

A different frame of mind and an upright batting stance are two reasons Husker centerfielder Paul Haas has been hitting better this season, UNL coach Tony Sharpe said.

After 26 games and an 18-8 Husker record, the Lincoln senior is leading UNL in batting with a .373 average. Although Haas only has seen action in 17 games because of a pulled hamstring, the closest hitting Husker to him is freshman leftfielder Joe Scherger with a .352 average.

"I have more confidence at the plate," Haas said. "It's hard to say why. I hit well our first few games and it helped carry over."

He also used to crouch while batting but now bats straight up, Haas said. But he said a better mental attitude is the reason his batting average has jumped more than 140 points from last year's .233 batting average.

"I'm not surprised it has," he said. "I've thought before I could hit that well and coaches did too. I'm just more relaxed."

Attitude important

Husker coach Tony Sharpe said Haas's turn around from last year is his attitude.

"That's 90 per cent of hitting, fielding, and pitching," Sharpe said.

"Paul had a good hitting year when he was a freshman then had two off years. He's a very intense competitor and tended to think the umpires were not the greatest.

"He thought the umpires kept him from hitting and so

he tried to call the balls and strikes himself," Sharpe added. "Sometimes he'd overdo it to the point where he was only hurting himself."

Sharpe said Haas' hamstring injury in late March probably helped his hitting.

"We had some fine players and Paul had to win his spot back," he said. "He had to win it back or sit on the bench."

"He's done it," Sharpe said, "and we're (coaches) real pleased with him and hope he keeps it up."

No surprise

Haas said the Huskers' improved record from last year's 21-24-1 mark also is no surprise.

"It's no fluke," he said. "We're playing the same teams this year as last year. Last year we used to split our games but this year we're beating them."

"We've worked too hard and put out too much sweat to lose," Haas added. "It's nice to have a winning team for a change."

But winning the Big 8 Conference Tournament, let alone to qualify, is a tall "win" order for the Huskers. The top two teams in the Big 8's Western and Eastern division qualify for the tournament May 20 through 24

in Oklahoma City, Okla. Iowa State (ISU), Missouri, and Kansas (KU) Universities join the Huskers in the Eastern division.

"We'll have to win seven out of our eight conference games just to have a chance to qualify," Haas said. "We had a long winning streak before, maybe we could start another."

The Huskers meet KU April 22 and 23 for four games. Their last four conference games will be against ISU April 29 and 30.

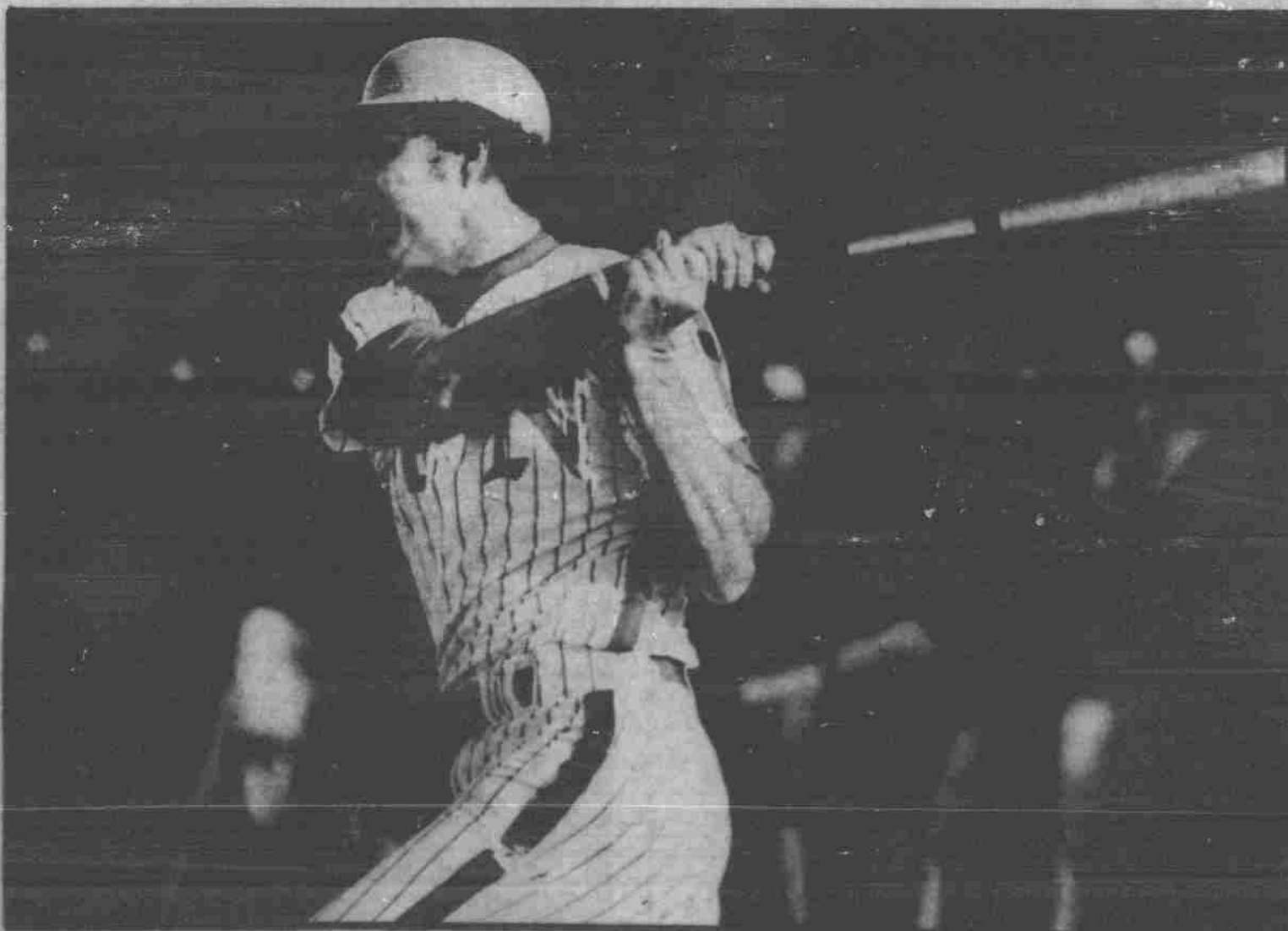
"Winning the Big 8 is a reality," Haas said. "It's not too far fetched."

Haas said professional baseball is not too far fetched, either.

"No one has contacted me, but I'd like to play," he said. "I think I could play. I have enough speed and that's the biggest thing they (scouts) look at."

Haas could be looking at a Big 8 batting title if he continues his hitting pace. In 51 trips to the plate, he has pounded out 17 hits.

"There's some real good hitters in the Big 8," he said. "There's no doubt about that. Some of them are hitting .450 to .460."



Husker centerfielder Paul Haas is leading the Huskers in batting even though he missed the first nine games of the season with a hamstring injury.

Photo by Ted Kirk

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