

## sports

## 'Flush the Tide' chant fades as Bear's Alabama rolls

By Mary Jo Howe

Birmingham, Birmingham. Greatest city in Alabam—so goes the song. But last Saturday, Nebraska fans saw it from its worst side—the tough side.

Few but spirited, Nebraska football fans swarmed to the Hyatt Hotel in downtown Birmingham, prior to the Alabama-Nebraska football game.

About 50 NU alums from Nebraska, 44 Atlantans for Nebraska, 25 members of the UNL ASUN, a group from the Pensacola Navy Base, Panama City alums and a token pep band made the trip—but they soon found out they weren't alone.

The first indication was a "good 'ol boy" from Auburn University, who passed two vans of Big Red vans on the interstate, yelling, "I hope y'all whip their ass!" and proceeded to lead the merry caravan to the stadium.

At the stadium, more Auburn fans joined forces with UNL fans. Auburn and Alabama have been sizzling arch-rivals for years and it seems just as important for Auburn fans to attend Alabama games to boo, as it is to cheer at their own games.

**Flush the Tide**

Back at the Hyatt Hotel, Chancellor Roy Young and Regent Ed Schwartzkopf led a Big Red pep rally where they auctioned off a toilet shaped piggy bank with Flush the Tide written on the rim. Alabama head coach Bear Bryant had a copy of his hat unceremoniously flushed to the bottom of the toilet. Later, a student dressed in a bear skin rug danced the 'Bama hoedown.

After more rounds, of both cheers and drinks, the boisterous group left for Legion Field where they continued the courageous, if hopeless, task of cheering among the 77,023 record-breaking Alabama fans yelling, "Roll, Tide Roll."

Most courageous of the group were two members of Ag Men fraternity who carried a sign that read "Shuck Y'all" in front of the rolling 'Bama student body. They were promptly showed with beer cans, ice and rocks—southern hospitality.

**Push 'em back**

The Nebraska delegation couldn't match the roars from Alabama and throughout the second half could offer little more than a repetitious "Push em back, push em

back." They also watched the oddities in the crowd and performed for the ABC-TV television cameras.

A man with a green, orange and yellow rainbowed afro danced jigs and was a favorite with the crowd. Even the 20-odd body guards surrounding Bryant on the sidelines provided some entertainment.

But there was little entertainment that could help make the bitter disappointment of the loss easier to swallow. The hurt was most poignant on the faces of the UNL players as they trudged silently in single file to the lockerroom. Faces, sweating and tearful, were bent to the ground. Blood spotted the white jerseys. The coaches came last and the door shut behind them, leaving them alone.

**Picking up pieces**

Then minutes later, UNL head coach Tom Osborne emerged hurt and disappointed but already picking up the pieces.

"The defense played well," Osborne said. "The reason Tom Sorley (UNL quarterback) didn't look very good was because the offensive line didn't help him out much."

"The loss didn't damage the team's morale so bad that they can't be ready for the next game."

The Crimson Tide won the statistical battle as well as the game. In fact Alabama's defense was so proficient that it shut off a potent Husker offensive attack with less total yardage than the Tide had on the ground alone.

UNL running backs Rick Berns and Isaiah Hipp could manage only 42 and 54 yards rushing respectively against the revenge-minded Tide defense. Alabama was led by senior running back Tony Nathan who led all rushers with 78 yards. Overall, Alabama outrushed UNL 264 to 110.

**Low yardage**

The Huskers fared a little better in the passing department. Sorley and backup quarterback Jeff Quinn managed 10 completions in 23 attempts for 64 yards compared to the Tide's 54 yards passing. It was the lowest Nebraska total yardage output since a 27-0 shutout loss to Oklahoma in 1973.

Defense was the lone bright spot for UNL in Saturday's game. Osborne cited defensive end George Andrews, tackles Bill Barnett and Rod Horn, linebacker Lee



Photo by Ted Kirk

**Even Cookie Monsters like football games.**

Kunz and cornerback Tim Fischer for their efforts against Alabama.

**Andrews awarded**

Andrews, who led all tacklers with 17, was named the "Defensive Player of the Game" for his work by ABC.

Things started off well for the Huskers as they scored first on a 48-yard field goal by placekicker Billy Todd. But by the end of the first half the momentum had switched decidedly to Alabama. The Tide scored on a four-yard pass from quarter-

back Jeff Rutledge to halfback Major Ogilvie, capping a 99-yard touchdown drive.

Alabama scored on a two-yard by Nathan in the third quarter with the point after conversion failing. The Tide's final score came on a three-yard run by Rutledge with 2:17 left in the game.

The Huskers will open their home season this Saturday against the University of California-Berkeley. It will be the first meeting between the two schools.

## Volleyball coach, team optimistic about upcoming season

By Kathy Chenault

Improving upon last year's 42-12 season and second straight Big Eight Championship are realistic goals, according to UNL Volleyball Coach Terry Pettit.

Gifted athletes, a close team feeling and a group desire to win the regional tournament and compete at nationals, are reasons why Pettit maintains such high aspirations for this season.

"We have the finest athletes Nebraska has to offer," said Pettit, in his second year as head volleyball coach. "This is complemented by their closeness, which is vital in a team sport like volleyball."

Pettit said another factor that could influence the success of the team is the team's knowledge of him and his system, which was gained last year.

**Will work harder**

"It takes a year to adjust fundamentally, psychologically and mentally," he said. "Now they (the team) know what needs to be done and are ready to work harder."

The nine varsity team members echoed Pettit's optimism for the upcoming season.

The main goal shared by team members is to be able to compete with anyone, according to Nancy Grant, a junior from Lincoln.

"We have a really good, tough schedule we can use to help us become recognized as a strong team."

"In the past it was an honor just to be invited to attend some tournaments. Now, rather than just going to these tournaments, we want to prove we can seriously compete," said Grant.

Junior Lucy Axberg of Waverly said competitiveness with the annual volley-

ball powers in California and Texas is what the team is striving for.

"We have confidence that we can stay with anyone," Axberg said.

The varsity team members (all Nebraska natives) agreed with Pettit's assessment that team unity and familiarity with their coach should work to their advantage.

**Physically ahead**

"Since he (Pettit) wasn't new, we had a chance to work all year on volleyball," said Axberg. "We've been lifting weights and working on technique since last spring."

**Analysis by Jim Kay**

Speculate (spek'-u-lat). 1. To contemplate; to see mentally. 2. To ponder a subject in its different aspects and relations; meditate; especially to theorize from conjunctures without sufficient evidence.

It's amazing, really, how year after year the closet experts and armchair quarterbacks emerge from their closets and rise from their easy chairs and extol their vast and cosmic knowledge of football. In essence, it's nothing more than speculation. Sports fans and sportswriters are great "what if" types. Hindsight is a wonderful advantage they all seem to possess and something every knuckleheaded coach lacks in foresight.

We caught several shots of a worried Husker head coach Tom Osborne pacing the sidelines. "Ya Bum," screams Joe fan. "Where's the Veer? Where's the Veer?"

An interesting question, that. Where was the much celebrated Veer offense on Satur-

day night? Actually, it was nowhere except in the speculative minds of many Nebraska fans who were anxiously awaiting the chance to see I.M. Hipp and Rick Berns in the same backfield.

Alabama Head Coach Bear Bryant said his team practiced defending the Veer on only one day while preparing for the UNL game. The Huskers probably didn't practice much more than that with the Veer all fall.

The reason we would expect Osborne was reluctant to use the Veer against Alabama may be as follows: "If it ain't broke, why fix it." In other words, why mess around with a proven winner. You would be hard pressed to find a collegiate team that runs the I-formation better than UNL. It is a complex and efficient system for an amateur team, and one that has been copied by other teams, following the early success of the Bob Devaney teams in the 1960s.

Alabama didn't win Saturday night because they ran out of the Wishbone. They

are also sharpening their skills.

Junior varsity coach Russ Rose said he is concerned with developing fundamentals and promoting group play.

"The game is won on the floor because that's where the ball lands," said Rose. "Therefore the girls must learn what I call the discipline of the game; going after the ball."

The junior varsity will also open its season Sept. 9, when they host volleyball squads from Nebraska Wesleyan University and Wayne State College.

## Recruiting, not offense is Big Red blight

won because they made fewer mistakes and put better athletes on the field on this particular occasion.

The I-formation is not an outmoded offense. It takes extraordinary athletes to run the Wishbone or the Veer, just as it does to run the I-formation. Werin may lie the answer. UNL did not beat Alabama or may never beat Oklahoma because those teams are better teams with better athletes. It was apparent Saturday night. UNL was not less enthusiastic than Alabama, they were just outmanned. Granted, it's a very simplistic answer but if you want to find fault with Osborne, blame his recruiting success, not his offense.

Hunter Thompson once said that "Objective journalism is a contradiction in terms." It's hard for "loyal" UNL fans to be objective too as they sit before their TV sets and watch Alabama beat their team. In fact it's unlikely the something will happen this weekend against the University of California.

But that's just speculation.