

Horn credits football success to UNL's 'good people'

By Paul Huscher

The sun was setting, as the shadow of the press box slowly spread across the field and onto the east stands.

It was late Wednesday afternoon as a peacefulness settled on Memorial Stadium. Most of the Nebraska football players had gone to the locker room. A few were practicing snaps in the south end zone and others were talking to reporters. But one man could be seen chopping his way up the east stadium stairs in his gray sweat clothes.

That man was Rod Horn, Nebraska's three-year starter at left defensive tackle for the Blackshirt defense.

After running several flights of stairs, he headed to the weight room in the north fieldhouse to "pump some iron."

Horn is a self-made player in many ways. He said his father didn't push him into football, nor did he have any older brothers who influenced him to take up the sport.

The 6 foot 4 inch, 264 pound senior from Fresno, Calif. credits his success in football to being surrounded by "good people."

"Also, the drive within me," he said. "I want to be good in anything I do, especially things I like to do such as playing football and studying."

And does he do these two things well?

HORN WAS NAMED to the first team All-Big Eight football team and was an Honorable Mention All-American last year. He was also an Academic All-Big Eight player last year as a junior.

He said he hopes to make this year's All-American team, but making the Academic All-American team would be more important to him.

"I don't know if I'll be drafted (although he said he hopes to be), but I'll always have something to fall back on, and that's my studies," Horn said. Horn is a major in wildlife management.

Nebraska defensive line coach, Charlie McBride, gave his assessment of Horn.

"He's the most dedicated player I've ever coached," said the veteran coach who is in his third year at Nebraska after spending time at Colorado, Arizona State, and Wisconsin.

MCBRIDE SAID Horn is what he calls a "Mauler" because he's so strong he can completely dominate another player.

Cross country . . .

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Nebraska's hope for a top finisher appear to rest with Hass.

However, Hass will have to improve on her past performances to finish in the top ten, Frost said.

No matter where Nebraska places, the cross country season has been valuable preparation for the upcoming indoor track season, according to Frost.

The meet is scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. in the picnic area of the park.

"Not only is he strong, he also runs well for a player his size (4.85 in the 40)," he said.

McBride said there is no question about Horn being an All-American this year and he should go fairly high in next year's NFL draft.

"I haven't seen all the tackles in the nation, but compared to Penn State's two All-American tackles, I'd have to rate him as one of the best in the country," he said.

Horn works a lot harder than other football players, McBride said. And he's an important reason the defensive line is doing so well this year (second in the nation against the rush).

Horn puts the credit for the defense elsewhere.

"The defensive line isn't the only strength of the defense this year," Horn said. "The linebackers, defensive backs and defensive line have all been playing well together."

"We're a real close group and we're all really close to coach McBride."

EXPERIENCE IS probably the line's greatest asset this year, he said.

"Bill (Barnett), Oudious (Lee), Kerry (Weinmaster) and I have been around for five years, (Dan) Pensick's been around for four years and Dave (Clark) has been around for three years," he said.

That's 27 years of college football experience between the six players.

"We've been around a long time together, and we try to help each other as much as possible," he said.

Horn said he's dedicated to football because he wants to do his part for the team.

"I'm a team player and you have to make sacrifices for the team," he said.

Horn holds the team weightlifting record in the clean

(343 pounds) and the squat (560 pounds). He also has the defensive tackle record in the bench press with 400 pounds.

Some people say too much muscle can make a person bulky and awkward, but Horn says "sure you need flexibility and quickness. I'm not the quickest person around so for me, strength is important. It's definitely a factor in playing good."

Horn said he came to Nebraska after visiting several schools because he liked the football program, the academic program, the stable situation with the head coach and the "good" people he met here.

"You can't beat a football program like this. Everyone is here to help you. You can't go wrong," he said.

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