

UNL students bet thousands on football

By Mike Sweeney

(c) 1979 Daily Nebraskan

Editor's note: This is the first in a three-part series on campus football gambling.

UNL students bet several thousand dollars every weekend on college and professional football games, yet law enforcement officials said they were unaware of the illegal activity.

Seven of nine fraternity representatives contacted by the Daily Nebraskan said between one-eighth and one-half of the fraternity members regularly places bets with football bookmakers.

One fraternity official said about 20 of the 69 members of his house each bet up to \$50 a weekend. Bookie sheets arrive at the house every Wednesday or Thursday, he said, and a runner regularly collects the bets.

Other fraternity representatives said most bets ranged from \$5 to \$50. However, a few said they know students who have placed bets of more than \$1,000.

A fraternity officer said he heard a student won \$3,000 on football games last week and is a fairly consistent winner.

"One guy made enough to pay his tuition next semester," another said.

However, representatives of two fraternities and four sororities said there is no gambling in their houses. One woman said she knew some sorority members place bets through their boyfriends.

Two of three student assistants in UNL dormitories had heard scattered reports of football gambling. One said gambling is less common this year than in the past.

LAW ENFORCEMENT officials said Friday they were surprised by the magnitude of gambling on campus.

"This is the first I've heard of it," UNL Police Capt. Robert Edmunds said. "In the past there have been reports of places in town where you could go and bet on a football game, but there have been (no reports) on campus."

"But I'm not shocked," he said. Lincoln Police Detective Allen Soukup also said he hadn't heard of widespread gambling on campus.

Soukup said all football betting is illegal, including \$5 bets between neighbors, but law enforcement officials concentrate on people who earn substantial profits from sports bookmaking.

Edmunds said campus police will investigate if they hear reports of gambling agencies on campus.

None of the fraternity officials or police officers interviewed could estimate the total amount of money bet on City Campus in one weekend.

"ANY ESTIMATE IS going to be conservative," said a man who collected bets for his fraternity last year. He said all of the bets in Lincoln are channeled through two bookies, each handling at least \$500,000 a week.

A Lincoln bet runner who takes several thousand dollars' worth of bets every weekend said he didn't know how much money was bet in the city because runners act independently.

However, \$500,000 "wouldn't surprise me at all," he said.

The runner said he knows five or six bookmakers in Lincoln.

Another runner said the \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 figure would be low unless a gambling wire operates in the city.

"Then I'd say it's low," he said. "What's \$20 to a millionaire?"

Representatives of seven fraternities contacted with regular gamblers estimated that between \$500 and \$1,000 is bet at each house every weekend.

They gave various reasons for students becoming regular betters.

"IT MAKES the games more interesting," a fraternity president said. "If you're sitting in the stands and you have money on somebody, you're more apt to pay attention and enjoy the game a little more."

Others said some students see betting as a status symbol or as a way to make a few extra dollars for school.

A few described gambling as a disease of compulsion. "I've heard of people who are down maybe \$500 for the year. They try and win it back by betting bigger," a fraternity official said. "It becomes a disease, especially if you've tasted success."

He said he didn't bet because he has seen too many friends "fall into the trap."

As reasons for betting vary, so do betting styles. Continued on Page 15



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Cat nap

The lazy, hazy days of summer are still lingering on. The warm afternoons which have recently delighted Lincolniters are a chance for all—from animals to animal lovers—to bask in the sun.

Voice machine topples student's communication barrier

By Bill Graf

For a quadriplegic with no speech ability the toughest barriers to overcome are social rather than physical, according to a UNL student with cerebral palsy.

Bill Rush, 24, a junior in journalism said, "My goal is to be a normal guy with an apartment, a diploma and maybe a girlfriend."

"Our society doesn't let disabled people just be mediocre. They are either superman or welfare moochers, there is no in between. If someone else flunks a class or gets an A or a C it's no big deal. I don't have that luxury."

"I don't want to sound bitter, I'm just tired."

Rush was born with his disability, therefore he has gone through life unable to communicate by any means

other than by using a stick mounted on his head to spell out words, letter by letter, on a language board.

However, thanks to Mark Dahmke and Lois Schwab at the Nebraska Division of Rehabilitation Services and the United Cerebral Palsy of Nebraska, Rush now can communicate audibly. And as if speech itself isn't enough, his new voice has a Swedish accent.

"IN SEPTEMBER of 1977," Dahmke explained, "I met Lois Schwab almost by accident."

"We went to her department to discuss a grant proposal for academic computing. During our conversation, I told her that back in high school I had once planned to build a simple voice synthesizer for a science fair project. Dr. Schwab suggested that we look into the possibility of a pilot project. Almost simultaneously, we thought of Bill."

"Within hours, Dr. Schwab contacted the University Affirmative Action office and other agencies, and had obtained a commitment of support."

The money to develop the \$3,000 voice synthesizer came from the Nebraska Division of Rehabilitation, United Cerebral Palsy of Nebraska and the University Affirmative Action office.

The voice synthesizer reads phonetic spellings of words. After the word's phonetic spelling has been entered into the computer's dictionary, Rush needs only to spell the word in English and the synthesizer recalls the phonetic spelling and then pronounces the word.

RUSH SAID THE synthesizer has been a great help toward toppling some of the social barriers. He can talk on the telephone for the first time.

Also, the synthesizer presents whole sentences, whereas before Rush pointed out each letter. By the time he finished, many people couldn't put the series of letters into a meaningful sentence.

Life magazine has just finished interviewing Rush and Dahmke about the voice synthesizer. The interviews are part of a story Life is doing about advanced technology and how it is helping the disabled. Rush said the story will appear after the first of the year.

As a student in the School of Journalism, Rush said his goal is to do freelance writing. He has already had stories published four times in the Omaha World-Herald and three times in The Exceptional Parent, a nationally circulated magazine for parents with handicapped children.

Near the end of the interview, Rush said, "There are two final points that are very important."

"FIRST, TECHNOLOGY is great, but it is only a tool to get accepted as a person. Second, I have conquered every facet of life, for example, education, social, etc. Except one, sexuality, and modern technology can't help me there."

Rush went on to say that when he talks about sexuality, he isn't talking about the act of copulation, but instead, simply one person caring for another.

inside monday

Bummin' around: Reporter takes an inside look at the life of the streets. Page 6
Shake it, don't break it: Reviewer says band goes back to rock's roots Page 12
Looking ahead: NU players thinking of Missouri after seventh straight win Saturday. Page 14