

sports

Sports evolution is professor's manuscript theme

By Cindy Gardner

The evolution of American sports from informal colonial folk games to the age of spectator-centered football Saturdays, is the theme of a manuscript recently completed by UNL History Prof. Benjamin Rader.

Rader's book, *American Sports from the Age of Folk Games to the Age of the Spectator*, deals with sports in terms of social and economic factors. Rader reports that this is a somewhat new approach.

"There's not any book actually like this on the market," he said. "Interest in sports history from this angle is relatively new among scholars."

When the book is published next March by Prentice and Hall of Englewood Cliffs, N.J., it will culminate six years of work. Rader began the book in 1976 after being unable to find a satisfactory text for his history of sports class.

"Most of the existing literature was of two types,"

Rader said. "The first type was written by the sportswriter or athlete. This usually dealt with the dramatic aspect—great performances and biographies. There was no attempt at interpretation."

The second category Rader mentioned were books written by physical educators. These books, Rader said, tended to treat sports and physical education together. Neither approach was what he was looking for.

Rader took two semesters and all his summers off to research the project. Information about the colonial period was found mostly in legislation, journals and memoirs. Research on the 19th century was aided by the advent of newspapers, periodicals and books dealing with sports, Rader said.

"Of course, in the 20th century there's the advantage of having the indexed *New York Times*. I also went through every *Sports Illustrated* since the thing was first published. I suppose I went through three or four years a day," Rader said.

Once people realized Rader was working on the manuscript, they began to come to him with obscure sources. Rader submitted his first draft to experts in different areas who told him of even more sources. All of this research challenged Rader's own ideas about history.

"The book required an immense amount of reading in social history as well as in sports. It caused me to rethink much of what I thought I knew about American history," he said.

The book is aimed at a national market, but Rader said no one knows how well a book like this will sell.

"Much of it," he said, "depends on if we can get a review. They say if you get a review in the *New York Times*, you'll at least break even."

American Sports from the Age of Folk Games to the Age of the Spectator is Rader's second book. His first work, *The Academic Mind and Reform*, was published by the University of Kentucky Press in 1966.

Rader's current project is illustrated by Daily Nebraskan Art Director Dave Luebke.

Solich says freshmen to face team as tough as Ellsworth

By Kevin Warneke

The Nebraska junior varsity football team hosts Waldorf Junior College Friday and Coach Frank Solich does not foresee an easy game.

Solich said although he doesn't know much about Waldorf, they are big, have good execution, and, basically, play a lot like Ellsworth Junior College played.

Solich noted that Waldorf defeated Ellsworth 15 to 12 which is comparable to Nebraska's 14 to 9 defeat of Ellsworth.

The Husker squad will have two new starters for this game. Andy Allen will start in the place of Mike Hager at split end and Dave Dietz is replacing Todd Frain at tight end. Stanley Wade and Pat Connor are listed as questionable for Friday's game due to illness or injury.

"We've added new plays, both running and passing, to get ready for Friday's game," Solich said. "We're also working

hard on our passing game which has been below par so far.

Solich said a good performance is needed from the quarterbacks, because the offense is running an option type of attack. He added that good blocking by the tight ends and wingbacks will be needed to make the option work.

"Since we don't have that great of speed and can't rely on the big play, we need to have good execution and not make any mental mistakes on offense in order to win," Solich said. "We also have to be steadily consistent."

"If we play well all four quarters and not let up, we should win the game," Solich said. "But it won't be a runaway by any means."

Solich added that right now he doesn't expect any new freshmen to move up to the varsity ranks.

Kickoff time for Friday's game at Memorial Stadium is 1:30 p.m.

New diamond for spring

UNL Women's Athletic Director June Davis said she hopes the women's softball field behind Mabel Lee hall will be completed in time for the spring season in March.

Davis said the new field will mean a lot to the women's softball program.

"It's going to be wonderful. It's been a tremendous hardship (playing off-campus). It's difficult to establish a spectator following without the proper facilities," she said.

Davis said the field will be "very good." "Everything has been done with a lot of research," she said.

UNL officials evaluated the softball fields at other universities to see which

ones were best.

This field will have proper drainage, dugouts, batting cages, concession stands, washrooms, and a storage area. A scoreboard has also been donated, she said.

In the past, the women's softball team has played at Ballard and Mahoney fields. Davis said it has been a problem for the team. She said she felt since softball was so popular in Lincoln, more people would come to the games played at better fields.

"It's right in the middle of campus. I envision lots of fans," Davis said.

Grass for the field has been planted and as soon as it has grown to the acceptable length the fences will go up, she said.

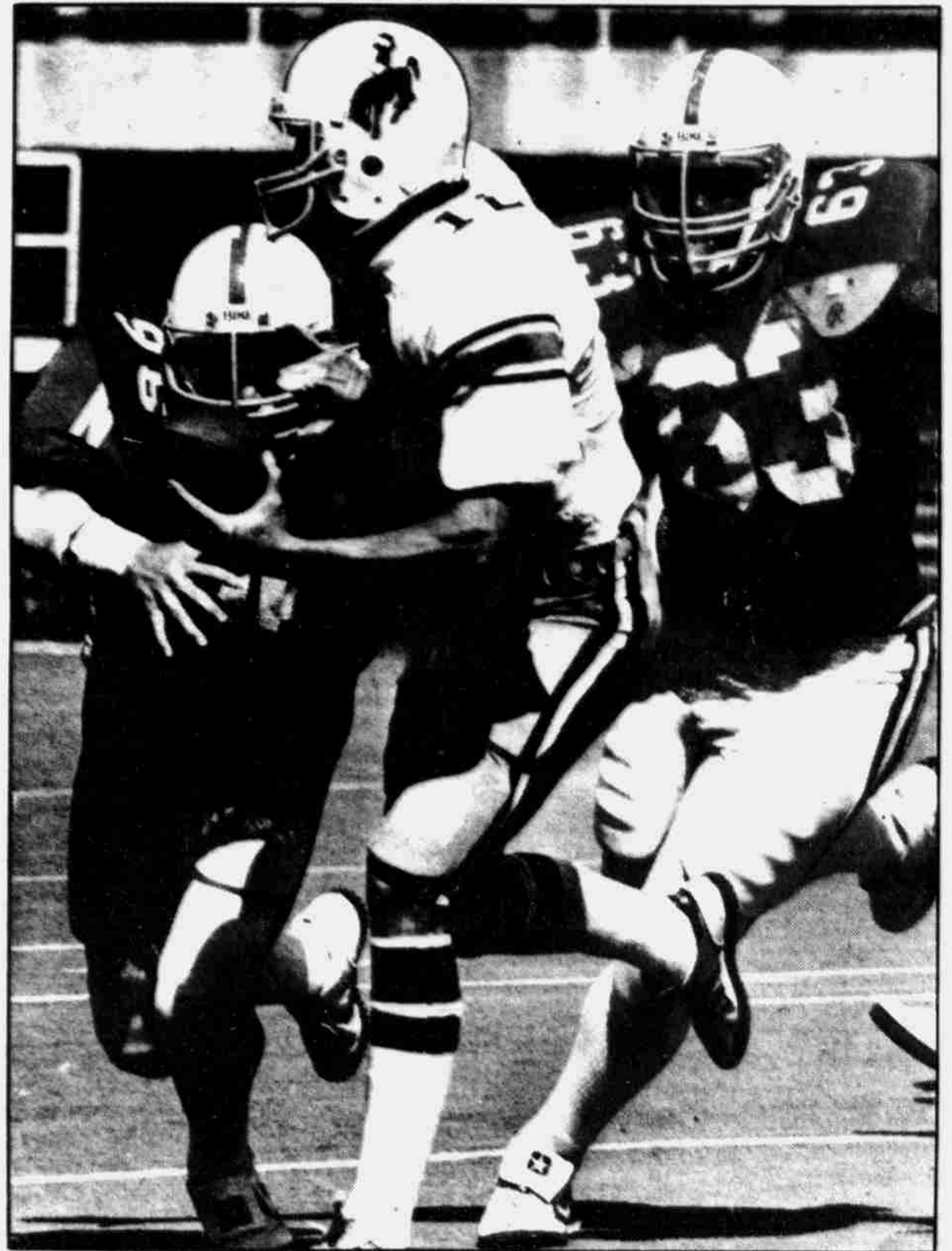


Photo by Kent Morgan Olsen
Scott Strasberger (96), defensive end for the UNL junior varsity, and noseguard Ken Shead (63) close in on a Wyoming player in a game played earlier this season. The Husker junior varsity will be in action again Friday, hosting Waldorf Jr. College.

Cross country coach says Huskers to improve

By Pat Beecham

With only one senior among the top seven runners, Nebraska's men's cross country team will head into its season with an inexperienced group, but Assistant Coach Mark Fluitt is going into the season with an optimistic attitude.

"We have a young team," Fluitt said, "but we're looking better than we have in the past. We're young

and we'll improve. Right now we still have a little ways to go, but the guys came back in good shape from the summer and I think we'll be competitive."

Nebraska went 2-2 in duals last year and finished third in a triangular meet with Iowa State and Kansas State. The Huskers will also be trying to improve on an eighth place finish in the conference from last year, a goal which Fluitt feels is well within reach for the young team.

"We're young, but we want to win," Fluitt said. "I'd like to finish in the top four in the conference, which is very realistic. I'm looking forward to the season."

Fluitt said he has been impressed with the running of two freshmen and a sophomore in workouts so far. Freshmen Tom Hoffman and Jerry Guinan, two of the Huskers' top seven runners, have been looking good, Fluitt said.

He said sophomore Kirk Woltman, also one of the Huskers' top runners, has been a "welcome surprise."

The Huskers have been working out since the first week of school trying to build up stamina, according to Fluitt.

"We've been doing a lot of distance and road work, working mainly on volume," he said. "We're trying to give the guys a base to work from, trying to build up some endurance."

Part of the reason Fluitt is looking for an improvement in the Huskers is the experience they have compared to teams of other years.

"In the past we had a lot of middle distance runners," Fluitt said. "Cross country is long distance. Usually if you're good in the long distances in track, you can be good in cross country."

Along with Woltman, Hoffman and Guinan, sophomores Marc Adam, Dave Cudmore and Mark Gokie, and senior Ron Mowmaster will make up the Huskers' top seven runners.

The rest of the squad includes senior Todd Hornung, sophomore Jeff Fagan and freshmen Matt Joeckel, Mark Guby, Mark Rooney and Reynold Middleton.

Although Colorado has dominated the Big Eight cross country for the last four or five years, Fluitt said Iowa State is the team to beat this year. He said Iowa State's seven man "foreign contingent" made up of runners from Belgium and Kenya will be tough to beat.

Although Fluitt is optimistic about this year, he said it is also a year to build on.

"Working with young kids, I guess you could call it a rebuilding year," Fluitt said. "In a few years, I think we can be one of the top two teams (in the conference)."

Nebraska will open up its season Saturday, Sept. 26 against Kansas State in Manhattan, Kan.

Craig receives top honors

Nebraska football I-back Roger Craig was named national football back of the week by *Sports Illustrated* for his performance in the Nebraska-Florida State game. Craig gained 234 yards in UNL's 34-14 win against the Seminoles. His performance ranks him third on the Husker all-time charts behind Rick Berns who picked up 255 yards in the 1978 Missouri game and I.M. Hipp who gained 254 yards against Indiana in 1977.

Craig was also named offensive player of the week by the Big Eight Conference. Defensive end Tony Felici was Nebraska's nominee for defensive honors.