

Sports

Big Eight officials put in their share of practice

By Tad Stryker

It's no secret that it takes a lot of training and dedication to be a first-teamer in the Big Eight. The learning years of high school football come first. Then, an individual's talent, desire and potential are assessed while he pays his dues at the freshman or junior varsity level.

That's why it takes so long to become a Big Eight football official.

Once chosen, officials are expected to be in top form every game.

The officials prepare religiously for each game and are evaluated as carefully as the players, said Bryce Finlayson, supervisor of Big Eight football officials.

"They're all in it because they love the game," Finlayson said. A former official himself, Finlayson said the part-time job claims high priority in the everyday life of each referee, head linesman, back judge, line judge, field judge and umpire.

"Our officials are all successful men in their own

fields," Finlayson said. "We have doctors, bankers, educators, business owners and lawyers.

"They're all dedicated to the game," he said. "They want to work a perfect game. You start thinking about it on Tuesday or Wednesday."

"It's a big part of all our lives," Frank Gaines, a Big Eight official from Lincoln, said. "We devote a lot of our energies during the season to it."

Actual game preparations begin the night before. The six-man crew meets in the city where the game will be played. If it is a conference game, the crew studies a three-hour film of the game it worked the previous week. Finlayson edits the film, pointing out mistakes made by the officials and discussing overall crew performance.

The next day, three and a half to four hours before game time, the crew assembles for another three-hour meeting. It mainly concerns mechanics, such as the placement of officials in different game situations, Gaines said.

Gaines is an umpire on the crew he normally works with. He is one of two Lincoln men on the crew. Two are from Omaha, one is from Manhattan, Kan., and the other is from Denver. All conference officials are from the six-state Big Eight area.

Gaines never works any Nebraska games because the Big Eight has a rule prohibiting officials from working if they are from a participating team's home city.

After each game, the crew is critiqued and graded by Finlayson through several sources. Each school sends films to the Big Eight offices, and each coach files a report to Finlayson. Special observers, all retired Big Eight officials, submit reports as well.

"At the end of the year, I go over the grades," Finlayson said. If an official is found wanting, usually because of "consistent mistakes," he is fired.

"We've dropped about seven since 1975, when I took over," Finlayson said. Also, mandatory retirement at 57 and promotions to the National Football League open the ranks for new blood.

Bjorn Borg probably never worked so hard for a beer

It's funny how a 12-inch black and white television screen makes tennis look so easy.

After watching Guillermo Vilas, Wannick Noah, Chris Evert Lloyd and the rest of the world's greatest tennis players participate in the U.S. Open it became paramount to prove my own skill on the courts.

Not claiming to be a professional by any means, it seemed ridiculous, at the time, to think such a simple game could cause all that excitement. In the first place, it's played on a court the size of a postage



Bill Allen

stamp. If Jimmy Connors can get from one side to the other in three steps, then why couldn't I, right? Well...

I pulled my trusty racket out of retirement, dressed for the game and headed for the courts.

The proper attire, learned from many hours of television observation, included white shorts with those funny little pockets that stick out, a preppy collared shirt, special canvas shoes and a sweatband on each wrist.

I couldn't find any of these things in my closet, so I just pulled on some old sweatpants, a holey T-shirt and a pair of high top Nikes. So what if Bjorn Borg dressed a little better? Clothes don't win a match.

Halfway to the courts I remembered an important thing! It helps to have a partner. I didn't feel like becoming the next Speedy Gonzales, so I headed back.

Who should I play against? This isn't as easy as it may seem. In order to really

get the most out of game, you have to find a partner of equal or better skill. Someone who serves with blinding speed, volleys with expertise and, of course, dresses as well. But, most importantly, someone you can beat.

I finally found someone with all of these qualifications, except the blinding serve and expert volley, but he decided to stay in the park, feed pigeons and drink wine. So I took my girlfriend along instead.

We walked on a court and immediately had everyone's attention, especially the people already playing on that court. Moving to an empty one I put on a dazzling display of fancy footwork and arching forearm smashes, following it up with a brutal backhand.

Now that everyone was really interested, I opened my can of tennis balls and prepared to serve.

The first thing I noticed was the size of the court. It was huge. I looked out over that vast expanse of green, and clear in the opposite corner was a little dot with a tennis racket. My girlfriend. The courts sure were smaller in the U.S. Open.

Still, I wasn't too worried. Connors always sliced the ball perfectly into his opponent's court, so I figured I could too.

My first serve hit my former girlfriend in the eye. My second killed a sparrow perching on the fence. Luckily, the third one went harmlessly into the net, but I lost the grip on my racket and knocked out the guy on the next court.

Not wishing to risk any more embarrassment, and after fighting off that guy's German shepherd, I headed back to my apartment for the great reward of all amateur athletes - light beer.

After a few beers I forgot my dreams of tennis stardom. After a few more I forgot my name and what tennis was.

So you see, it's all television's fault. It looked so easy.

Athletic abuses concern Roskens

By Tim Woods

Alleged abuses in collegiate athletics are a concern to "all of us in higher education," NU President Ronald Roskens said Tuesday.

Roskens is one of 26 college and university presidents and chancellors recently named by the American Council on Education to a committee that will study proposed reforms to NCAA rules violations.

The committee includes representatives from what Roskens called the NCAA's "major powers" - Missouri, Southern California, North Carolina, Michigan, Penn State, UCLA, Georgia, Kentucky, Washington and Ohio State.

The committee members suggested that the group be broadened to include representatives from all the major athletic conferences, Roskens said.

The committee had a preliminary meeting Aug. 7 and will have its first formal session Sept. 26 in Washington, D.C.

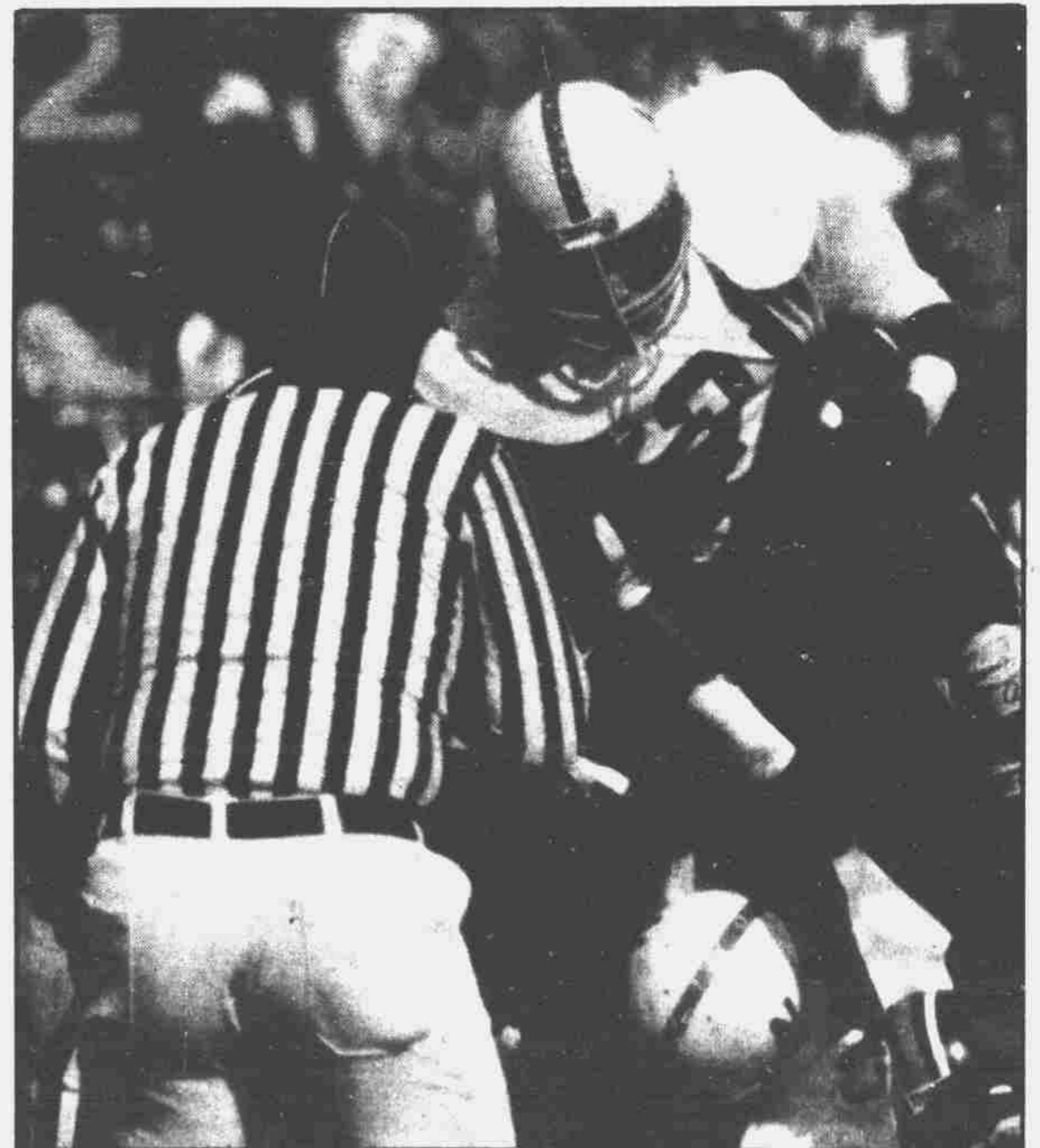
While the committee has not determined yet all the topics to be discussed, some issues to be studied are athletes' academic progress, allegations of falsified grade transcripts and institutional standards in general, he said.

Roskens' membership does not indicate that such problems exist at either UNL or UNO, he said.

"I don't have the slightest inclination to think that we have any major problems here," he said.

Athletic directors Bob Devaney of UNL and Don Leahy of UNO, and the universities' coaches, adhere very stringently to NCAA's rules and regulations, he said.

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Daily Nebraskan file photo

Nebraska's Roger Craig (21) tries to break the grasp of an Iowa defender in last year's 10-7 loss to Iowa in Iowa City. The Huskers open the 1982 season Saturday in Lincoln against the Hawkeyes. Craig is scheduled to start at fullback with Mike Rozier set for I-back.

Praeuner is 27th Husker to be awarded scholarship

Nebraska football Coach Tom Osborne announced Wednesday that defensive end Wade Praeuner has been added to the team's list of players receiving scholarships. Praeuner, a junior from Battle Creek, is the 27th player to receive a scholarship and brings the Nebraska total to the NCAA limit of 95 scholarship players.

Osborne said several players deserved scholarships. Middle guard Ken Graeber and fullback Mark Schellen were two players that Osborne mentioned. Both players will be able to play without scholarships because they are unrecruited walk-ons.

"It would have been nice to give them scholarships," Osborne said. "We have a problem with the 95 limit because of attrition."

The NCAA scholarship limit per year is 30. Nebraska only used 27 so in effect three were wasted. The fact that Nebraska is now at the 95 player limit will also keep them from adding players in December and prevent them from signing any junior college transfers then.

The Huskers continued preparation for their Saturday game with the Iowa Hawkeyes. Osborne said the team's intensity has been good during the week. Roger Craig, who will start at fullback on Saturday, has done well in practice this week, he said.

"Roger seems to be doing all right," Osborne said. "He's getting all of his mental assignments down."

Osborne said offensive guard Scott McLaughlin has left the team and is hopeful of transferring. The sophomore from Houston was the fourth guard on the left side behind Mike Mandelko, Kurt Glathar and Anthony Thomas.

"Both Texas A&M and Rice have shown interest in him," Osborne said. "I imagine he'll end up at one of those places."

"He's a fine player and a nice person. We just felt it would be in his best interest to make that move."

As of Wednesday, no freshman players have decided to become redshirts, Osborne said. The players have until Friday to decide if they want to use the redshirt option.