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Visual memory underestimated

Checker games challenge students' memories

By Lisa Nutting
Daily Nebraskan Staff Writer

It's not whether you win, but how you play the game.

About 130 students played checkers — not to win — but to find out how their memory works.

Students participated in memory experiments that tested their ability to remember visual and verbal sequences. John Petelle, UNL professor of speech communication and his wife, Kathleen Garthright-Petelle, dean of Doane College in Lincoln, conducted the experiments.

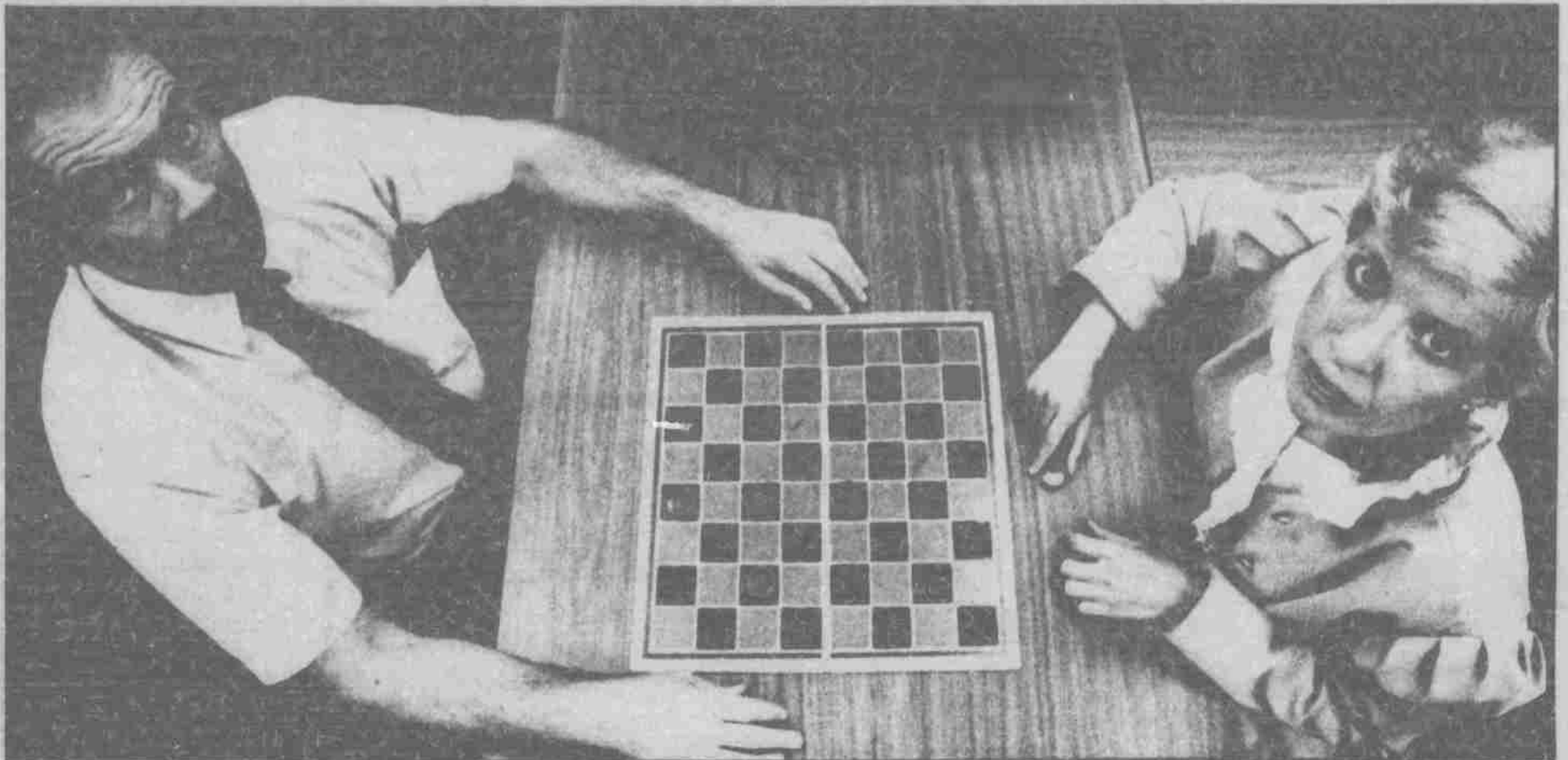
Petelle said humans have two information processes — visual and verbal. According to him, the visual process has been considered the superior of the two.

"Perhaps we've been underestimating the verbal processing of information," he said.

The experiments used slides with pictures of actual checkers in position (visual) as opposed to letters and numbers (verbal) in checker positions.

"The goal was to find out the usefulness or superiority of one system (verbal or visual) as opposed to the other," Petelle said.

The experiments tested how long the students could recall what they had seen. In the short term memory test, students were asked to recall the arrangement of the checkers (visual) or letters and num-



David Creamer/Daily Nebraskan

The Petelles with a checkerboard used in some of their memory research.

bers (verbal), 45 seconds after the picture was taken off the screen. For the long term memory test, the students had to wait 5 minutes before they recalled what they had seen.

And the Petelles' intuition was right.

The verbal processing was better when remembering low level complexity — information was retained longer in both the long and short term memory test.

"Right now, the biggest implication is that we shouldn't assume visual process

is the superior," Petelle said.

The Petelles' report, Spatial Problem Solving, is being revised for future publication.

"We will probably be doing more of this in the future," Petelle said.

Football pulls in big bucks for athletic programs

By Jim Rasmussen
Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

Editor's note: This is the last

Behind Big Red

article in a five-part series exploring various issues behind Nebraska football.

Nebraska football makes a big impact in Lincoln and throughout the state, but nowhere is that impact felt more than in the Huskers' own backyard — the UNL athletic department.

The reason — Nebraska football pulls in more than \$7 million each year, providing the main source of revenue for the athletic department's \$9 million annual budget. The athletic department is not supported by tax dollars.

Gary Fouraker, UNL's athletic department business manager, said the Huskers make more than \$800,000 per game in ticket sales. In a six-game home season, ticket revenues usually total about \$5 million, he said.

The athletic department also sells about \$50,000 to \$75,000 worth of concessions (food, drink and souvenirs) at each game.

The bucks don't stop there, as the Huskers rake in about \$1 million in TV revenues and another million in away-game gate receipts annually, Fouraker said.

That's not all. Companies that feature Herbie Husker, the Nebraska helmet design or the university name on their products must pay royalties to the university. Royalty payments amounted to about \$40,000 last year, Fouraker said.

"And that's from the ones we know about," he said.

Several makers of Husker sou-

venirs don't pay royalties, he said, leaving the company name off their products. The athletic department loses thousands of dollars in potential royalties each year because of the "black market" Husker products.

Regardless of the royalty losses, the football program is certainly profitable. Football revenues, counting concessions and royalties, totaled about \$7.35 million last year. Football expenses totaled \$3 million.

Of UNL's other 14 sports teams, only the men's basketball team showed profit — it made \$450,000.

The rest of the athletic department revenue — about 1.2 million — came from private contributions.

As stated earlier, 14 UNL sports teams lost money last year, as they do every year. Some examples of 1983-84 losses, with figures provided by Fouraker: baseball, \$200,000; men's track, \$200,000; women's track, \$150,000; women's basketball, \$173,000;

wrestling, \$150,000; men's gymnastics, \$100,000; volleyball, \$119,000 and softball \$120,000.

Football, basketball, and private contributors keep the athletic department running. Without private contributions, the athletic budget wouldn't balance, Fouraker said.

Many of the contributors give through the NU Foundation, Fouraker said. The foundation handles money for several contribution funds, including the Director's Club and the Husker Award Scholarship Fund.

Director's Club members pay at least \$50,000 during a 10-year period, and Husker Award contributors pay \$2,000 a year, said Lee Liggett, vice president of the foundation.

Liggett said he thinks football generates much of the enthusiasm that leads to contributions, especially this time of year. But he said other UNL sports also have their loyal boosters.

"I think you'd be surprised at the number of individuals who contribute to other sports," he said.

The Touchdown Club, made up of Husker boosters from Nebraska and other states, kicked in \$300,000 for UNL athletics last year, according to the club's treasurer, Lou Roper.

The Touchdown Club's members don't get a lot of special treatment for their contributions, Roper said.

"Sometimes they don't get anything," he said. "We try to provide a parking space (for Husker games) and once a year they're invited to a dinner."

Helen Ruth Wagner, UNL's athletic ticket manager, said athletic boosters get priority consideration for football tickets, but the university can't promise anything.

"If somebody says, 'I'll give you whatever amount if I can get ten tickets,' we just can't take it," she said.

Nebraska Historical Society moves to amend constitution

By Kevin Dugan
Daily Nebraskan Staff Writer

Nebraska folklorist Roger Welsch, known for his caustic humor, wasn't kidding when he said the Nebraska Historical Society annual elections were a joke.

Welsch, a nominee for the society's executive board, said the elections were a fraud and society members did not have a chance to vote for him.

Marvin Kivett, director of the society, said a committee has been designated to make recommendations for updating the society's

constitutional by-laws.

"I will find out and finalize my recommendation to the committee within the next 30 days, and I assume we'll have a mail ballot before next year," he said.

The society's constitution now deals with elections in a non-specific manner.

A hand-count vote of 67 people during Saturday's vote was accepted as a valid expression of the 5,000 member society.

The society's nominating committee, which is appointed by the executive board, nominated four board members for reappoint-

ment.

The committee's nomination was challenged by an alternate slate of four society members.

According to minutes taken at the meeting, society president Edwin Faulkner decided members should vote on the adoption and election of the nominating committee's resolution.

Kivett said this was done with the understanding that if the resolution was not approved, a vote on the opposition slate would be taken.

The resolution passed, 36-31.

Continued on Page 6

Inside

- Friday Funnies Page 12
- This week's football predictions from the College Football Bible Page 8

Index

- Crossword 15
- Editorial 4
- Sports 8
- Wire Report 2