

# Sports

## Practice heats up QB battle

By Chuck Green  
Senior Reporter

The battle is on. One of the most important spring football decision-making processes at Nebraska in recent years is underway.

The "battle" is between McCathorn Clayton and Steve Taylor for the No. 1 quarterback position on the depth chart.

Taylor is the early leader. Taylor, a sophomore from Spring Valley, Calif., was named the top quarterback on last week's depth chart and has not looked back since.

"I really didn't expect this much," Taylor said. "It's surprising."

In Saturday's intrasquad scrimmage, Taylor completed five of seven passes for 80 yards and ran for 40 yards on five carries.

"He's got tremendous ability," Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said following the scrimmage. "He's very hard to tackle, he's got good lateral movement, good speed and a real fine arm."

Clayton, last year's starter, was held out of Saturday's scrimmage because of back spasms. Last week, Clayton carried 10 times for 32 yards and completed one of five passes for one yard. Clayton said he feels that Taylor deserves his No. 1 ranking on the depth chart.

"I think he's done some things better than I have," Clayton said. "That's why Coach Osborne moved him up."

The much talked-about rivalry between the two signal-callers for top honors was shrugged off by both as being relatively non-existent.

"There's no problem at all," Clayton said. "We get along fine and help each other out." Taylor agreed.

"We're good friends," Taylor said. "We get along the same as always. It's not really something we think about in practice. We just go out and run our plays and try to do the best we can."

Taylor also said he felt the position on the depth chart is not as important as people tend to think.

"It doesn't matter that much," he said. "Nothing really matters until next summer."

Both players said they have improvements to make, especially where the passing game is concerned.

"Our (team's) passing percentage wasn't that high last season," Clayton said.

Clayton said he feels his biggest advantage is experience. He said he feels fairly comfortable with reading defenses and reacting to particular situations.

Taylor, on the other hand, said his inexperience is his biggest drawback.

"I need to continue to learn the offense and continue to keep up my consistency," Taylor said. "I just want to do the right thing."

Taylor said the job of starting quarterback will probably be decided by whichever player is the best athlete, as well as who shows the most consistency.

Battles are never won by anything less.



Andrea Hoy/Daily Nebraskan

Taylor



Andrea Hoy/Daily Nebraskan

Clayton

## Softball team leads Big 8

By Lisa M. Henkel  
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska softball team leads the Big Eight conference by two games after last weekend.

The Cornhuskers defeated Oklahoma State, 4-3, and Missouri, 8-1, on Saturday in Columbia, MO. Sunday, Nebraska again swept both games in the round-robin tournament, beating Oklahoma State 3-1, and Missouri, 4-3. The wins raised ninth-rated Nebraska to 29-7 on the season and 7-1 in the conference.

Nebraska coach Wayne Daigle said the games were tough wins, but his team is playing well. He said the team probably needs to work on its mental intensity.

"We've separated ourselves from the rest of the conference in terms of winning and losing," Daigle said. "We need to push ourselves to win. It's the most important task at hand."

Daigle said his freshmen players hit their stride about a week ago.

"Every freshman that starts is playing very good ball at the major college level," he said.

The Huskers hit six home runs by four different players during the tournament. Shelby Mertins and Jane Kremer both had two-run homers against No. 15-ranked OSU. The Cowboys had a 3-2 lead but Kremer's fourth home run of the season won the game for the Huskers. Donna Deardorff got the win for Nebraska while Lori Sippel earned her third save of the season.

Lisa Winchester, Lori Richins and Mertins all had homers in Saturday's win against Missouri. Eight runs on 13 hits were enough to help Nebraska to victory. Sippel earned the win to raise her record to 9-4.

On Sunday it was freshman pitcher Marlys Handley who got the win against OSU. It was Handley's 10th straight win, raising her record to 11-1 and her ERA to 0.27. The game also gave sophomore pitcher, Sippel her fourth save.

Nebraska scored two runs in the sixth inning to break a 1-1 tie. Rhonda Gorraiz scored on Katie Wolda's double. The winning run scored when Heidi Schlabach reached first on an OSU error.

The win against Missouri on Sunday came after Deardorff retired 13 straight batters. The win raised the sophomore's record to 9-2. Nebraska was behind as the Tigers scored on a walk and three singles. Winchester hit her third home run of the season to bring the Huskers within one. Pinch-runner Ann Schasteen scored on a Missouri error off Margie Ogradowicz's ground ball. Ogradowicz then scored on a single by Richins.

Ogradowicz is hitting .376 and has hit safely in nine straight games and in 25 of the last 26. She also broke a school record by stealing two bases, raising her record to 18 stolen bases this season. The old record was 17, held by Denise Eckert.

Daigle said Deardorff was the key to Nebraska's victory.

"She completely shut the other team out," he said.

Nebraska's next six games are at home. The Huskers play Kansas State in a double-header Friday at 3 p.m. Nebraska then takes on Iowa State and Kansas in a round-robin tournament, Saturday and Sunday. The Iowa State game begins at 2 p.m. and the Kansas game at 4 p.m. at the softball complex.

# Comebacks startle sports world

Winter made a comeback in Lincoln Monday as snow fell and the temperature plummeted.



Bob Asmussen

Comebacks seem to be the rule in recent days rather than the exception. No where is that more evident than in the remarkable weekend performances of two athletes, Dennis Leonard and Jack Nicklaus.

Going into the past weekend, Leonard and Nicklaus seemed to be in the

winter of their careers. Or maybe even past winter.

Injuries and four operations had left Leonard on a growing pile of washed up baseball pitchers. Once the leader of the Kansas City staff, Leonard had fallen to the status of a spot starter whose career was severely in doubt.

Nicklaus' apparent downfall had a more reasonable culprit: age. The 46-year-old golfer hadn't won a tournament in two years and it appeared to all that Jack would never be back.

With Danny Jackson out for a couple of weeks with a twisted ankle, Leonard got one of his spot starts Saturday. The Royals played Toronto, one of baseball's best hitting teams, on a nationally-televised afternoon game.

It was Leonard's first start since early in the 1983 season and it was

probably his best performance in an outstanding career. Leonard three-hit the Bluejays. At one point, he retired 18 batters in a row.

Leonard's performance was needed as the Royals could only score one run off the Bluejay pitchers.

While an early season win isn't very important, Leonard's performance Saturday was of extreme importance to the defending World Champions. With Leonard apparently fully recovered from a severe knee injury, it will allow the Royals to deal one of their other pitchers for another everyday player, likely an outfielder.

Not only does Leonard's return give the Royals some trade leverage, it should also insure that the young staff has a leader it can look to for guidance. Bret Saberhagen is a great pitcher, but

he is a young pitcher, and can hardly be expected to lead the Kansas City staff. Leonard's presence, both on and off the field, will take some of the pressure off the young pitching staff.

While Leonard's performance Saturday took pressure off some younger players, Nicklaus' performance Sunday put pressure on the young golfers on the tour.

Nicklaus shot a 65 Sunday to win the Masters golf tournament for a record sixth time. While most everyone else had forgotten about Nicklaus, he didn't give up on himself or his abilities. And in the end, it was the failure of others that gave Nicklaus the title, failure of younger golfers.

Nicklaus lurked four strokes behind leader Greg Norman going into Sunday's final round. He was still lurking

after the front nine. But, on the mean and nasty back nine that has claimed so many titles, Nicklaus shot a record-tying 30. His eagle at the 15th hole pulled him within two strokes and consecutive birdies on 16 and 17 pulled him into a tie for the lead with Norman.

Norman, known as the Great White Shark, had a chance to tie at 18 with a par, but he hit his second shot into the gallery and ended up with a bogey.

Nicklaus looked Father Time in the eye Sunday and told him to take a hike. His performance in the world's most prestigious golf tournament didn't signal the end of his brilliant career, only a new beginning.

Nicklaus and Leonard proved that they were both definitely back.

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