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Huskers sign 18 recruits to letters; three more standouts still undecided

By Tim Hartmann
Senior Reporter

Dave Gillespie, Nebraska's on-campus recruiting coordinator, announced the signing of 18 high-school athletes and two junior-college transfers to letters of intent on Wednesday, the first day recruits could sign with the school of their choice.

Football coach Tom Osborne was out of town and unavailable for comment.

In addition to the players signed, Gillespie said, Nebraska will possibly sign two more players. Among the players still considering Nebraska are Mickey Joseph, a quarterback from New Orleans' Bishop Shaw High School, Omaha Central High School running back Leodis Flowers and Anthony Ray, a running back from Wharton, Texas.

Earlier in the day Emmitt Smith, the Parade Magazine Player of the Year, announced that he would sign with Florida. Smith had narrowed his choices down to Nebraska, Auburn and Florida before today's announcement.

"It's disappointing," Gillespie said. "He (Smith) showed a lot of interest in us . . . but we weren't surprised (he signed with Florida)."

Gillespie said the fact that Nebraska got a late start in the recruiting of Smith may have hurt its chances of signing him.

Gillespie said Nebraska was pleased with this year's recruiting class, espe-

cially because two players from Chicago and Massachusetts, areas where the Huskers have had little recruiting success, were signed.

"We feel like it's a very good recruiting class," he said. "We're very pleased with them as individuals and players."

The Massachusetts players were wingback/defensive end Mike Croel and linebacker/defensive tackle Joe Sims, both all-state selections from Lincoln-Sudbury High School.

From Chicago, Nebraska was able to recruit 6-3, 260-pound offensive tackle Wayne Keneipp and Parade All-American wide receiver Nate Turner.

Gillespie said that signing the Chicago players was not a surprise, even considering Nebraska's past success in the area.

"The only surprise is that we have not been in that area, done well in that area in the past," he said.

Seven players are from Nebraska, including three from Class A football champion Omaha Creighton Prep. Running back George Achola, defensive end/linebacker Daryl Leise and tight end Dan Lohmeier, all all-state selections, committed to Nebraska.

Other Nebraska players who signed with the Cornhuskers were Tim Herman, a 6-6, 240-pound linebacker from Lincoln Southeast High School; Pat Engelbert, a Columbus Scotus High School defensive tackle; Erik Wiegert, a Fremont Bergan High School defensive end and Brian Brown, a defensive tackle from Republican Valley High

School in Indianola.

Nebraska continued its recruiting success in Texas, where four players signed. William Thomas, a 6-1, 180-pound safety from Houston and the brother of Nebraska's all-Big Eight Conference defensive end Broderick Thomas, signed, as did quarterback Keithen McCant, offensive tackle Jeff Chaney and tight end/defensive end Chris Garrett.

Two Colorado players signed with Nebraska. They were Brian Boerboom, a 6-7, 250-pound offensive lineman, and defensive back Tahoun Lewis, both of Colorado Springs.

Nebraska also signed 6-3, 190-pound Reggie Cooper of Slidell, La., High School. Cooper, a defensive end/strong safety, was named the most valuable defensive player in Louisiana in 1986.

The two junior-college transfers, running back Bryan Carpenter and defensive back Tim Jackson, came from Coffeyville, Kan., Junior College and are already on campus.

Gillespie said the fact that Nebraska was placed on probation after a ticket violation last season had no effect on recruiting.

"I think it was very insignificant," he said. "In fact, I can't even recall any major questions from prospects or parents."

This season was the second year Proposition 48, a rule requiring college athletes to attain certain scores on either the ACT or SAT college-entrance tests, was in effect.

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Savage scores high

By Rich Cooper
Staff Reporter

When Nebraska gymnast Crystal Savage was a little girl, her father would throw her into the air and catch her in his arms.

Eventually, though, her father told her she was too big to be thrown into the air, so she decided to do her own tumbling.

Savage has consistently been the Cornhuskers' No. 2 gymnast this season. In the last two meets, she has recorded the two highest scores of her career. Against Utah Feb. 2, Savage scored a 37.20 and at the Heartland Invitational against Arizona State and Oklahoma Saturday night in Lincoln, she finished fourth in the all-around with a 37.25.

Savage, a sophomore from Sioux Falls, S.D., said that until her sophomore year in high school, she lived and worked out in Brainard, Minn. Then she and her mother moved to Sioux Falls, where she began training with the Sioux Falls Gymnastics Club.

For the next three years, Savage said, she and her family were in different places, but still very close.

"It wasn't really hard being away from my father and brother because we stayed very close through those years," Savage said. "My parents have always been very supportive of me when it comes to gymnastics."

During her career with the Sioux Falls club, Savage was a vaulting finalist in the 1985 Junior Olympic meet. She also finished fourth in the 1985 Class I Regionals and was vaulting champion at the 1984 Western Nationals.



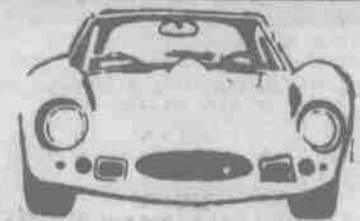
Savage

Savage said that before she finished high school, she had decided to compete at Nebraska. She had met Coach Rick Walton at the 1985 Class I Regionals.

"The first time I met Coach Walton, I liked his personality and I knew from that moment on that I wanted him as my coach in college," Savage said.

Walton said he recruited Savage because he saw her potential. He

See SAVAGE on 19



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