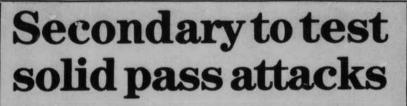
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By Chuck Green Senior Editor

Nebraska defensive secondary coach George Darlington expects to lose a little sleep this fall while preparing the Cornhuskers for their 1987 schedule.

Nebraska opens its season with four non-conference games against passing teams — Utah State, UCLA, Arizona State and South Carolina. The Gamecocks have preseason All-American Todd Ellis at quarterback. In addition, the Huskers will face

improved passing attacks from Big Eight opponents Kansas, Kansas State and Oklahoma State.



Fryar

"This season will obviously be a test," Darlington said. "Lately, there's been a trend in college football, either teams go to a wishbone offense or a more pass-oriented offense

Darlington said that Colorado's passing attack is also a threat, citing the Buffaloes' 20-10 win over Nebraska. A 52-yard touchdown pass late in the third quarter sealed the Buffaloes' first victory over the Huskers in 18 years.

"Last year, two teams that weren't supposed to throw the ball very much beat us with the pass," Darlington said. "Oklahoma and Colorado both had some big plays against us, but from the standpoint of defending against passing teams (last

year), we did pretty well." Darlington said his main concern

in the secondary is the lack of depth the Huskers possess. Two starters - Charles Fryar at right cornerback and Brian Washington at strong safety - return from 1986, but, Darlington said, "we're pretty thin in experience.

Fryar led Nebraska's secondary in tackles last season with 52 - 38 unassisted — and three intercep-tions. Washington had 18 tackles in

Lorenzo Hicks, a 5-11, 195-pound junior from Kansas City, Mo., will begin the fall as the second-team right cornerback. Hicks was converted from split end after his freshman season. Freshman John Crippen, who redshirted because of an injury last year, will start the fall as the No. 3 right cornerback.

McCathorn Clayton, who convert-ed to defensive back last spring from quarterback, will begin the fall as the top prospect at the other corner. Clayton will also be given a look at strong safety, behind Wash-

Tim Jackson, a junior transfer from Coffeyville (Kan.) Junior College, will also contend for a starting ob at left cornerback.

Darlington said recruiting Jack-son was easier than other defensive

"Jackson used to play at Kansas State and actually played against us two years ago," he said. "Our evalua-tion of him came off of our own

Hicks and Cartier Walker, a 5-10, 175-pound sophomore, are other pos-sible prospects for the left corner-back position, as is redshirt sopho-

more Marvin Sanders. Joining Washington and Clayton at strong safety are Jeff Tomjack, who had considerable playing time last season, and Scott Vampola, a 5-11, 190-pound sophomore from Lin-

At free safety, Mark Blazek and converted quarterback Wendell Wooten will begin as the first- and second-team players, while Tomjack will also be looked at.

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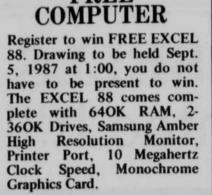
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Inexperienced kickers leave question mark

By Tim Hartmann Senior Reporter

Gregg Barrios and Chris Drennan. two sophomores with little varsity experience, are battling for placekicking duties this fall, and that's a fact that makes Nebraska coach Dan Young a little nervous.

When you are in front of 80,000 people with the game on the line it is a difficult time to kick," Young said. "Dale Klein (who used up his over the last two years, and it's cluding a long kick of 63 yards. something the kickers are going to have to adjust to."

Young said he expects the kickers to pick up some things in games that can't be taught in practice. "You always learn from being in

the game and kicking under pressure," he said.

Drennan redshirted last fall and Barrios walked on last year after helping Creighton Prep to a state high school championship. Both nip. Both players are good kickers, Young

'Chris and Barrios both kicked really well in the spring," he said. "Both of them graded well and they "Both of them graded well and they are almost equal in field goal and extra point kicking. Chris might have a slight advantage in kickoffs. They did pretty well." Craig Schnitzler, a senior from

Battle Creek, said junior Dave Cheloha of Elkhorn also have a chance to contribute at place-kicker. "We have four pretty decent play-ers there," Young said. Schnitzler and Cheloha need to

show some improvement in a couple of areas to push Drennan and Barrios,

Young said. "Craig Schnitzler is a straight-ahead kicker, and he doesn't have the range that a soccer-style kicker has," he said. "Cheloha needs to become more consistent.

Last season, Klein hit 10 of 13 field goals, including 9 of 9 from inside 40 yards, and was 51 of 52 in extra points. The year before, he set an NCAA record by making seven consecutive field goals against Mis-

The only other kickers to score and punt.'

last season were Barrios, who made one extra point, and Schnitzler, who made two.

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Young said kickers generally struggle at Memorial Stadium.

"It's not too good," he said. "There's a lot of weird winds that swirl and it also is hard to punt in because it usually gets pretty cold here late in the season. But that's something both teams have to deal with."

At punter, junior John Kroeker eligibility last season) knew what it returns after averaging 39.6 yards a was like, he had a lot of experience kick on 46 kicks last season, in-Young said he expects Kroeker to

improve this season. "At times (last season) he performed very well and at other times he was inconsistent," Young said. "It was his first year and he lacked a little confidence. Hopefully, after one year, he will get comfortable and gain consistency. He has out standing ability and a strong leg."

Dante Wiley, a junior linebacker who also punts, will challenge Kroeker for the starting job. Wiley eeds to work on his consistency Young said, but he has a very strong

"Dante is just a tremendous punter when he hits," Young said "In the spring game he was booming the ball and he looked like he was (former Iowa All-America punter) Reggie Roby. He has a powerful leg and he is a great athlete. He has nlimited potential.'

Kroeker was listed ahead of Wiley on the preseason depth chart.

"(Kroeker) charted better than Dante did throughout the spring, but Dante had a better spring game, Young said. "I'd say Kroeker would probably start right now, but Dante is right behind him. It should be a battle

Schnitzler is also a punter, some-thing which could be a real benefit to the team, Young said.

"Schnitzler is a consistent punter in the 38- to 40-yard range," he said. "He gets the job done, but he doesn't get the big boomer which you sometimes need. He is a valuable person to have, with the limited travel roster, because he can kick

