

NU signs 26 recruits in 'unusual' class

By Tim Hartmann
Senior Reporter

The Midwest produces much of the nation's food every year, but this year it didn't produce much of the high school football talent.

"This is not a natural gold mine in terms of recruiting," Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said.

Osborne announced that Nebraska had signed 21 athletes to letters-of-intent by Wednesday afternoon and that he expected to sign five more by Wednesday night.

Osborne said he was surprised by the small number of recruits that Nebraska got in-state and from surrounding states.

"It's kind of an unusual group of players in that it's probably the smallest group from the immediate area," he said.

Three high school football players from Nebraska signed letters-of-intent and one more was expected to sign. The Cornhuskers signed no players from Iowa, South Dakota, Wyoming or Colorado.

Under NCAA rules, the Huskers are allowed to sign up to 30 players, but Osborne said Nebraska plans to save some scholarships to give to walk-ons. However, he said, Nebraska may give out one more scholarship if a "great running back came down the pike."

"There's one other player out there running loose that we might take," Osborne said.

Osborne said Nebraska had to turn away several recruits who wanted to sign with the Huskers because he wanted to save the scholarships for walk-ons. He said he was pleased with this year's recruiting class, especially because of the natural disadvantages Nebraska faces.

"I'm kind of amazed we got as many good ones as we did when you look at the distance we were going to get them," Osborne said. "I think that some people in the state are unhappy that we don't go undefeated every year, but after five or six weeks of recruiting, I'm amazed that we do as well as we do."

"We really are battling some difficult odds in terms of distance and weather."

One of the disappointments in this year's recruiting class is that Nebraska did not get one

of the top five running backs in the country, Osborne said. Willie McClendon, a highly regarded running back from Jacksonville, Fla., who had been recruited by Nebraska, signed a letter-of-intent with Florida.

Osborne is not allowed to comment on a player until he has signed a letter-of-intent, so he couldn't discuss the five players who had yet to sign.

Those players are Steve Carmer, a defensive back-running back from Wahoo; Tyrone Legette, a defensive back from Columbia, S.C.; lineman Scott Peterson from Peoria, Ariz.; Mike Petko, a linebacker from Anaheim, Calif.; and offensive lineman Chris Ybarra from Fontana, Calif.

The players who have signed letters-of-intent include:

- Scott Baldwin, a running back-defensive back, from Roselle, N.J. Baldwin, who is 6-foot-2 and 190 pounds, rushed for 1,368 yards last season, including a school-record 368 yards and five touchdowns in one game.

- Ernie Beler, a running back-defensive back from Bayonne, N.J. Beler was selected as the league back of the year on both offense and defense, and earned second-team all-state honors two seasons in a row.

- Jon Bostick, a 6-2, 185-pound split end from Bellevue, Wash. Bostick was named the Washington Player of the Year by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. He caught 39 passes for 814 yards and 16 touchdowns last season.

- Tyrone Byrd, a defensive back from Chandler, Ariz. Byrd made interceptions as a senior and earned all-state honors. He also started at quarterback and returned kickoffs for Chandler High School.

- Jeremiah Clark, a 6-4, 220-pound defensive tackle from Mesa, Ariz. Clark, who led Arizona in quarterback sacks with 19, runs the 40-yard dash in 4.77 seconds and was an all-state selection.

- Jason Daniel, a 6-3, 230-pound offensive tackle from Midland, Texas. Daniel was an honorable-mention all-district player at Robert E. Lee High School, the same school Nebraska sophomore Jake Young attended.

- Darin Duin, a 6-2, 190-pound defensive

back from Fargo, N.D. Duin was named the North Dakota Player of the Year by USA Today. He played four positions as a senior — wide receiver, tailback, fullback and cornerback.

- Mike Grant, a quarterback-defensive back from Brandon, Fla. Grant led Brandon High School to a 25-9 record from 1985-87 and earned all-conference honors as a sophomore. Brandon ran the wishbone last season.

- Travis Hill, a 6-3, 210-pound defensive end from Pearland, Texas. Hill's school did not keep defensive statistics, but Osborne said, "He was one of the better players in the Houston area."

- Tyrone Hughes, a wingback from New Orleans. Hughes was named the Louisiana offensive Player of the Year. He rushed for 845 yards, caught 20 passes for 601 yards and scored 22 touchdowns. He also returned kickoffs and punts.

- Bart James, a defensive back-quarterback from Tempe, Ariz. James threw for more than 1,000 yards and nine touchdowns and rushed for more than 600 yards last year. On defense, he intercepted eight passes, giving him 30 interceptions in his high school career.

- Dave Jensen, a 6-5, 265-pound defensive tackle from Omaha. Jensen earned first-team All-America honors from Bally while leading Creighton Prep to three consecutive state titles. He had 62 unassisted tackles last season.

- Lance Lewis, a 6-0, 200-pound fullback from Scott City, Kan. Lewis was the USA Today Kansas Player of the Year. He rushed for 1,600 yards and 24 touchdowns, and recorded 133 tackles as a linebacker.

- Jamie Liewer, a 6-5, 200-pound offensive-defensive lineman from Atkinson. Liewer was a four-year starter at West Holt High School. He made 97 tackles last season while earning all-state honors.

- Andre McDuffy, a running back from Hurst, Texas. McDuffy was named an all-district selection after rushing for 816 yards on 128 carries, an average of 6.4 yards per carry. He was also L.D. Bell High School's leading punt and kickoff returner.

- Junior Monarrez, a 6-2, 265-pound middle

guard from Bell Garden, Calif. Monarrez is a transfer from Cerritos Community College, where he made 78 tackles last year. He was a two-time junior-college All-America selection.

- Bruce Pickens, a 5-11, 185-pound defensive back from Kansas City. Pickens is a transfer from Coffeyville, Kan., Community College. He intercepted five passes last year, including three against Nebraska's freshman team.

- Kevin Ramaekers, a 6-3, 265-pound offensive-defensive lineman from Norfolk. Ramaekers was an all-state selection as a senior at Norfolk Catholic High School, and won the Class B gold medal in the shot put in the state high school track meet.

- Vic Stachmus, a 6-6, 240-pound offensive-defensive lineman from McAlester, Okla. Stachmus was an all-state selection at McAlester High School while playing on an 11-2 team.

- William Washington, a 6-3, 235-pound tight end from Tyler, Texas. Washington caught 15 passes for 300 yards and four touchdowns last season. Osborne said he was Nebraska's top tight-end recruiting target in the country.

- David White, a 6-3, 225-pound defensive end-linebacker from New Orleans. White caught 15 passes for 225 yards as a tight end, but will play defense at Nebraska. He earned all-metro honors in New Orleans.

Osborne said he thought new NCAA regulations that limited the amount of time that Husker recruiting coordinator Jack Pierce could spend on the road hurt Nebraska, because the Huskers recruited so many out-of-state players.

Osborne said he thought Nebraska would be hurt by a new NCAA rule that will limit coaches to one visit to the home of recruits. The rule will go into effect next season.

"I think that being in a sparsely populated area in the middle of the country that everything they (the NCAA) do to take people off the road — to shorten the evaluation time, to shorten the recruiting time — works to our disadvantage," he said.

Team to focus on Tigers, not offensive fans

Probable Starters: Nebraska (12-11, 3-4)

Henry T. Buchanan	G
Eric Johnson	G
Rich King	C
Jeff Rekeweg	F
Derrick Vick	F

Missouri (14-5, 4-3)

Byron Irvin	G
Lee Coward	G
Doug Smith	C
Nathan Buntin	F
Derrick Chievous	F

By Mark Derowitsch Senior Reporter

A nationally televised meeting against No. 7-ranked Nevada-Las Vegas on Saturday isn't the top priority of the Missouri men's basketball team.

Missouri coach Norm Stewart said the game against the Running

Rebels will have to wait because the Tigers must first face Nebraska Thursday night at the Hearn Center in Columbia, Mo. The game will begin at 7:35 p.m.

"We've got a tough schedule," Stewart said. "We're just trying to isolate it and concentrate on playing one game at a time."

Stewart said Missouri can't afford to take the Cornhuskers lightly.

"I think people are looking at (Nebraska's) ballclub a little bit differently," Stewart said. "You look at how they came back to take one from us, did the same thing to Kansas, went on the road and won at Colorado and nearly won one on the road at Kansas State. It will be a tough ballgame for us."

"We have to leave (for Las Vegas) the following day, and we must make sure we keep our attention on that night's game."

Stewart said the Tigers must do

a better job on free throws to avoid a loss. Missouri connected on 18 of 30 shots from the free-throw line in its 70-68 loss to Nebraska earlier this season.

"I think we've put more effort on them and concentrated more," Stewart said. "We're shooting 67 percent, which isn't far off. We should be around 70 percent, but we're getting there."

Nebraska coach Danny Nee said the Huskers, who are now 12-11 overall and 3-4 in the Big Eight, can't afford to make mental mistakes against Missouri.

"We understand with our ability we have to work hard for us to win," Nee said. "We must be in the right frame of mind and be ready to go to work."

Nee said the Huskers will focus on Missouri forward Derrick Chievous and center Doug Smith

instead of the Antlers, a group of Missouri fans who are known for screaming obscenities. Chievous, a senior from Jamaica, N.Y., is averaging 21.9 points and 8.6 rebounds per game, and Smith is averaging 12.1 points.

"About the Antlers — that's secondary stuff," Nee said. "I'm more concerned with Smith and Chievous."

Nebraska guard Eric Johnson also said the Huskers will have to control Chievous.

"We have to stop Chievous," Johnson said. "That was what we tried to do the first time we played them. We'll certainly place more emphasis on him."

Johnson said Nebraska will have to look to the future instead of the past. The Huskers go into the game with a three-game losing streak.

"We definitely have to be ready for them," Johnson said. "It will

make us or break us. We have to try to make things happen and go after the win."

Nebraska guard Henry T. Buchanan agreed.

"We've got to prepare for Missouri like we did the last time," Buchanan said. "We have to try to ignore the crowd and play with the same intensity as we did against Kansas State."

Buchanan said the Huskers can't be bothered by the Antlers if they are to win the game.

"It will be a tough place to play ball, but we're focusing on the guys we're playing against, not the Antlers," Buchanan said.

Husker center Pete Manning said he expects the Antlers to go after him.

"I've never been down there before, but I heard a lot about it," Manning said. "They'll probably be on me — I guarantee that."

Huskers ignore talk about Jayhawk swim meet

By Jeff Apel Senior Editor

Nebraska men's swimming coach Cal Bentz will put all the talk aside when the Cornhuskers face Kansas Saturday at Robinson Natatorium in Lawrence, Kan.

Bentz said the Huskers, who have captured eight straight Big Eight championships, aren't listening to the predictions made by Kansas swimming coach Gary Kempf that say the Jayhawks are ready to challenge Nebraska for the conference crown. He said the Huskers can't afford to pay attention to these statements because it might pull them away from

their training schedule if they do.

But Bentz said Nebraska will still be ready for the meet against the Jayhawks. The meet, which also includes a women's battle between Nebraska and Kansas, begins at 11 a.m.

"We're not trying to dispute Gary Kempf or anybody else," Bentz said. "But I guess I don't spend an awful lot of time thinking about those things because they are beyond our control."

Bentz said Nebraska will use the dual meet as a steppingstone to this year's NCAA Championships, which will be April 7-9 in Indianapolis, Ind. He said Nebraska needs to continue to

improve if it is to achieve its goal of earning a top-10 finish nationally.

Bentz said the Huskers will have an advantage entering the meet because they will leave Lincoln on Friday afternoon. He said Nebraska usually begins the 3 1/2-hour voyage to Lawrence on Saturday morning, but the meet's early starting time necessitated the early departure.

Bentz said he is not concerned about traveling because the 7-0 Huskers have posted road victories against Louisiana State, Tulane, Missouri, Southern Illinois and Arkansas this season. He said Nebraska has established itself as a good road team.

Nebraska women's swimming coach Ray Huppert said the 6-2 Huskers have also established themselves as a strong road team even though they dropped a 116-101 decision to Arkansas Saturday in Fayetteville, Ark. He said Nebraska performed well despite the loss.

"I'm getting tired of saying we learned from a loss," Huppert said. "But we did swim well."

Huppert said Nebraska respects the Jayhawks even though they have compiled a 6-6 record this season. He said Kansas possesses excellent talent, but hasn't been able to put everything together.

"I don't want to speculate on why not," Huppert said.

Huppert said he knows Kansas will be ready for the No. 18-ranked Huskers because Nebraska broke the Jayhawks' 10-year home winning streak with a 58-55 victory in 1985. The Huskers also have defeated Kansas for the Big Eight championship each of the last three years.

Huppert said Nebraska doesn't mind assuming the role of a favorite. He said it's a role the Huskers have to accept.

"We've shown this year that we could be the favorites," Huppert said. "So I don't think that adds any more pressure."