

## Cornhuskers, Aggies to 'kickoff' football season

By Mike Kluck  
Staff Reporter

Two days of speculation ended Thursday when the Nebraska football team accepted a bid to play Texas A&M in the 1988 Kickoff Classic.

Nebraska athletic director Bob Devaney said there were two reasons why the Huskers accepted an invitation to travel to East Rutherford, N.J., and face the Aggies.

"One of the reasons we decided to go was because we were invited, which is an honor," Devaney said. "Secondly, some of the returning players expressed an interest to Coach (Tom) Osborne that they wanted to go."

The Cornhuskers will be the first team to play twice in the game that officially begins the college football season. Nebraska defeated Penn State 44-6 in the 1983 game. The

time and date of this year's game has not been set.

Nebraska, which earned a No. 6 ranking last season despite losing two of its last three games, will be led by all-Big Eight quarterback Steve Taylor, All-America defensive end Broderick Thomas and all-Big Eight linebacker LeRoy Etienne.

Last year, Texas A&M won its third consecutive Southwest Conference Championship and defeated

Notre Dame 35-10 in the 1988 Cotton Bowl. The Aggies have an eight-game winning streak.

Texas A&M's defense earned the nickname of the "wrecking crew" last season after finishing seventh in the nation by allowing opponents 244.7 yards per game. The 10-2 Aggies' defense returns seven starters, including All-America John Ropers.

Devaney said he isn't sure how

much money Nebraska will receive for playing in the game. He said the Huskers made \$450,000 from the 1983 contest.

Devaney said Nebraska's official acceptance was delayed because the Huskers had to receive approval from the other Big Eight schools. He said Big Eight school officials will let the Huskers take 70 to 75 players rather than the 60-player limit normally imposed by the Big Eight.

## Hometown visitors may steal some of NU's applause

By Lori Griffin  
Staff Reporter

When the Nebraska women's gymnastics team meets Denver and Brigham Young Saturday in the Big Red Invitational, the Cornhuskers won't be the only ones benefiting from the Lincoln fans.

Denver women's gymnastics coach Dan Garcia said his squad also will have a home advantage when it enters the meet at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Denver freshman Kristin Gutz, a Lincoln East High School graduate, will compete for the Pioneers in the all-around competition.

"Kristin will give us some of the home-town rooting section," Garcia said. "It could help because (fans in Lincoln) already know her."

Garcia said Gutz has been a consistent performer this season. Gutz's highest score in the all-around competition is 35.5.

Garcia said Denver's "cheering

section" also will be aided by fans of Kathy and Diana Detwiler, who are from Omaha.

"We will have our own little rooting section at the meet," Garcia said.

Garcia said Denver, which defeated Brigham Young 177.4-174.3 earlier this season, does not expect to win the meet. He said the 3-2 Pio-

neers want to have a good meet and perform to their capabilities.

"We hope to upgrade our routines and do well with all of the events," Garcia said. "We hope to have a good meet and to stay in the 180 (point) range."

Denver is led by senior Tina Johnson, who scored a career-high 37.45 in the all-around competition earlier this season. The Pioneers also rely on senior Kathy Milberger and freshman Jenny Setnicker, Garcia said.

BYU women's gymnastics coach Brad Cattermole said the Cougars are excited about this weekend's meet. He said BYU has had problems with injuries and a midseason coaching change.

"If we can get healthy, I think we can be as talented a team as anybody," Cattermole said. "Our kids



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