

# Pete looking at season, not NFL

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Reporter

When Nebraska middle guard Lawrence Pete searches for inspiration, he looks no further than the accomplishments of his former roommate.

Pete uses the accomplishments of former Nebraska defensive tackle Neil Smith as an inspiration each time he finds himself soul searching. He said Smith's story is particularly inspiring because the New Orleans native arrived at Nebraska as an overlooked, lanky defensive tackle and went on to become a 1st-round draft choice by the National Football League's Kansas City Chiefs.

"There's a lot of guys who use Neil as an inspiration," Pete said, "just because of what he accomplished."

Pete said he roomed with Smith during his freshman, sophomore and junior seasons. He said he has spoken with Smith several times since the former All-America selection joined the Kansas City organization this season.

"We talk about what he's doing," Pete said, "He says the NFL is a little bit quicker and that he's still learning."

Pete said he hasn't started to think about a potential NFL career. He said he just wants to focus in on his final season at Nebraska.

Pete said he feels fortunate to be a member of this year's team because he originally quit early in spring practice. He said personal matters, including his recent marriage and the birth of his son midway through spring practice, prompted his decision.

Pete said he spent several months wondering if he had made the right decision after he quit the team. He said he now realizes his decision was wrong.

"It was an ill-advised move," Pete said.

Pete took several steps to rejoin the team. He first expressed his desire to Nebraska coach Tom Osborne and Husker defensive coordinator Charlie McBride, then explained why he left to his Husker teammates.

Pete said his Nebraska teammates held the final decision of whether he could rejoin the team because they voted on his reinstatement. He said he's glad his teammates allowed him back on the team.

"I'm glad they respected my ability and realized I'd be an asset," Pete said. "I'm glad they showed a lot of confidence in me."

McBride said he's glad that Pete rejoined the team because the senior from Wichita, Kan., can shore up a defense that surrendered 28 1st-quarter points in Nebraska's 41-28 loss to UCLA. He said Pete overcame missing spring practice and mononucleosis to become the Huskers' 2nd-team nose guard, then graded better than fellow middle guard Mike Murray in the UCLA game to earn a starting job.

Pete will make his first start of the season when Nebraska faces Arizona State on Saturday at 6 p.m. in Lincoln's Memorial Stadium.

**'He played good against UCLA, but he just hasn't got over the sickness.'**

—McBride

McBride said he has been pleased with Pete's progress. He said Pete has used his veteran experience to overcome missing spring practice, but has not been able to shake a throat virus, which has reduced his strength.

"He doesn't feel real good right now," McBride said. "He played good against UCLA, but he just hasn't got over the sickness."

"When he does, it will still take him about three or four weeks to get back in shape."

McBride said he never pressured Pete to rejoin the team. He said Pete's decision was made entirely on his own.

"I never pushed him one way or the other," McBride said. "You don't want to talk somebody into some-

thing and have it be the wrong thing. That's the last thing you want to do."

McBride said he believes Pete quit the team because of concerns about his family and the absence of Husker defensive tackles Lee Jones and Smith, who used up their eligibility last season. He said Pete entered spring practice with a lost feeling because Jones and Smith were two of his closest friends.

McBride said Pete was thinking about his future when he weighed his family in his decision. He said Pete decided that he would concentrate on earning his degree rather than playing football. "He was in a position where he had to be thinking about two to three years down the road," McBride said. "He had a lot of things on his mind and he made an intelligent decision by placing his family ahead of all of them."

McBride said he tried to ease Pete's transition back onto the team by relating a similar experience he incurred in 1962. He said he knew what Pete was going through because he got married when he was a senior student-athlete at the University of Colorado.

"I tried to help him along anyway I could," McBride said. "It was a situation where his coming back was good for me and everything is back to normal now."

Pete said he wants to forget about his decision and concentrate on the rest of Nebraska's season. He said the Huskers would consider an 11-1 season a success because that would mean they would be Big Eight champions and would be in a position to contend for the national championship.

"If we take one game at a time and do it Nebraska's way, we'll have a very successful season," Pete said. "One loss isn't going to destroy our season."

## Cornhusker tight end injured

An injury to Nebraska tight end Monte Kratzenstein concerned Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne after the completion of Tuesday's practice.

Osborne said Kratzenstein, a 6-foot-2, 225-pound junior who is listed 2nd on Nebraska's depth chart behind Todd Millikan, appeared to hyperextend his knee during a non-contact drill. He said the injury creates concern because Kratzenstein finished spring practice as the Huskers' only healthy tight end.

Millikan missed all of spring practice with a pulled groin, while senior

Corey Grobe also sat out spring drills with a broken leg. Freshman Chris Garret, Nebraska's 4th-team tight end, suffered a dislocated shoulder during this year's spring game.

Osborne said he doesn't know if Kratzenstein will play in Nebraska's game against Arizona State on Saturday.

"I don't know how bad it is," Osborne said.

Osborne said he has no plans to pull William Washington, a 6-3, 235-pound freshman, out of a redshirt season unless the Huskers suffer a long-term injury at the tight end position.

## Teammates help freshman adjust

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Nebraska's, Van Housen said, but he did have some weight training in high school.

"My high school coach was really into weights," he said. "He had so little to work with, but he was always trying hard to get something better for us."

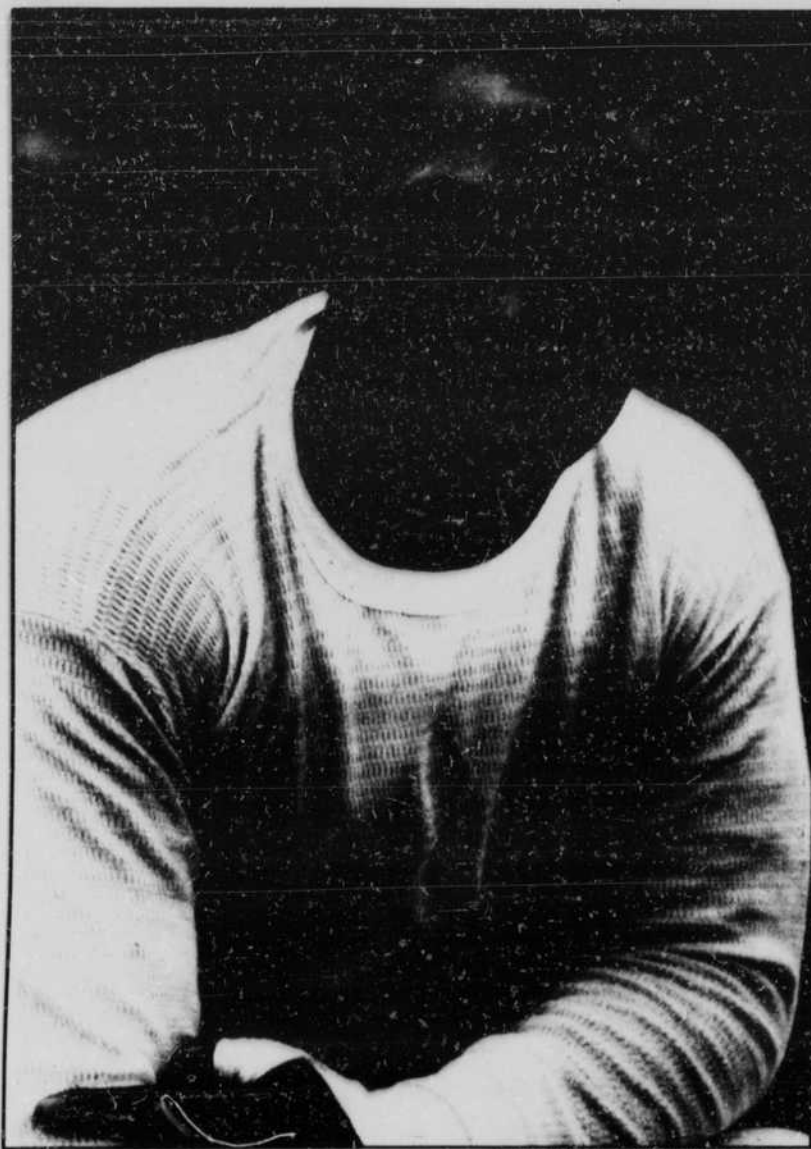
Van Housen said any progress he makes in the weight room carries over to his play on the field.

"If you're a winner in your mind (in the weight room), you're a winner on the field," he said. "It makes you feel good about yourself."

Van Housen, a mechanized agriculture major, said he has always wanted to play football at Nebraska. He said he considered attending Northwest Missouri State, but then decided to walk on at Nebraska because he said he has always wanted to be a Husker.

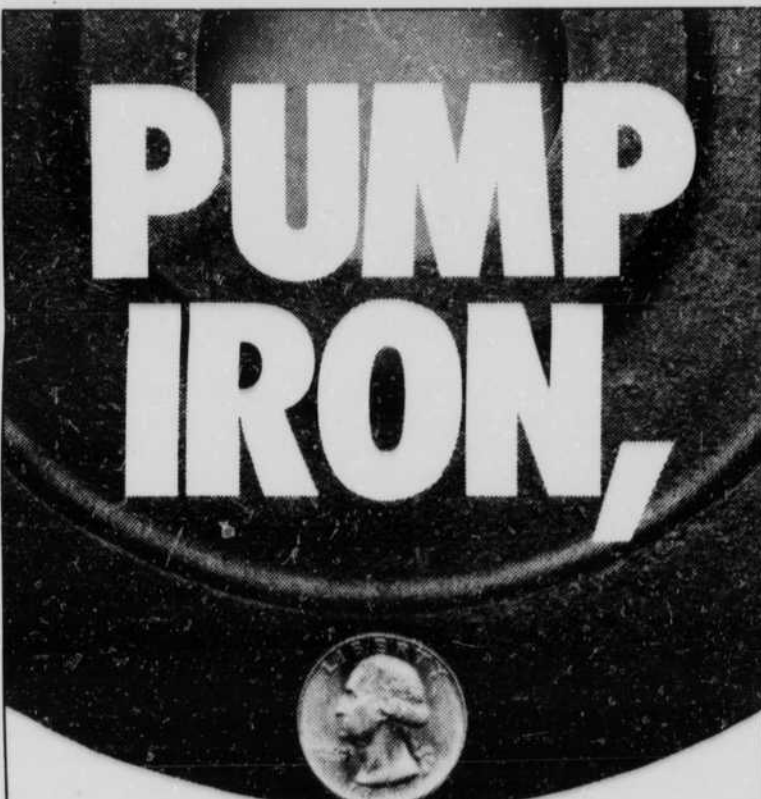
Van Housen said he has not thought much about what his future in Nebraska football is. He said he wants to continue playing well this season and make a strong showing in spring practice. He said any success the team has far outweighs any success he may have as an individual.

"It's important to have a good season as a team," Van Housen said. "Your teammates are people you depend on to be there on every play. Football isn't an individual sport, it's a team sport."



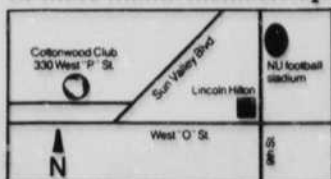
Ward Williams/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska middle guard Lawrence Pete cools off after practice Monday outside Cook Pavilion.



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