

Injuries offer opportunities

Nebraska's troubles in the offensive backfield seem to have no end.

A freshman or graduate transfer to Terry Rodgers left head coach Tom Osborne's practice squad in the last few seasons for those acquainted with the Cornhusker backfield.

Each fall, before the 1988 season, Osborne — who never commented the most on the loss of Rodgers — told his coaching staff, "I'm going to have a hard time finding a back who can run like Rodgers. Over the course of the season, I'm going to have to look for a back who can run like Rodgers. I'm going to have to look for a back who can run like Rodgers. I'm going to have to look for a back who can run like Rodgers."



This season, Nebraska had no 100-yard performance from any running back until the Arizona State game four weeks into the season. Rodgers showed the most improvement this season with slashing cuts through holes and tough inside running — the kind of which the Huskers desperately need if they are ever going to seriously contend for the national title.

During Monday's practice came one of Rodgers' best cuts of the year. It was a cut during non-contact signal drills, a cut so good his body couldn't physically withstand it.

He planted his foot, executed the cut and fell to the ground in agony. His anterior cruciate, a ligament which regulates lateral movement, was ruined. So were his dreams of a possible 1,000-yard season and a good shot at a 1st-team placement at the start of the spring drills next March.

Team trainers estimate Rodgers' absence to last for at least six months, possibly nine.

Along with Rodgers, full-back Sam Schmidt is presumably sidelined for the year with a broken ankle he suffered in the Sept. 10 UCLA game. Freshman Lodea Flowers, considered by many the future of the Nebraska I-formation, is slowed by a sprained ankle.

The Husker backfield has banged itself up more than opponents have this season.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne could turn this into a golden opportunity as the heart of the Big Eight season approaches. This week against Kansas, the Huskers are allowed only 10 players on their travel roster in compliance with Big Eight rules. Only six running backs will make the trip to Lawrence: Ken Clark, Tyrone Knox and Lodea Flowers will make up the backfield, while Bryan Campbell and freshman Lodea Lewis will handle the fullback duties. Brian Flowers will handle the fullback duties. Brian Flowers will handle the fullback duties.

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Volleyball team rebounds against KSU

By Jeff Apel
Senior Reporter

A tempo change paid huge dividends for the Nebraska volleyball team during a 15-9, 15-11, 15-8 win against Kansas State Wednesday night at the NU Coliseum.

Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said the key to the Cornhuskers' straight-set victory was their ability to maintain a fast tempo. He said that tempo was a drastic change from a slow-paced one which hurt Nebraska during its loss to Oklahoma on Saturday.

Pettit said Nebraska "dictated" the match against Kansas State with the tempo and strong play by sophomore specialist Jarilyn Obermiller and All-America setter Lori Endicott. He said

the tempo allowed the Huskers to play

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their style of match.

Obermiller, who started in place of senior outside hitter Angie Millikin, finished with four digs and one set assist, while Endicott tallied 13 digs and 35 of Nebraska's 41 assists.

"Jarilyn played with a lot of confidence. I thought she passed well," Pettit said. "Lori tends to play on the level of her defense, so that's something we have to emphasize."

Pettit said Nebraska used improvements in ball handling and defense to jump out to early leads in the first two games. He said the only dark spots for the Huskers were 14 service and 23 attack errors.

But Pettit said the errors didn't take anything away from Nebraska's performance.

"I thought our effort was good," he said. "It's a step in the right direc-

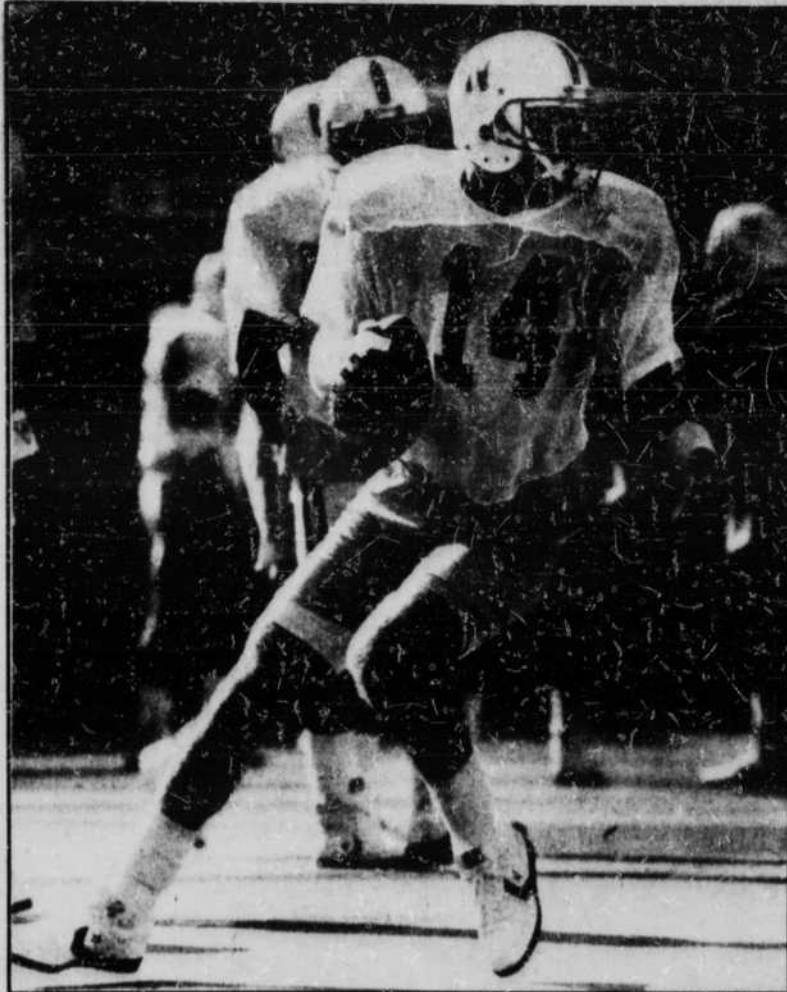
tion." Kansas State coach Scott Nelson said his squad was doomed by inconsistent play. He said the Wildcats, who dropped to 8-7 overall and 0-2 in the Big Eight play, didn't play well at critical times.

"I don't think we had a rhythm," Nelson said. "We couldn't pass or score. When you play in the Big Eight you have to play at a consistent level, which we didn't do."

Nebraska jumped out to a 10-2 lead in the first game. Middle blocker Linda Barsness had two kills and Endicott and outside hitter Val Novak each added tips to spark the quick start.

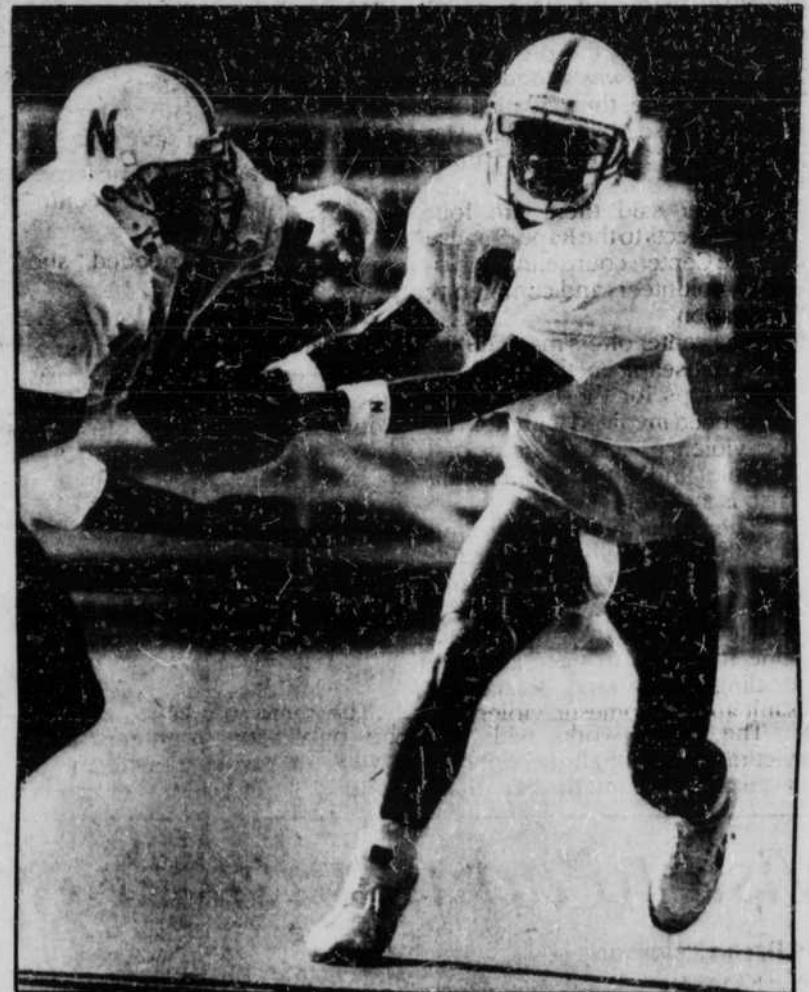
Kansas State cut the Huskers' lead

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Ward Williams/Daily Nebraskan

Gdowski



Ward Williams/Daily Nebraskan

Joseph

Joseph, Gdowski anxious to duel

By Mark Derowitsch
Senior Reporter

Mickey Joseph doesn't want to forget about the rest of this season, but he's already looking forward to Nebraska's spring football practice and the results it will produce for next year.

Joseph said the Cornhuskers' top priority will be replacing quarterback Steve Taylor during spring drills. And he thinks it will be a hard struggle between junior Gerry Gdowski and himself to see who emerges as the Huskers' top quarterback.

"It's going to be a real battle," said Joseph, a redshirt freshman. "It's going to be fun to go to practice because I don't want to miss any of the battles. It might be a problem, but it will be better for the team. It will be a problem that makes the team better."

Gdowski said he's also looking forward to the duel with Joseph. The two quarterbacks are currently sharing 2nd-team duties.

"I think any athlete enjoys a challenge," Gdowski said. "It will be nice to compete with him."

But, Gdowski said, he should have the advantage going into spring practice. Both quarterbacks are listed at No. 2 behind Taylor on the depth chart.

Gdowski entered fall camp as the back-up to Taylor, but Joseph began sharing that role during the last month.

"I still think I'm the solid No. 2,"

Gdowski said. "I don't think Mickey is No. 2. I haven't slipped."

Gdowski, a junior from Fremont, has rushed eight times for 57 yards this season. He's also completed 2 of 3 passes for 19 yards and one touchdown.

Last year, Gdowski played in six games. He rushed 18 times for 131 yards and two touchdowns. He also completed one pass for eight yards.

Gdowski		Joseph	
2-3, 19 yds	Passing	1-1, 7 yds	
8-57	Rushing	6-71	
7.1	Rushing	11.8 yds	

Last season, Joseph sat out as a redshirt. Gdowski played in six games behind Steve Taylor and Cleo Blakeman, and rushed for 131 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries. He hit one of two passes for 18 yards.

Gdowski said he's pleased with his progress this year.

"There's always room for improvement," Gdowski said. "I think I've played steady, but I feel good about my progress."

Gdowski said he has to improve even more to earn the starting job next season.

"I think I'll win it and Mickey thinks he'll win it," he said. "That's the best attitude to have when you're competing for something. But whoever comes out on top will be fine with

either of us."

Joseph, a 5-foot-10, 170-pound player from Marrero, La., said he'll have to avoid making little mistakes in order to take over when Taylor leaves.

"Gerry doesn't make mistakes," he said. "He doesn't go in there and mess up. Even in practice, Gerry makes less mistakes than I do. But I'm getting better."

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John Bruce and Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

Joseph said sometimes he tries to make too much happen when he's in a game.

"The offense is harder than the one I ran in high school," he said. "I never pitched the ball in my life until I came here. But we have a power game and that intimidates a lot of people. I usually get to take two steps and then I have to pitch the ball."

Joseph said he would rather run out of the wishbone instead of the "I" formation because he ran the wishbone at New Orleans Shaw High

School.

"We (Nebraska) can beat you slowly with kind of offense we use," Joseph said. "But the wishbone is such a big-play offense."

During his senior year at Shaw, he rushed 153 times for 947 yards. He also passed for 1,135 yards and 12 touchdowns. For his efforts, he was named the Louisiana's offensive player of the year.

This season, Joseph has rushed for 71 yards on six attempts. He completed the only pass he's thrown for 7 yards.

Joseph was rated the best high school option quarterback in 1986. This accomplishment, and the fact that he was highly recruited has caused Nebraska fans to overreact when he enters a game, he said.

"All the other players tell me that I'm the crowd favorite," he said. "When I go in, I hear them. But after that, I don't hear them anymore."

Joseph said he's glad Nebraska coach Tom Osborne is bringing him along slowly. He said he wouldn't enjoy playing in a pressure situation this year, but he is looking forward to those situations next season.

"I wouldn't like going in if Steve got hurt," he said. "I like going in there with the game in control, because I can learn to relax."

On the other hand, Gdowski said he would enjoy trying to play under pressure this season.

But he doesn't want to play as a result of an injury to Taylor.