

Osborne: Nebraska playing good defense

By Mark Derowitsch
Senior Reporter

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Tuesday the Cornhuskers' defense is not getting the recognition it deserves.

Osborne, speaking at his weekly press luncheon at South Stadium, said Nebraska has been playing good defense.

"There's been quite a concern about our defense," Osborne said. "I know statistics are for losers, but we're currently first in the Big Eight in total defense and pass defense. We're not too far down in scoring so hopefully that might alleviate some of the anxieties of our faithful fans

don't think we can play a lick of defense."

Osborne said that besides the first quarter of the Huskers' 41-28 loss to UCLA on Oct. 10, the defense has played well.

"Admittedly, we've had some games where we've had some points scored (against Nebraska)," he said. "I can understand the points to some degree we gave up to Oklahoma State. It's a little hard to keep playing the type of defense you need to play."

The Cornhuskers, 7-1 overall and 3-0 in the Big Eight, defeated Oklahoma State 63-42 in Lincoln. The Huskers led 35-0 after the first quarter.

Osborne said the defense, which

held Kansas State to 44 yards rushing last Saturday, is improving behind the play of the offensive line.

He said the improved play of linemen Kent Wells, Willie Griffin, Paul Brungardt and Joe Sims give the Huskers' an added luxury on defense.

Rather than being concerned about the defense, Osborne said he is more worried about the offense, particularly the health of some key players.

I-back Ken Clark missed practice Monday and Tuesday because of a foot injury. He should be able to play against Missouri Saturday, Osborne said. Nebraska will play the Tigers in a 1:30 p.m. game at Lincoln's Memorial Stadium.

Tyrese Knox, Clark's back-up,

also missed the first two days of practice this week because of the flu.

Fullback Bryan Carpenter's bruised leg has kept him out of practices so far this week.

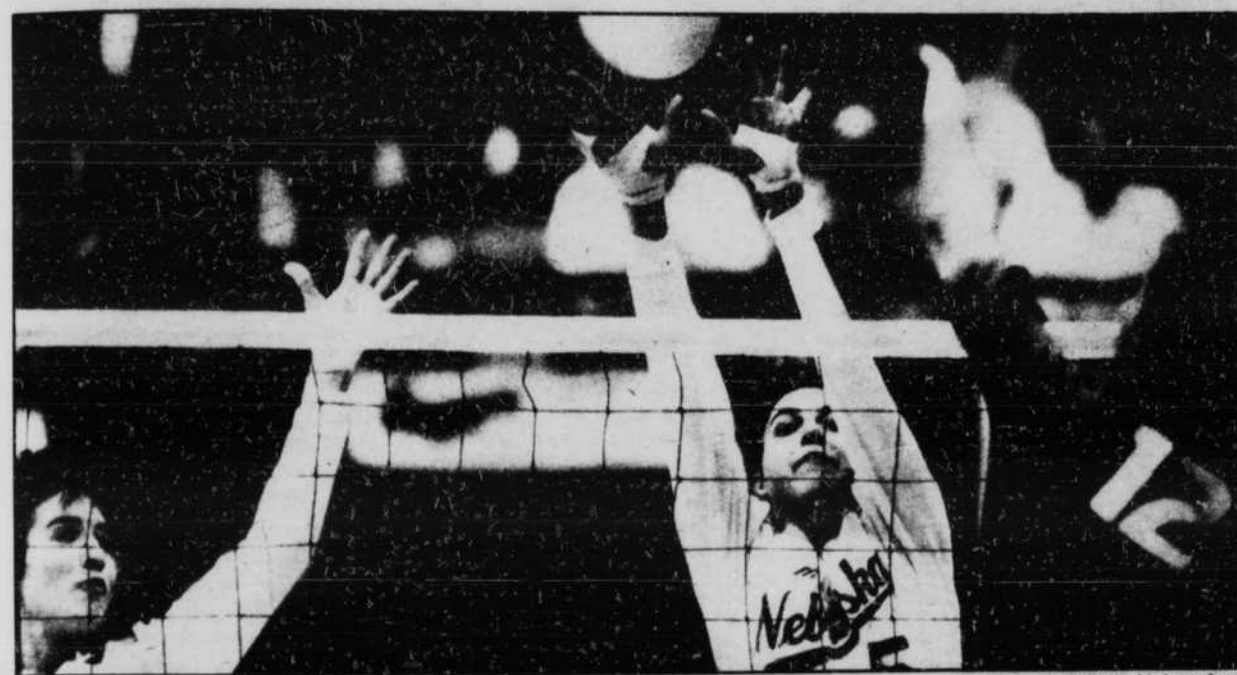
NOTES:
• Osborne said a recent article in

Sports Illustrated about a South Carolina football player on steroids was probably blown out of proportion.

But, he said, "I'm gonna be the last guy in the world to say that we're not a normal football team."

		W	L	T			W	L	T	Football
CONFERENCE	3	0	0	Nebraska	7	1	0	SEASON	Standings	
	3	0	0	Oklahoma	6	1	0			
	2	1	0	Oklahoma St	5	1	0			
	2	1	0	Iowa St	4	3	0			
	1	2	0	Colorado	5	2	0			
	1	2	0	Missouri	2	4	1			
	0	3	0	Kansas	0	7	0			
	0	3	0	Kansas St	0	7	0			

John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's Linda Barsness (right) and Carla Baker go up for a block during Nebraska's victory over Iowa State Tuesday night.

Mealer says Nebraska's the best after Huskers whip Iowa State

By Jeff Apel
Senior Reporter

It didn't take Iowa State volleyball coach Vicki Mealer long to determine who the best team in the Big Eight was after the Cyclones dropped a 15-2, 15-12, 15-6 decision to Nebraska Tuesday night at the NU Coliseum.

Mealer said Nebraska, which leads the Big Eight with an 18-3 record overall and 7-1 mark in the Big Eight, is the conference's best team. The Cornhuskers own a one and one-half game lead over second-place Oklahoma, which possesses a 16-7 record overall and a 5-2 conference mark.

Nebraska split its two matches against the Sooners this season. The Huskers dropped an 8-15, 15-7, 15-4, 10-15, 15-5 decision to Oklahoma earlier this season in Norman, Okla., but beat the Sooners 15-9, 14-16, 15-4, 11-15, 15-13 in Lincoln.

"It surprises me that Oklahoma plays (Nebraska) that tough," Mealer said. "I think Nebraska is definitely better. They've got a much faster

team. I give every single advantage to Nebraska."

Mealer said Iowa State was intimidated by Nebraska, which is ranked sixth in the latest NCAA and American Volleyball Coaches Association polls. She said she had to take the loss in stride even though the Cyclones helped Nebraska's bid to capture its 12th-straight Big Eight title by defeating Oklahoma 10-15, 15-12, 15-13, 15-11 Saturday night in Norman.

"I think we just had too many unforced errors," Mealer said. "It's not frustrating. You have to take it in stride."

Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said he was pleased with victory because the Huskers played as good as they have all year during the first game. Nebraska jumped out to a 9-0 lead in the first game, then outscored the Cyclones 6-2 to post the 15-2 victory.

Pettit said he would like to see Nebraska play like it did in the first game all season long.

"Our goal would be to sustain it,"

he said, "but you can't always do what you want."

After crushing Iowa State in the first game, Nebraska rallied from a 7-5 deficit in the second by using a kill by middle blocker Virginia Stahr to tie the score 7-7. The Huskers then used two kills by Stahr and a kill by middle blocker Linda Barsness to post the 15-12 victory.

Nebraska took a 9-0 lead in the third game, then used two Iowa State errors and a kill by Barsness to take a 12-6 lead. The Huskers sealed the victory with a block by freshman Janet Kruse, an Iowa State error and a stuff by All-America setter Lori Endicott.

Pettit couldn't complain about the victory.

"I just think we played real well," he said. "We're getting better at the right time."

Nebraska's next match is on Friday, when the Huskers travel to South Bend, Ind., to face Notre Dame. Nebraska will face Western Michigan Saturday night in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Benjamin makes U.S. team

By Steve Sipple
Senior Editor

Besides a trip to Hawaii, Nebraska sophomore outfielder Bobby Benjamin has never taken a trip overseas.

But Benjamin will be headed to Taiwan in about a month to play in the 1988 International Harbor Baseball Tournament, thanks to an outstanding freshman year that led to Benjamin being named to Baseball America magazine's freshman All-America team.

Benjamin, a 6-foot 205-pound player, was selected earlier this month to be a member of a team of 20 U.S. collegiate players who will play in the tournament from Nov. 24 to Dec. 3.

Benjamin said Tuesday that he was surprised when Cornhusker pitching coach Tom Pratt told him he made the team two weeks ago.

"I really didn't know anything about the team," Benjamin said. "Making this team and being named freshman All-America are the two best honors I've ever had."

The U.S. team, which will be coached by Charlie Green of Miami-Dade (Fla.) junior college, will play

seven games during the tournament against teams from Japan, Mexico, Holland, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Taiwan and the Dominican Republic.

Last season, Benjamin started every game for Nebraska in left field and compiled a .288 batting average and a .656 slugging percentage. He led the nation with 91 walks and broke the Huskers' season record with 21 home runs.

In addition, Benjamin batted in 78 runs, which led the team, stole 18 bases and hit 12 doubles and two triples. He was named 2nd-team All-Big Eight.

Benjamin said he will leave Nov. 18 for California, where the team will practice for a couple days before going to Taiwan.

Nebraska coach John Sanders said the fact that Benjamin is just a sophomore made the honor special.

"It is an outstanding honor and one that Bobby deserves," Sanders said. "It's especially significant because we are talking about someone who is a sophomore in college."

All members of the team who will play in Taiwan will be invited in June to play on a U.S. team that will tour Korea.

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