

Running back stays modest despite success

By Jeff Apel
Senior Editor

Minnesota running back Darrell Thompson will bring some big credentials into Saturday's game against Nebraska, but his ego does not match them.

Thompson said he does not feel special even though he was tabbed as a pre-season All-America selection by Play-boy magazine. The senior from Rochester, Minn., earned that honor after entering this season with the top two single-season rushing performances in Golden Gopher his-



Thompson

tory -- 1,240 yards as a freshman and 1,229 yards as a sophomore.

Thompson also entered this season as Minnesota's all-time leading rusher with 3,379 yards. He began his senior year by rushing for 106 yards on 27 carries during the Golden Gopher's 30-20 win against Iowa State Saturday in Ames, Iowa.

Thompson said he keeps his accomplishments in perspective.

"I don't see it as that big a deal," he said. "I can run a football, but some other guy can hook up a stereo. God gave everybody their own thing."

Minnesota offensive-line coach Jim Hueber said Thompson's modesty has earned him the respect of his teammates and of the Minnesota coaching staff. He said although Thompson will not admit it, the 6-foot-1, 220-pounder is special.

"Darrell doesn't think the world evolves around him," Hueber said. "Throw everything else out, and he's a great person and will be a success at whatever he decides to do."

Thompson's accomplishments have not gone unnoticed. Mel Kiper, a National Football League draft expert who works for the ESPN cable network, said earlier this year that Thompson will be the first player taken in this year's draft. And John Pont, a former football coach at Indiana, Northwestern, Yale and Miami of Ohio, describes Thompson as one of the 10 best running backs he has ever seen.

Minnesota coach John Gutekunst said Thompson deserves the praise. He described Thompson's ability to accelerate as "phenomenal."

Thompson has displayed that abil-

ity throughout his career, as he was named the freshman running back of the year by The Sporting News in 1986. He was a sophomore All-America selection the following season, and is the only player in Big Ten history to rush for more than 1,000 yards as a freshman and sophomore.

"Darrell can get into another gear at any time," Gutekunst said. "He has quickness and shifts laterally. He can step out of things, change direction and get back to full speed in a hurry."

Thompson said the Nebraska game will be special because he was recruited by the Cornhuskers following his senior season at John Marshall High School in Rochester. The prep All-America selection said he turned down scholarship offers from Nebraska and Iowa so he could concen-

trate on his future.

"The deciding factor was what I could do when I was done with football," Thompson said. "The Twin Cities offered me a business community which I could work into. In football, you can always get hurt -- you're one play away from a knee injury. I made my choice knowing that I could get hurt at any time in my career."

Thompson did get hurt last season, when a knee injury forced him to miss the final game of the season. He still finished with 910 yards, the sixth highest single-season total in school history.

Thompson said he has not set any individual goals for this season. He said his goals are centered on the team.

"We want to be the best we can be," Thompson said.

in brief

SPORTS

Alpha Tau Omega wins intramural cross country team title

Mark Meuret finished fourth and Eric White seventh to lead Alpha Tau Omega to the team title in the men's intramural cross country meet.

Alpha Tau Omega tallied 38 points to edge Harper 10, which had 39. Sigma Nu finished third in

the 14-team competition with 91 points, followed by Triangle with 111, Chi Phi with 167 and Phi Gamma Delta with 205.

Douglas Lee of Team Doug claimed the individual title by finishing in 10:54. Andy Bruckner of Harper 10 was second with

an 11:11 clocking, followed by Pat Bloomingdale of Phi Kappa Psi, Meuret, Morgan Tyntr of Team Doug, Joseph Cowan of Sigma Nu, White, independents Steve Holliday and Pat Hovey and Adam Hodges of Harper 10.

Beta Theta Pi captures punt, pass and kick competition title

Beta Theta Pi used strong performances from Brad Weishaar, Pat McMahon and Jeff Lohmeier to capture the team title in the men's punt, pass and kick competition.

Weishaar punted 136 feet, 11 inches, passed 162-6 and kicked

143-5 to finish second to Sigma Phi Epsilon's Dave Federspiel. Federspiel punted 146-8, passed 161-11 and kicked 147-1 to win the competition.

McMahon finished third, while Sigma Phi Epsilon's Dave Potumann was fourth, Alpha Tau

Omega's Bryan Schmidt fifth, Lohmeier sixth and Delta Upsilon's Rick Tetzloff sixth.

Beta Theta Pi won the team title by tallying a score of 1667-4. Sigma Phi Epsilon was second, followed by Alpha Tau Omega, Delta Upsilon and Sigma Nu.

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Nebraska collected six hits off Kearney State sophomore pitcher Dana Skrobecki, but left eight runners stranded.

Kearney State softball coach Dan Simmons said he was pleased with his team's victory. The Lopers won despite operating without pitcher Sue Johnson, who still is recovering from arthroscopic surgery.

"We put the ball in play really well," he said. "I was real pleased with our effort in the first game. In the same sense, I was a little disappointed in that I felt we weren't as intense as we should be in the second game."

"All in all, I'm pleased. Nebraska has a lot of speed and they're going to cause you to make mistakes."

Simmons said that without Johnson, Skrobecki will do most of the pitching this fall.

'All in all, I'm pleased. Nebraska has a lot of speed and they're going to cause you to make mistakes.'

—Simmons

"We knew Dana's throwing real well and we anticipate her throwing a lot for us this fall," he said.

In the second game, Nebraska took advantage of Kearney State pitcher Amy Delahunty, who surrendered 10 hits, three walks and had four wild pitches.

"Amy is a freshman off knee surgery," Simmons said. "She got tossed into the thick of things in a hurry."

Nebraska second baseman Michelle Cuddeford, a Kearney State transfer, was Delahunty's top nemesis as she scored three times en route to hitting 3 for 4 and driving in four runs. Cuddeford singled in the third inning and hit a two-run single in the fourth, followed by a two-run double in the fifth.

Junior Stephanie Skegas got the win for Nebraska. She allowed five hits while giving up a walk, striking out two and throwing a wild pitch.

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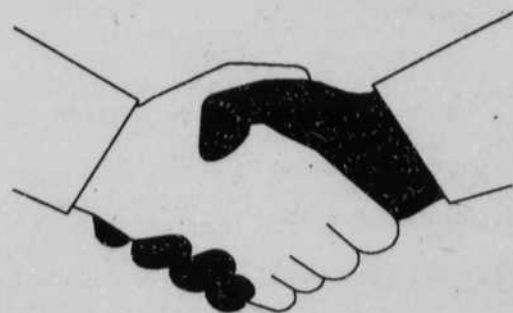


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