

# NCAA, Gathers, Rosenblatt provide news worth noting

In recent weeks there have been many newsworthy items that need to be noted.

So here are some of my thoughts on what is going on in the world of sports:

● If the NCAA were smart, which it is not, it would never move the



**McGraw Milhaven**

College World Series from Omaha. Rosenblatt Stadium has all that baseball needs, including an old-fashioned stadium, a history and fan support.

P.J. Morgan, don't listen to CBS, and don't even think about putting a roof on the stadium.

● How many people do you think have filled out an NCAA basketball tournament bracket?

How many of you who did think the one you filled out is right? Well, good luck because the possible variations are, 1.2689 X 10 to the 87th power.

● When asked to pick the winner of the tournament, Nebraska baseball coach John Sanders shied away from Big Eight teams Kansas and Oklahoma and chose UNLV.

Sanders said although he liked the Jayhawks and the Sooners, a rumor and a little luck would lead UNLV to the title. The rumor which Sanders is referring to was the one started by ESPN commentator Dick Vitale, who predicted that Running Rebel coach Jerry Tarkanian would resign at the end of the season.

"I think this is the year of the leprechaun," Sanders said. "Las Vegas has shamrocks in its pockets."

● It was reported that Hank Gathers, the former Loyola Marymount basketball star who died last week, took out a \$1 million dollar insurance policy with Lloyd's of London.

Doctors told Gathers about his weak heart and told him he should not

play. Lloyd's of London would have paid Gathers in case of heart trouble, but death was not covered by the policy.

It is a shame that a great person and star had to die to show the sports world that college players really do play for the love of the game.

● Things are getting so bad in New York that children in Brooklyn were found playing soccer with a human head in a bag.

The children thought they were playing with a real soccer ball. The rest of the body was found in a garbage can, and still is unidentified.

● With all the postseason awards being given, why didn't Creighton coach Tony Barone get an award for the coach who looks most like a bowling ball?

● Will someone please explain why Bob Costas, a sports anchorman for NBC, has his own talk show with guests like Mario Cuomo.

Costas, there is only one Roy Firestone.

● The NFL owners did Paul Tagliabue a favor by making him commissioner, so Tagliabue did the owners a favor by adding one more playoff game for the owners.

That way the owners make even more money.

● For all non-basketball fans I have bad news.

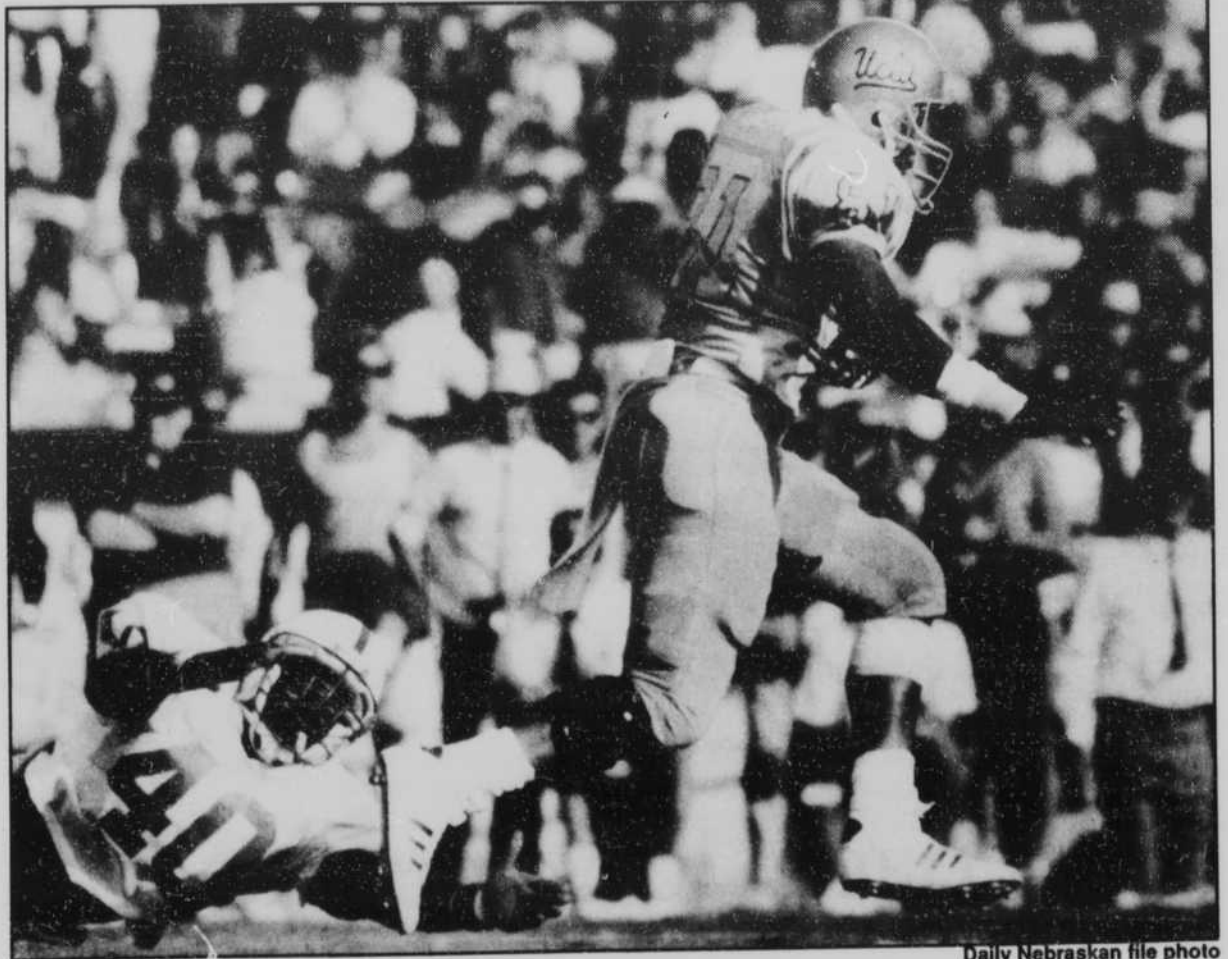
There will be 63 college basketball games in the next three weeks, and they all will be televised. The good news is no soap operas will be pre-empted.

● Monday's anti-racist rally should put to sleep any rumors that football players are dumb jocks.

The football team was out in force along with the rest of the students to demonstrate against the racist rally that never happened. Robert Hicks, a student-athlete, spoke in order for the other student-athletes to be heard.

● One last note to baseball fans: If you can't handle the strike, WGN (cable channel 2) is re-airing Cubs games from last year. You know the strike is getting bad when you find yourself rooting against the Cubs.

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Nebraska linebacker Pat Tyrance makes a diving grasp at UCLA's Thomas Boyers.

# Osborne says offense faces vacancies, returners provide strength for defense

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Editor

An area that came under intense scrutiny last season is being touted as a strength for the Nebraska football team entering spring practice.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said the secondary promises to be one of the Cornhuskers' top strengths this year. He said his optimism is based on the return of starting cornerbacks Bruce Pickens and Tahaun Lewis and safeties Reggie Cooper and Tyrone Byrd. That contingent of defenders was blasted after it surrendered a Fiesta Bowl record 422 passing yards to Florida State quarterback Peter Tom Willis. Willis' performance led the Seminoles to a 41-17 victory that ended Nebraska's 1989 campaign at 10-2.

Osborne said the secondary will team with the outside linebacking corps of Mike Croel, Travis Hill and David White and inside linebackers Pat Tyrance and Mike Petko to form the core of Nebraska's returning experience on defense.

He said the Huskers defensive line is a question mark entering spring practice because three starters used up their eligibility last year.

Nebraska will open spring practice April 2 and will conclude April 28.

"We have some major replacements to make in the defensive line," Osborne said. "The major task in the spring on defense will be to see how we shape up there."

"The rest of the defense has a lot of experience."

Osborne said that experience is not carried over to the Nebraska of-

fense, which must replace eight full-time starters. He said the large number of vacancies means the Huskers will have a major rebuilding job to do on offense.

Osborne said one of Nebraska's biggest areas of concern is at quarterback, where Gerry Gdowski has used up his eligibility. He said Gdowski's absence means Mike Grant will battle Mickey Joseph for the starting quarterback job.

"Replacing Gerry Gdowski at quarterback will be a major point of interest," Osborne said.

The Huskers also must replace three starters on the offensive line, and must find someone to fill the void left by the departure of I-back Ken Clark and fullbacks Bryan Carpenter and Sam Schmidt. Osborne said the running back position is a concern even though Nebraska possesses several capable replacements in Leodis Flowers, Terry Rodgers, Scott Baldwin and incoming freshman Calvin Jones.

Osborne said Nebraska's inexperience will make spring practice important. He said the Huskers will try to give their players some valuable experience throughout the spring.

"As always, we'll try to get a good look at all of our players, evaluate them and try to get our best people ready for the fall," Osborne said. "And, as usual, we'll look at making some adjustments in our offensive and defensive schemes."

Colorado coach Bill McCartney said the Buffaloes also plan on instituting some changes this spring. He said the biggest change Colorado wants to make is in its passing game.

McCartney said Colorado made great strides in its passing game last season en route to capturing the Big Eight championship, but still needs to improve. Colorado threw for an average of 101 yards per game last season while compiling an 11-1 mark and dropping a 21-6 decision to Notre Dame in the Orange Bowl.

"We've made great strides (in our passing), but we need to be better, especially if we want to win in postseason," McCartney said. "I'm convinced you have to pass not only when you want to, but when you have

to." McCartney said the strength of his team lies in 13 returning starters who will provide a solid core to build around on offense and defense. He said Colorado's biggest task this spring is to replace departed defensive lineman Arthur Walker and Oklund Salavea.

"We have a great nucleus of kids returning, but we have to replace two seniors up front," McCartney said. "That's a big key to our defense."

McCartney said Colorado's main experiments this spring will involve moving Greg Blekert from outside to inside linebacker, David Brown from outside linebacker to tight end and Julian Howard from defensive back to wide receiver.

Oklahoma coach Gary Gibbs said his team won't conduct any big experiments during the spring. Instead, he said the Sooners will work hard in all areas in hope of improving the 7-4 mark they finished with last year.

"We've got to get better in every area," Gibbs said. "It's critical that our junior college recruits show improvement and progress in the spring. That progress will determine how good we are in the fall."

Gibbs said his team's strengths lie in the offensive line and at the running back position. Oklahoma returns three starters in the offensive line, while the Sooners' already-potent ground attack will receive a huge bonus if Mike Gaddis returns.

Gaddis suffered a season-ending knee injury midway through last year, and will not participate in spring practice. If Gaddis isn't able to play, he will be replaced by either Rod Fisher, Dewell Brewer or Ike Lewis.

Gibbs said Oklahoma's backs will have to split time with the Sooners' passing attack.

"We will spend much more time throwing the football," he said. "This means all phases of the game -- play action, three-step drop and a better screen package."

"Our quarterbacks will throw more. The receivers will work on routes. And the lineman will work on pass protections."

## Stung

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a strong challenge.

"They'll compete very hard," Sanders said. "I expect them both to play very hard."

Notes:

● Nebraska is being led offensively this season by four players who all are topping the .340 mark.

Shortstop Bill Vosik leads the Huskers with a .409 average, while

senior outfielder Kevin French has posted a .380 mark.

Junior outfielder Brian McArm is third among Nebraska regulars with a .371 average, while junior outfielder Kevin Jordan has a .343 average.

● In the pitching department, left-hander Dave Matranga is the leader with a 3-0 record and a 1.74 earned run average.

Zajeski also has a 3-0 mark, while Doug Tegmeier is tied with Armondo Garza for the team lead in saves with one each.

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