

# Coach: Passes, hits will tell NU tale

By John Adkisson  
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team's old rival has all but laid down and died.

Saturday, the second-ranked Cornhuskers will try to deliver a fatal blow to long-time Big Eight foe Oklahoma by beating the Sooners in their final game of the year.

Oklahoma is 11-20 overall and is sixth in the conference with a 3-8 record. The Sooners will miss next weekend's four-team Big Eight Tournament at Omaha for the first time in school history.

The Sooners, however, own more wins against Nebraska than any other conference team. Nebraska assistant coach John Cook said regardless of Oklahoma's record, he expects the Sooners to be ready for the season finale.

"Beating us would be a great way

to end a terrible season for them," Cook said. "They're either going to come out wanting to get the season over or come out all fired up."

Nebraska, on the other hand, will be looking to complete an undefeated Big Eight season. The Huskers have not lost a regular-season game in the conference since falling to Oklahoma in Norman in 1988.

Cook said he still thinks about that loss.

"I still have nightmares about losing to them down there," Cook said. "Whenever we go down there, it's on my mind."

Even though the Sooners are struggling this year, Cook said the Nebraska players still get up for Oklahoma.

"A couple of the players on this team have been beaten by Oklahoma," he said. "We take them a little more personally than we would other Big Eight teams."

Nebraska blew by Oklahoma in Lincoln earlier this year, winning 15-0, 15-9, 15-7. Cook said Nebraska controlled the match early, and got the Sooners flustered.

"We passed the ball well and since they were playing in the (NU) Coliseum, we got the momentum early," Cook said.

He said passing will be a key Saturday.

"If we're passing the ball well and hitting like we can, they won't be able to stay with us," Cook said. "The only way they can get in the match is if we make unforced errors."

Nebraska clinched the Big Eight regular season title Tuesday with a comeback five-game win against Colorado, 5-15, 11-15, 15-3, 15-7, 15-5.

Cook said fatigue, coupled with great play by Colorado, caused the Huskers to fall behind early.

"We arrived there late in the day,

and we were tired," he said. "Plus, in the first two games, Colorado played error-free volleyball."

Even when the Huskers got down two games to none, Cook said there was confidence among the players.

"I never felt a sense of panic when we were down," he said. "We're an experienced team, and I think we have that inner confidence."

Cook credited seniors Val Novak and Becki Bolli for providing the spark needed to come back and win.

"When Val gets that fire in her eyes, that's when we turn up our play a notch," Cook said. "Both of our seniors decided that we were going to win, and that's the way it turned out."

He also credited the play of sophomore Stephanie Thater, who had 18 kills and .654 hitting percentage.

"Val started to get the ball to Stephanie," he said. "And she just crushed it."

# NU gets Kansas recruit

By Paul Domeier  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska women's basketball coach Angela Beck has snatched a recruit, Sauna Witherspoon, out of the heart of enemy territory, Kansas City, Kan.

"We've never been able, since I've been here, to land a Kansas City kid," Beck said.

Until this year, Witherspoon, who attends Washington High School, has signed a letter-of-intent to attend Nebraska on a basketball scholarship next year, leaving behind the closer Big Eight schools, Kansas, Missouri and Kansas State.

Witherspoon is a 5-foot-9 swing guard. She also is a two-time AAU All-American on the Missouri Valley All-Star team, which has been national AAU runner-up two straight years. This follows a trend Beck started with present Huskers Karen Jennings and Meggan Yedsena to recruit players with extensive basketball backgrounds.

"I think what you'll find is the new kids have a lot more experience than the kids we have now," Beck said.

Beck said she expects to sign at least two more players in the November early signing period,

See HUSKERS on 8

# Basketball team to sweat it out down south

By Paul Domeier  
Senior Reporter

Successive games will keep the Nebraska men's basketball team at about the same level during the San Juan Sunshine Shootout, according to Coach Danny Nee.

"We don't have the chance to get much better in Puerto Rico," Nee said.

The Cornhuskers will have to play three games in three days, Nov. 23-25, in the 2,000 seat, un-air conditioned Eugenio Guerra Sports Complex in Bayamon, Puerto Rico.

But after the team returns, relaxes

and recuperates, Nee said, the games should pay off in improvement.

He said he's seen improvement already, between exhibition wins over High Five America and a Czechoslovakian national team.

"If I could see that all the way through for five or six games, we'll be in great shape," Nee said.

The fourth game of the regular season will be Nov. 28, two days after the team returns, against fourth-ranked Michigan State in the Bob Devaney Sports Center area, which seats 14,302 and can be heated or air conditioned as necessary.

The eight-team San Juan Shootout

includes four teams that participated in last year's National Invitation Tournament or NCAA tournament. Nebraska will play NIT runner-up St. Louis in the first round.

The Billikens are solid, Nee said, and he's sneaked a peek at the other teams in Nebraska's bracket, American-Puerto Rico and top seed Illinois. He said he hasn't looked beyond that, to Murray State, Northern Iowa, Old Dominion and Bucknell.

Nee said he will play a lot of people to combat the heat and humidity. The Huskers' top nine are Bruce Chubick, Tony Farmer, Carl Hayes, Rich King, Keith Moody, Dapreis

Owens, Eric Piatkowski, Beau Reid and Clifford Scales, with Chris Cresswell and Kelly Lively the top reserves.

The Huskers have one more Red-White game to squeeze in before the trip south. The intrasquad scrimmage will be Monday at 7 p.m. at Papillion.

Nee said the team can benefit from that scrimmage.

"One, it just showcases the team in Omaha," he said.

The scrimmage also is played under game conditions, with a crowd and officials.

"It still beats scrimmaging at home," Nee said.

# Jailed Thompson tells nightmare of OU football

By Chuck Green  
Senior Editor

For anyone skimming through "Down and Dirty: The Life and Crimes of Oklahoma Football," the book written by former Oklahoma quarterback Charles Thompson, tragedy is the most noticeable aspect.

Thompson, 22, is serving time in federal prison in Big Springs, Texas, for selling cocaine. But when one turns to the middle of the book to view the photo section, it's all brought closer to home. Anyone's home.

There are photos of Charles and his brother, Harold, playing football in their yard as children. There is a picture of Thompson running wild through the midget leagues, and there are a few snapshots of him and his girlfriend, Kori.

But when the reader turns to page 1 and settles in for a long read, it becomes crystal clear that this is no touching family tale.

The book, written with the help of Allan Sonnenschein, an editor at Penthouse, gives readers a cold, hard look at the Oklahoma Sooner football program, or at least what it was three years ago.

Very little of the picture painted is as pretty as any seen in the mid-section.

Thompson recalls, with uncanny vividness, the day that marked the beginning of the end for him, former Sooner coach Barry Switzer and the nightmare that was the Oklahoma program.

One particularly chilling excerpt is in the first chapter, when Thompson recalls the day Switzer summoned him to his office to give him some bad news.

After Switzer handed a newspaper clipping to Thompson about rapes and shootings by football players on the OU campus, he writes, Switzer got right to the point:

"... finally, he spoke. 'Charles,' he said, pointing to the newspaper, 'what could be worse for the program than this?'"

"Gee, coach," I stammered. "I don't really know."

"Switzer flung the newspaper down and screamed at me: 'You know goddamned well what I mean.'

# DOWN AND DIRTY THE LIFE & CRIMES OF OKLAHOMA FOOTBALL



CHARLES THOMPSON &  
ALLAN SONNENSCHN

"I guess me," I said.  
"Yeah, you, Charles," he continued screaming. "Do you know that this will be all over national television and your family is going to get hurt? Charles, I've heard rumors about you being around drugs again. And you know what else?"

"I looked at him without saying a word."

"Charles, the FBI knows about it."

"I panicked. 'Coach, what are you talking about?'"

"Charles, they've got you."

"I sat there trembling, my arms wrapped around my body. I had never felt so cold in my life with the air conditioner blowing, listening to Switzer's words..."

And so begins for the reader a rollercoaster ride through Thompson's Sooner career. He recounts everything from his excitement about getting recruited by Oklahoma to his empty, cold feeling sitting in a courtroom only two years later, being sentenced to two years for conspiracy to distribute cocaine.

The rest of the book is full of Thompson's memories and opinions, and not many of either are positive.

See THOMPSON on 8

# Switzer's book has its charm, lampoons NU

By Chuck Green  
Senior Editor

Love him or hate him, Barry Switzer is a charmer.

His personality has been to many the epitome of all that is wrong in modern college football. His flamboyance and tolerance is seen by many as a cover for some sort of hidden evil.

Maybe, maybe not. Through it all, he was the winningest active coach in the collegiate ranks until he retired in the summer of 1989.

But in his autobiography "Bootlegger's Boy," Switzer conveys his enchanting personality through detailed accounts — often, excuses — of why the Oklahoma Sooner football program slowly spiraled into the toilet during his 18-year reign as coach.

Several references to the Nebraska program and those surrounding it are in the book, most of which are humorous, although some Nebraska fans may disagree, given their staunchly unamused attitude toward any sort of criticism toward their beloved Cornhuskers.

One example: Switzer colorfully recounts the incidents after the 1986 game against the Huskers in Lincoln, when Oklahoma came from behind to beat Nebraska 20-17 in the game's last seconds.

"... Nebraska was stunned. The crowd was almost silent. Jerry the policeman and I walked off the field toward that same tunnel where I had been grabbed (a story that came a page or two earlier). On the right side of the end zone, the Nebraska fans in red were deflated and frustrated. On the left side of the end zone, the OU fans in red were deliriously happy.

"I nudged Jerry and pointed at the Nebraska fans and said, 'That bunch is awful damn quiet.'"

"Just as if I had been a movie director giving them a cue, the 15,000 Nebraska fans in that section all rose as one person — men, women, grandfolds, little kids, they all stood up and gave me the finger.

"Yeah, 15,000 Nebraskans all shooting me



the bird.

"God, Jerry, I'd love to have a picture of that hanging on my wall," I said..."

Hmmm.

"Bootlegger's Boy," written with the help of journalist and screenwriter Bud Shrake, covers everything the college football fan would ever want to know about the Sooner program and Switzer himself. Recruiting wars, games with Texas and Nebraska and trouble he and his players and assistant coaches got into, fill more than 400 pages.

Switzer devotes an entire chapter to the 16 NCAA violations the Sooner program was charged with during his tenure. He tells what happened, why it happened and whether, in his opinion, he and the program were guilty.

The book probably will be met with skepticism and head-shaking disbelief from Nebraska fans who have been trained from birth to hate the Sooner program and whoever leads it, so reading it with an open mind is vital.

For the objective reader, though, it's a must-read. It gives a gripping overview of an interesting time in college football history.

Even if the time period isn't very charming, the book is — in its own unique way.