

# Tyrance, teammates thirsty for Citrus Bowl

By Todd Cooper  
Staff Reporter

Nebraska inside linebacker Pat Tyrance has a tart taste in his mouth and only the Florida Citrus Bowl can remove it.

Bittersweet memories of November — of missed opportunities and missed awards — have left Tyrance and his teammates thirsty for a victory over 10-0-1 Georgia Tech.

"We'd definitely like to go out of here on a winning note," he said. "That would just kind of take the sour taste out of our mouths from the last two losses."

The first loss came to now top-ranked Colorado, 27-13 Nov. 3. The Cornhuskers never returned to their

former shape, Tyrance said, losing 45-10 to Oklahoma on Nov. 23.

"It really wasn't indicative of the games that we had played early in the year," he said. "We didn't play with a lot of emotion the last few games. It was hard for the players to bounce back from the loss to Colorado."

Now the Huskers must recover from the larger defeat at Oklahoma.

"We're trying to gain a little respect," Tyrance said.

"We're not in a position to win a national championship, and we don't want anyone else to win it at our expense."

Tyrance led Nebraska with 98 tackles, 41 in the final three games. He said he expected the strong finish.

"I think it's just my willingness to

try to get better every week," Tyrance said. "It's really being focused on what it is I want to accomplish and not letting circumstances affect my play."

For his on-field performance and his 3.5 GPA as a pre-medicine major, Tyrance was named a first-team academic All-American this past week.

Two weeks ago, Tyrance was awarded a \$13,000 scholarship by the National Football League Foundation and Hall of Fame. He also has received a \$4,000 NCAA post-graduate scholarship.

But he was left off the first- and second-team AP and UPI All-American lists.

"It kind of disappointed me a little bit," Tyrance said. "I guess you can't

really dwell upon that. I kind of use that as motivation to work a little bit harder."

A win over Georgia Tech would help ease the pain of the losses and lack of awards. A Nebraska victory also could confound the race for the national title.

"What we have to do is make the most of this opportunity: Go out and beat the only undefeated team in the country," Tyrance said. "It's a chance to mix things up more than they already are."

For a while, the No. 19 Huskers had their own shot at being No. 1.

"We did have more than a couple of opportunities to take control," Tyrance said. "It was hard. I think some of the players had the mentality that the season wasn't going to be a success unless we went undefeated."

As a result, hints of dissension surfaced following the Colorado game. "After a loss, people kind of have the tendency to point the finger," said

Tyrance, a Nebraska captain. "Overall, I know the team attitude has been good. We continue to be pretty close and supportive of each other."

A senior from Millard North, Tyrance has 208 career tackles, 12th on Nebraska's all-time list. He said he would like to follow his Husker career with another type of personal recognition as an NFL draft pick.

"It's always been a goal or dream to play in the NFL," he said. "I'm interviewing for med school right now, and hopefully I'll get a couple of acceptances by the time the draft rolls around."

"It depends on the circumstances as far as where I get drafted and when I get drafted."

Ideally, Tyrance wants both. "The last few years I've really had the motivation to be a doctor and enter medical school," he said. "I'd really like to do both but if it doesn't work out, I don't think going to med school's all that bad."

## Uncertainty helps Grant stay inspired in practice

By Sara Bauder Schott  
Staff Reporter

Uncertainty over the Cornhuskers' starting quarterback may distract Mike Grant most of the day, but it helps him focus during practice.

The junior from Tampa, Fla., became involved in a contest for the Cornhuskers' starting quarterback job after the Oklahoma game when coach Tom Osborne declined to name a starter for the Citrus Bowl.

But Grant said the uncertainty has helped him.

"It keeps you up," he said. "You can't lollygag, you can't slow down."

Grant admitted that he normally has a hard time staying motivated for practices.

"It's hard to get yourself up for doing the same thing over and over," he said. "At least in a game you run a lot of different plays."

The Citrus Bowl will be Grant's first opportunity to play in a bowl, and doing so as a starter is very important to him.

"I want to be the No. 1 man," he said. "I don't want to get in and play at the end or anything like that."

The 20 family members Grant will have attending the game will be a little extra motivation. Tampa is about 75 miles from Orlando. His parents last saw him for the Nebraska-Baylor game, he said.

Grant said that when he came to Nebraska, he knew he would have to wait for playing time behind Steve Taylor and Gerry Gdowski. But Grant also knew that he didn't want to become "just another brick in the wall" of players who never get the chance

to contribute.

He started the season opener against Baylor this year. He injured his knee in that game and missed the next two contests.

Grant returned to start games 4 and 5, but Mickey Joseph beat him out for the starting role. The spot opened up again in the final game of the season when Joseph went out with a leg injury.

Anxiety about winning the starting job weighs on Grant now, but he said he has to block that thought out when he takes the practice field if he wants to do a good job. Concentrating on football will be easier once the semester is over and he doesn't have to worry about school, Grant said.

In order to concentrate completely on football, Grant said he has to block many things out, including press coverage of the team and poll rankings. He can successfully block almost anything out, except for running backs coach Frank Solich.

"He just gets on us and stays on us," Grant said. "It's good for us — he doesn't let us slack off at all. He's just on us and on us and on us."

Grant said the Huskers want to use the bowl game as a way to soothe their aching spirits after losses to Colorado and Oklahoma and kick off 1991 in the right way.

If Grant is cast in the leadership role of quarterback for the Citrus Bowl, he said he will try to lead by example.

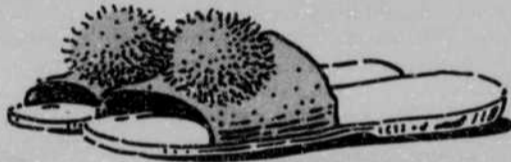
"I'm not a cheerleader on the field, but I don't like to be a sideline assassin, either," he said. "I like to just lead by doing what needs to be done, but if the team needs a pep talk I'm capable of giving that, too."



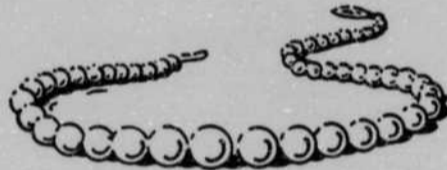
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### ★ GAME NOTES ★

Nebraska (9-2) vs. Georgia Tech (10-0-1)

Jan. 1, 1:30 p.m. Orlando Stadium, Orlando, Fla., on ABC-TV  
First meeting between the teams.

Nebraska	13	Baylor	0
Nebraska	60	Illinois	14
Nebraska	56	Minnesota	0
Nebraska	31	Oregon State	7
Nebraska	45	at Kansas State	8
Nebraska	69	Missouri	21
Nebraska	31	Oklahoma State	8
Nebraska	45	at Iowa State	13
Nebraska	10	Colorado	27
Nebraska	41	Kansas	9
Nebraska	10	Oklahoma	45
Georgia Tech	21	North Carolina State	13
Georgia Tech	44	Tennessee-Chattanooga	9
Georgia Tech	25	South Carolina	6
Georgia Tech	31	at Maryland	3
Georgia Tech	21	Clemson	19
Georgia Tech	13	at North Carolina	13
Georgia Tech	45	Duke	31
Georgia Tech	31	at Virginia	38
Georgia Tech	6	Virginia Tech	3
Georgia Tech	42	at Wake Forest	7
Georgia Tech	40	at Georgia	23

SCORES