

Could this be NU's year?



Chuck Green

This is it. The big one. The football season everyone has been waiting for. Gather 'round, everyone, and get the kids out of bed.

This is important, damn it! Ah-hem . . . drumroll, please . . . the Cornhusker football team is going to win the national championship this season.

No more excuses. No more whining. No more patsies on the schedule. This is it, baby.

The 1991 Huskers are going to be unstoppable. They're going to pass more than usual . . . maybe even on first down. Ooooh . . . ahhh!

It's going to be a hot fall this year in Lincoln. Coach Tom Osborne is hot. He'll be tanned, rested and ready for another major Division I onslaught. Even if some of his players can't remember what time — or days — to show up for football practice, he'll be primed.

No prisoners will be taken this year by the Huskers. This is serious business, and the Blackshirt death squads will be out for blood.

Nebraska's schedule is hot, too. No more Minnesota, Northern Illinois or Montana Cub Scout Troop 451. Next season is chock full of Washingtons and Arizona States and Oklahomas and Colorados. Even Colorado State, a bowl winner last season, will make an appearance at Memorial Stadium.

But it won't be bowl time for the Rams in September. The Huskers will butt heads with them until the paint peels from their helmets.

Speaking of helmets, some of those crazy Huskers had X's on their helmets throughout the spring, and even during the Red-White game. How can you lose with that kind of frolicking, fun-loving spirit?

There will be X's on Nebraska's helmets and O's under the other team's name on the scoreboard in '91. It will be a regular tic-tac-toe on the gridiron.

Football will fly in Memorial Stadium, and an unusual number of them will be thrown by Husker quarterbacks. Most of those passes will be caught by wingbacks and split ends with blistering speed.

But back to the Blackshirts, a.k.a. the defensive starters. Gone are Mike Croel, Kenny Walker, Pat Tyrance and the regular names in the defensive backfield. Most of them are off to the National Football League.

Good luck, guys, and take care. Your teammates here will carry on your tradition, as always.

The Husker defense that is left has a lot to prove, to itself and its critics. They'll be hitting a little bit harder, covering opposing receivers and running backs that much closer and generally making life miserable for players and coaches who come to Lincoln looking for a win at Nebraska's expense.

Not this year. Recess is over. This team will look a lot like the 1971 Huskers, revered by many — especially in Nebraska — as the greatest college football team of all time. But 20 years later, the Huskers will be a trip down memory lane. They'll play alike.

Sometimes they'll walk alike and talk alike . . . what a crazy pair.

Any way you look at it, '91 will be remembered throughout the college football community as "The Year of the Husker."

Add to all that the fact that Nebraska won't be ranked highly to start off the season, and you've got the main ingredients of a national championship season.

Miami, Notre Dame, Oklahoma

and Washington, with their legions of returning starters, will be the August favorites of coaches and sports writers alike to compete for the right to party hearty in January, with their index fingers pointing to the humid Miami or Tempe skies.

But they'll all be sadly mistaken. The Huskers will go about their business quietly, demolishing teams, ranked and unranked throughout September and October, then taking aim at the Big Eight crown and a trip to the beach.

Before anyone knows what happened, Nebraska will be 11-0 and ranked atop the Division I heap.

After the smoke clears from the Orange Bowl game, the Huskers will be dancing on Biscayne Boulevard and being fitted for their national championship rings.

Yessiree, this is the year the Huskers finally win the big one. People around here have been saying it for, oh, about 20 years now, and have always ended up disappointed for one reason or another.

But this is the year the Huskers take all the marbles. Right? Right . . . Uh-huh.

And this is also the year Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny will break dance on the Sower's head atop the State Capitol on Christmas morning while eating a plate of nachos and sour cream.

Recess is over. The Huskers will lose four games, including the bowl game, and finish third in the conference.

But don't fret. Eight wins in a season is a great accomplishment. There are lots of teams and coaches who would love to have Tom Osborne's record in January.

Or so I'm told . . . and told . . . and told . . .

Green is a senior news-editorial major, a Daily Nebraskan senior sports reporter and a copy desk editor.

Pepin says more qualifiers needed

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

After one of Nebraska's best-ever performances at the Drake Relays, track and field coach Gary Pepin is still restraining his optimism about the Cornhuskers' chances at the NCAA outdoor championships.

The Husker men and women each captured two event titles in the Relays last weekend, but did not qualify any more athletes for the NCAA outdoor championships, which will be held May 29-June 1 in Eugene, Ore.

"It does concern me. It always does," Pepin said. "You always want more qualifiers than you have. But there's just not much you can do. I don't sit around and dwell on it."

But, Pepin said, he hopes more Huskers will use the season's three remaining meets — two of which are at home — to qualify.

The Huskers will travel to Seattle Saturday for a triangular with Washington and Washington State.

After that, Nebraska will host the Twi-Light Invitational on May 11 and the Big Eight championships May 19-20.

"We just need some good weather and some good performances, and we'll be just fine," he said.

In the men's competition at Drake, Anthony Adkisson won the 100-meter dash in 10.49 seconds and Stephen Golding won the 110 high hurdles in a personal-best time of 13.9 seconds.

The women's 3,200 relay team won in 8:37.25 — the second-best time in school history — and the 1,600 relay won in 3:34.89.

The Huskers came close in other events. The men's and women's 400 relay teams were second.

Overall, Pepin said, the Husker teams had "a terrific meet."

"The meet went pretty much as expected," he said. "We did well in the events we've done well in all year, and we didn't do so well in the other ones. It was one of the best meets Nebraska's ever had out there, so it's hard to cut it down."

"But there still are areas we need to work hard on."

One area in particular is the

women's jumping events. But, Pepin said, Nebraska suffered from a lack of competitors at Drake. The Huskers were without entrants in both the long jump and high jump.

"It's not a true concern, where we have weaknesses, but we do hope we can make more improvement," Pepin

said. "Time is running out."

Pepin said Saturday's triangular with Washington and Washington State won't be easy to qualify at, either, because of the weather and the competition. Washington State is one of the favorites to win the NCAA men's championship.

Rec Scoreboard

Results from Sunday's games.

Co-rec softball

A

St. Andrews Slicers 11, Alpha Tau Omega/Alpha Phi 9; Free Dirt 4, Law 44 2; St. Andrews Slicers 13, Free Dirt 6.

B

St. Andrews Slicers-Jantzi 10, Beta Sigma Psi 5; Ace in the Hole 6, Jagers 5; St. Andrews Slicers-Jantzi 3, Ace in the Hole 2.

C

Abel 11&13 by forfeit over Lambda Chi Alpha & Friends; 69'ers 12, Prichard's Dry Riders 3; 69'ers 8, Abel 11 1.

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R E G I S T E R N O W

1991 Major League Baseball Standings through Sunday					
AMERICAN LEAGUE					
East Division	W	L	Pct.	GB	The Week
Toronto	12	8	.600	--	4-3
Boston	10	7	.588	.5	4-2
Milwaukee	9	9	.500	2	3-3
Detroit	8	9	.471	2.5	2-4
Cleveland	7	9	.438	3	3-3
Baltimore	6	10	.375	4	2-4
New York	6	10	.375	4	2-3
West Division					
Chicago	11	5	.688	--	4-2
Oakland	12	7	.632	.5	4-2
Minnesota	9	10	.474	3.5	6-1
California	9	10	.474	3.5	1-5
Kansas City	8	9	.471	3.5	3-3
Texas	7	8	.467	3.5	3-3
Seattle	8	11	.421	4.5	2-5
NATIONAL LEAGUE					
East Division	W	L	Pct.	GB	The Week
Pittsburgh	13	6	.684	--	5-1
St. Louis	11	8	.579	2	4-2
New York	11	8	.579	2	3-3
Chicago	9	11	.450	4.5	2-5
Philadelphia	7	12	.368	6	3-3
Montreal	6	13	.333	7	1-5
West Division					
San Diego	11	8	.579	--	3-3
Cincinnati	10	8	.556	.5	4-3
Los Angeles	10	9	.526	1	4-3
Atlanta	8	8	.500	1.5	4-2
Houston	8	10	.444	2.5	3-3
San Francisco	8	11	.421	3	2-5

Amie DeFrain/Daily Nebraskan



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