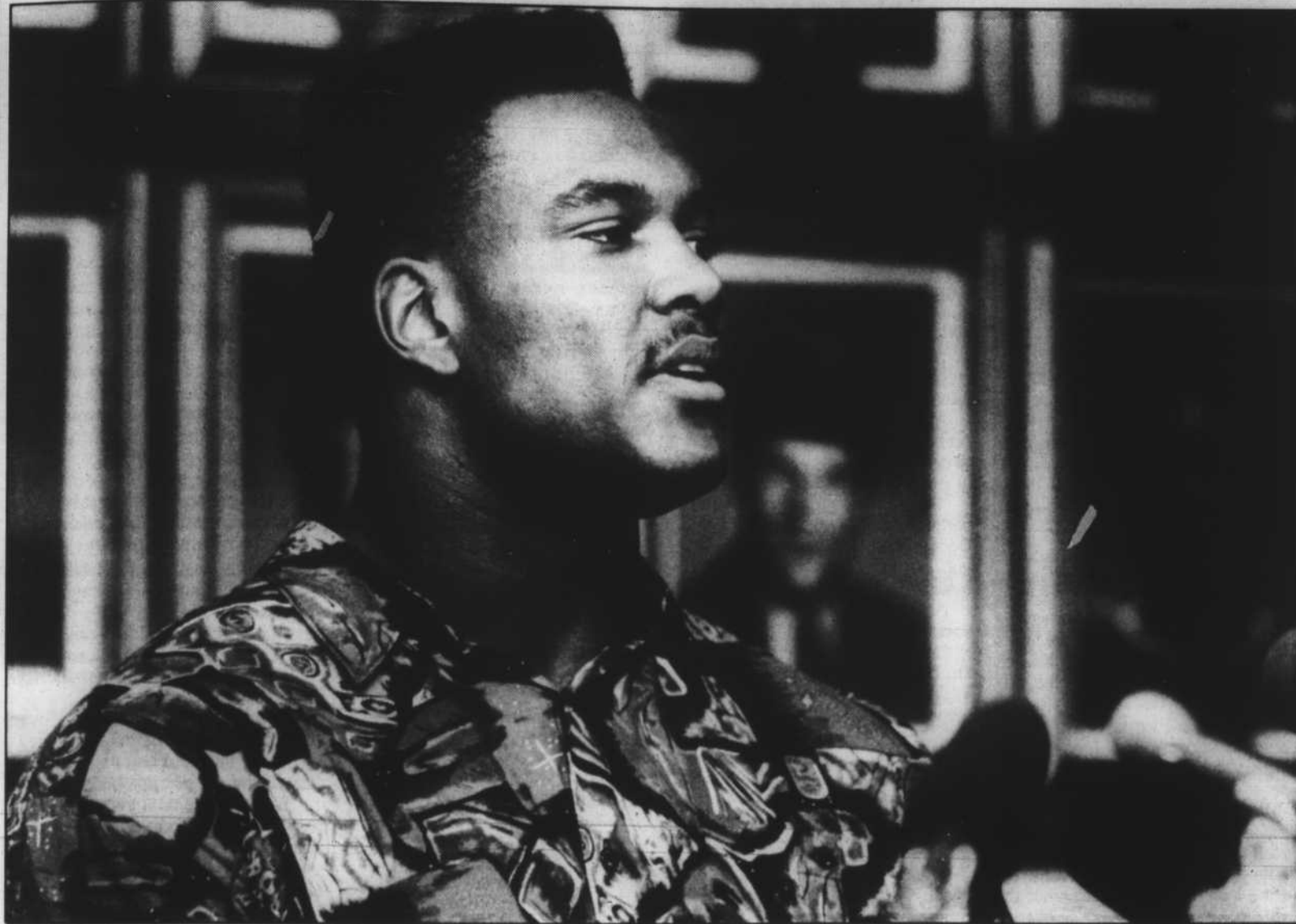


Tight end Mitchell to leave NU for NFL



Shaun Sartin/DN

Nebraska tight end Johnny Mitchell announces his plans to enter the NFL draft at a press conference Wednesday. Mitchell cited family obligations as a main reason in his decision to turn professional.

Sophomore cites financial reasons

By Susie Arth
Staff Reporter

Cornhusker tight end Johnny Mitchell announced Wednesday that he would make himself eligible for the 1992 National Football League Draft.

Mitchell, who still has two years of eligibility left at Nebraska, said his decision was caused by an obligation to his family.

Mitchell said a visit during semester break to his grandparents' home in Mississippi helped him to decide to join the NFL.

"My grandfather is a sick man," Mitchell said. "I owe him a lot."

Mitchell, who announced in December that he would not join the NFL draft in 1992, said his decision was not related to the Huskers' performance in the Orange Bowl, nor to his role on the team.

The earlier announcement, he said, was an attempt to take pressure off of him so that he could finish the season.

Mitchell, a two-time All-Big Eight selection, said he thinks he is as ready to join the NFL as he would ever be.

"I hope some team will give Johnny Mitchell a chance to contribute to their franchise," he said.

Mitchell said he has not talked to an agent, and hopes he will be contacted by an NFL scouting combine.

Receivers coach Ron Brown said he believed Mitchell had enough athletic talent to be a first-round pick.

The problem, he said, is that most teams are not expecting him to come out this season.

See MITCHELL on 14

Swimmer sets new goals to break personal records

By Susie Arth
Staff Reporter

Michelle Butcher has set Nebraska and Big Eight Conference records and has qualified for the NCAA Championships, but thinks her peak is yet to come.

Butcher, a junior member of the Nebraska swimming squad, said she thinks a better attitude will be one way to break her personal records this season.

"Last year I had a hard time because my head was not into it," she said. "I've been training since last May for this season so I think I'll see some improvement."

Butcher said she thinks her new coach, Kelly Nordell, has made her want to improve.

"Kelly's workouts push you to the limit," she said. "I feel like I'm going to drop dead some days."

Butcher said her goals for this season include retaining her Big Eight titles in the 500-yard freestyle, 400-yard individual medley and 1650-yard freestyle, and qualifying for the Olympic Trials in these events.

"Making the Olympic team would be my ultimate goal," she said. "But only two people from each event can go."

To achieve these goals, Butcher said, she has been training for more than four hours each day.

Butcher, who started competing when she was 5 years old, said she stays motivated by always keeping her goals in mind.

"I know what I have to do to reach my goals," she said. "And I know all the work will pay off in the end."

But Butcher said she also needs encouragement from her parents and coaches to keep her motivated.

Her parents, Butcher said, have never put any pressure on her to succeed as a swimmer.

"Up until college they came to

practically every meet. I swam in," she said.

Butcher said her father has put almost as much effort into her success as she has.

For almost two years, she said, he would take her to her morning workouts at 3:45, wait for two hours, then drive her back home.

It was her mother, Butcher said, who deserves the credit for getting her involved in swimming.

"My mom had a cousin who drowned," she said. "So she enrolled me in swimming lessons when I was four."

Butcher said she has only quit swimming for one month since she started the sport.

"I went crazy not swimming," she said. "Now I don't think I'll ever quit for good."

Butcher, who is from Alpine, Calif., said she decided to come to Nebraska because it was well-known for its athletics.

"I was so young and so excited that I was impressed with everything I saw on my recruiting trip here," she said.

The cold weather, she said, was the biggest difference between California and Nebraska.

Butcher, an elementary education major, said she hopes to return to the West Coast to teach in a grade school or work with aquatic animals after graduation.

For now, Butcher said she is just looking forward to the Big Eight Championships, the Olympic Trials and the NCAA Championships. These meets take place in February and March.

"It's kind of scary to think that the three biggest meets are basically within a month of each other," she said. "But no matter what happens, I've already accomplished more than I ever thought when I was little."

Mitchell's choice limits future

Nebraska tight end Johnny Mitchell has tremendous talent, but he can't seem to make up his mind about his future.

Mitchell announced yesterday that he has chosen to enter the National Football League draft.

"I have a great obligation to my family and I've decided to file for the 1992 NFL draft," Mitchell said. "It's a family decision, something I have to do for Johnny Mitchell and my family."

Wednesday's press conference is Mitchell's second in just over a month. On Dec. 10, he announced plans for staying with the Cornhuskers.

"I am here to let people know, who don't know that much about me, and my teammates and others who have asked me," Mitchell said at that time. "It was a family deci-

sion and I talked with Coach (Tom) Osborne and I'm going to stay in school."

Mitchell, who is never afraid to say what he feels, said that getting closer to his degree was the main reason for staying at Nebraska.

"The best thing for me to do is to stay in school and get closer to my degree," Mitchell said. "I think this



Thomas Clouse

is a great thing to do so I can learn more about handling money."

The 6-foot-3, 250-pound third-team All-American tight end has dazzled Husker fans with his unbe-

lievable catches. Unfortunately, pro scouts might not feel Mitchell would be an unbelievable catch for some NFL team.

The sophomore from Chicago, who recently turned 21, caught 31 passes for 534 yards and five touchdowns in the regular season. Mitchell also was named to the All-Big Eight team for the second year in two seasons.

In 1990, he was named the Big Eight Co-Offensive Freshman of the Year after catching 11 passes for 282 yards and seven touchdowns. Mitchell's 25.6 yards-per-catch average set a Nebraska record.

Before coming to Lincoln, he attended Chicago's Simcon High School where he earned all-state

See CLOUSE on 14

Jordan, Bulls to break winning record

If there are any NBA fans out there, this one's for you. If not, read the personals.

The Chicago Bulls are going to make history this season.

The record number of wins by any professional basketball team in an 82-game season is 69 by the Los Angeles Lakers in 1972. "Da Bulls," at 35-5, are well on their way to breaking that.

But this record run hasn't been easy for the Windy City hoopsters. After posting a club-record 61 wins in the regular season in 1991, the Bulls stormed through the Eastern Conference playoffs and eventually defeated the Lakers in five games in the championship series for their first NBA title.

That's when the troubles began for Michael "Not of this World" Jordan and the gang. Even in the locker-room celebration immediately after the game, reporters swarmed on Jordan as he was clinging on to the

trophy. NBC's Bob Costas even made the stupid mistake of calling Jordan's wife his mom. Now everyone has seen Mrs. Jordan on the Coca-Cola commercial saying, "Michael, we need some more Coca-Cola Classic." Come on, Bob—or "Sports Boy," as David Letterman calls him.

Anyway, the city of Chicago welcomed its Bulls home with open arms



John Gardner

and a ticker-tape parade, so everything was hunky-dory at that point. But once the confetti cleared, the internal problems began.

Shortly after Chicago's championship run, an author by the name of Sam Smith wrote a book called Jor-

dan Rules. According to Jordan, Smith misquoted him several times. And many of the "lies" that were printed in the book infuriated some of Jordan's teammates, mainly Horace Grant.

Then there was the pressure put on the Bulls to repeat this year. After their dominant showing in the playoffs last season, everyone and their dog figured Chicago was unstoppable.

Early- and off-season injuries to guard John Paxson and center Bill Cartwright made the 1991-92 season look bleak for the Bulls. And after starting this season 1-2, the whole world went into a tailspin.

That's when Chicago shifted into overdrive and proceeded to win 14 straight games to take over the Midwest Division lead quickly. The Bulls have not lost two games in a row this season and have put together some pretty impressive winning streaks. The current one is 11, which is crucial

See GARDNER on 14