

FOOTBALL 1992

Husker ready to go after sitting out first year

Player improves academic record

By John Adkisson
Senior Editor

The similarities were all there, and one young Christian Peter fan noticed them immediately:
A shaven head, a roundish look, monstrous forearms and hands that could probably palm two basketballs at once.

"Is his name Charles Barkley?" the child asked his mother at the Nebraska football team's annual Photo Day.

Christian Peter - all 6 feet, 2 inches and 310 pounds of him - just laughed.

After all, he's happy. He's finally playing football again.

Peter is returning to the field after two years away from the sport. The Middletown, N.J., native sat out his final year of high school football because of ineligibility and was a Proposition 48 casualty in his first year after coming to Nebraska.

How good is it to be back?

"God, it feels great," said Peter, a sophomore. "It's just been tough sitting out."

He said the hardest part of last season was sitting in the stands at Memorial Stadium watching his teammates play.

"I wouldn't miss a game," he said.

Peter credits Nebraska's academic support system and encouragement from friends for turning stigma into success in the classroom.

"My teammates have been great," Peter said. "I can't say enough about them or the help I've got. Without their support, I wouldn't have been able to get myself eligible."

Peter's physical tools are the stuff of which legends are made: He



Jeff Haller/DN

Nebraska sophomore nose guard Christian Peter (bottom) gets a hand stretching from junior David Noonan. The two are competing for time at nose guard, a position left open by the graduation of Pat Engelbert.

clocked a 4.8 second 40-yard dash out of high school and bench pressed 450 pounds.

Those numbers immediately impressed Nebraska coaches, and

prompted defensive coordinator Charlie McBride to compare Peter's physical ability to former Husker greats - and current NFL players - Lawrence Pete and Danny Noonan.

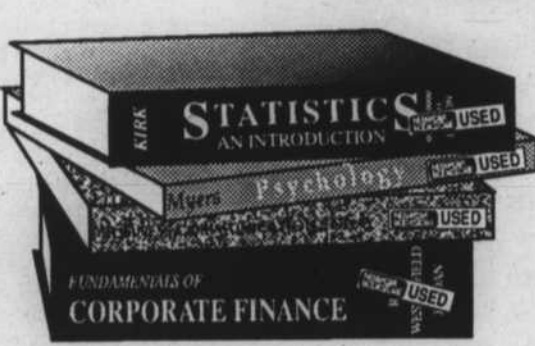
"He's a man-child," McBride said. "He's a big man in a young person's body."

Now he enters fall camp as a self-described "low man on the

totem pole," hoping to get playing time at middle guard, a position hit hard by the graduation of two-year

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