

Blue Raiders keep realistic view of game

Team must face mismatches

By Peter Theoharis
Staff Reporter

Size, strength and depth. Those three things separate NCAA Division I Nebraska from Division I-AA Middle Tennessee State, Blue Raider cornerback Jamie Redmond said.

The 5-foot-9, 178-pound senior cornerback from Oak Ridge, Tenn., said that for the Blue Raiders to be successful against the Cornhuskers, they must work around the mismatches, such as the one on the line of scrimmage.

"(The line) is going to be the difference," Redmond said. "They own the size up front, but hopefully we can cause some problems with our speed. As far as skilled positions, we have some of the top players in the country."

Redmond, a four-year starter, is one of those players. He has pulled down six interceptions in the last three seasons with 24 pass breakups and 107 tackles — 74 unassisted.

Nebraska's speed at wide receiver

is not an area that Redmond, who runs a 4.36 second 40-yard dash, is worried about.

"As far as receivers go, I'm not too worried," Redmond said. "I have gone against a lot of good receivers, and I get some good work against our top two receivers."

"So when I go into a game, I am pretty confident."

Redmond said one point of concern for himself and his Blue Raider teammates was depth. Middle Tennessee State learned last season when they played well early, but lost to top-ranked Florida State 39-10.

"Florida State would run two plays and bring in a fresh line," Redmond said. "We used the same line the whole game."

"It's a physical test. Against Florida State, we played real well in the first half and ran out of gas in the second."

Redmond said he was also worried about the mental lapses MTSU's defense experienced in its season opener — a 35-31 win over Tennessee State — and said he hoped the Huskers gave the Blue Raiders enough incentive to

Middle Tennessee State Quick Facts

1991 record: 9-4
Lettermen returning: 35
Starters returning: 14
Series vs. Nebraska: first meeting
Nickname: Blue Raiders
Offense: Multiple I
Defense: Wide-tackle six
Coach: Boots Donnelly
Record: 95-55 (13 years)



Scott Maurer/DN

improve. "We made a lot of mistakes," Redmond said. "I hope the game pulls us together as a team. The intensity is higher when we play a team like Nebraska, and Nebraska is a good game to try and pull the team together. We are really going to learn quick on what we have."

QB aims to prove I-AA mettle

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

Middle Tennessee State quarterback Kelly Holcomb is keeping a realistic view of Saturday's game with the Huskers.

"We've got to keep our mind right or we'll get beat bad," he said. "The whole team needs to get up and we'll be OK."

The Blue Raiders, a Division I-AA team, will be playing their toughest opponent of the year in Nebraska. Last season, Middle Tennessee lost to top-ranked Florida State 39-10.

"We wanted to really show people what Division I-AA was all about," he said. "A lot of times we do (get overlooked). Some people think that Division I-AA players might not be quite as good, but we've got good players here."

Holcomb posted some impressive freshman numbers, connecting on 130 of 209 passes for 1,763 yards and four interceptions last season. The sopho-

more also set a new school record when he completed 15 consecutive passes, 14 against Florida State.

"We had a good offensive line last year, but now we've got four new starters," Holcomb said.

The inexperience in the offensive line showed last week in the 35-31 victory over Tennessee State as Holcomb was sacked six times for 43 yards.

"We weren't as prepared as we should have been and they stuck it to us for three and a half quarters," he said.

The Blue Raiders are coming off a 9-4 season and a Division I-AA quarterfinal playoff loss to Eastern Kentucky, where Holcomb completed 25 passes.

But Holcomb said that last year is over, and the Blue Raiders must now focus on the No. 11 Cornhuskers.

"They're big and strong and quick," he said. "I can't see any weaknesses when I look at them on film."

"I think that it's important we try to run against them."



Jeff Haller/DN

Nebraska fullback Lance Lewis is brought down in Saturday's game against Utah. The Huskers will face Middle Tennessee State on Saturday at Memorial Stadium.

Huskers challenge old foe, new rival in weekend match

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

Fresh off a victory over fourth-ranked Pacific last weekend, the Nebraska volleyball team will look for continued success in the Big Ten-Big Eight Challenge this weekend.

To do it, they will have to go through an old nemesis and a new rival.



Both Ohio State and Illinois will be looking to upset the No. 5 Cornhuskers when Nebraska travels to Champaign, Ill., for the four-team tournament this weekend. No. 16 Colorado is also in the field.

After losing their opening match to New Mexico, Nebraska rebounded with a straight-game win over Pittsburgh and the four-game victory over Pacific.

Nebraska will start the tournament Friday with a match against the Buckeyes, and then will face the Illini in the tournament finale Saturday.

Illinois coach Mike Hebert, whose team lost to Nebraska twice last season, said he expected the Cornhuskers to be tough again.

"They lost two key players in Janet (Kruse) and Cris (Hall)," Hebert said. "That will affect them in terms of chemistry and confidence."

"I know Nebraska will adjust to the absence of those two very reliable players."

Last year, Nebraska knocked Illinois out of the NCAA Tournament. Four years ago, Illinois defeated Nebraska to earn a trip to the NCAA Final Four.

Hebert said his team, off to a 5-1 start, was stronger than last year's 19-10 squad.

"Our confidence is higher; we're hitting the ball better this year," he said. "Our overall game is much better."

The Fighting Illini also field a relatively young squad, with only one senior, outside hitter Lorna Henderson.

"Last year we had to rely on one or two people," Hebert said. "This year no one really stands out from the rest."

The Buckeyes, 4-0 and ranked 14th, came into Lincoln last year and upset the Huskers in four games in the NCAA Midwest Regional Championship.

Coach Jim Stone, in his 11th year at Ohio State, guided the Buckeyes to the NCAA national semifinals for the first time last season.

Ohio State is led by three sophomores, Setter Laura Davis and outside hitters Gabriele Jobst and Carrie Leonard anchor the Buckeyes, while setter Tracy Endecavegh is the lone senior on the team.

Four Buckeye freshmen also have seen extensive playing time this season. Middle blocker Jenny Jackson started off the season with a school-record .900 hitting efficiency in the Buckeyes' opening match against Cincinnati.

Middle blocker Caroline Hill and outside hitters Ashley Mullis and Kirstine Jensen have also played key roles in the Buckeyes' success this season.

Injuries set back two players

By Phil Carter
Staff Reporter

Two members of Nebraska's secondary will likely miss this Saturday's game against Middle Tennessee State, Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne said Wednesday.

Cornerback Kenny Wilhite and strong safety Ernie Beler missed most of the team's two-hour workout at Memorial Stadium.

Wilhite, who started for the Huskers against Utah last Saturday, pulled his hamstring during

Tuesday's practice and was limited to jogging on Wednesday.

Beler, who has been hampered by a sprained ankle during most of fall practice, worked out with the defense sparingly on Wednesday.

"Beler, I don't think did very much," Osborne said. "I noticed during the last half of practice he was just watching. I'd say he's doubtful for this week."

The Husker defensive line received some relief when noseguard Terry Connealy returned to practice after missing Monday and Tues-

day workouts because of back spasms.

Despite a showdown in Seattle with No. 2 Washington in less than two weeks, Osborne said the players needed to be focused for Saturday's game with Middle Tennessee State if the Huskers want to improve on their performance against Utah last weekend.

"I hope they understand they've got to play a football game," Osborne said. "And they have to play well."

Hibner achievements parallel Devaney legend

If Nebraska athletic director Bob Devaney is the "Bob-father," then she must be the "Barb-mother."

But unlike her male counterpart, she hasn't received quite the amount of recognition for her involvement in Nebraska athletics.

Yet her achievements parallel the Cornhusker legend.

She is Barbara Hibner, assistant to the athletic director in charge of women's sports.

In other words, she is a female version of Devaney. She's not quite

as famous as he, but she's just as important to the success of Nebraska athletics.

Hibner, who is entering her 14th year at Nebraska, works primarily with women's athletics and has transformed Cornhusker women's sports into one of the best female athletic programs in the nation.

But has anybody noticed?

The women's athletic program at the University of Nebraska doesn't receive the recognition it should, but since 1978, Hibner has helped close



Jeff Singer

the gender gap between men's and women's sports in the Husker program.

She has helped Nebraska women's

athletic teams win 71 Big Eight championships. And if anyone's counting, that's 45 titles ahead of second-place Oklahoma State.

She has helped the women's athletic department's budget grow from approximately \$75,000 14 years ago to about \$1.2 million today.

And just as Devaney was instrumental in getting Memorial Stadium expanded in 1972 and having the Bob Devaney Sports Center built in 1976, Hibner was the key to the recent renovations of the NU Coliseum, making

it one of the best volleyball facilities in the nation.

But has anybody noticed?

Hibner, a native of Gettysburg, Pa., is no stranger to highly touted accolades. She is a member of the National Association for Collegiate Directors of Athletics, the Council of Collegiate Women's Athletic Administrators and the National Association of Athletic Marketing and Development.

See SINGER on 14