

Middle Tennessee shows pro prospects

Talented players appeal to scouts

By Nick Hytrek
Senior Reporter

Saturday might not be the last time Cornhusker football fans see some of Middle Tennessee State's players.

According to Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne, some of those players could be playing professional football in a few years.

"Middle Tennessee has some good individual players," Osborne said. "It's my understanding that they have somewhere between five and eight people that pro scouts feel are pro prospects."

Kickoff for Nebraska's first-ever meeting with Middle Tennessee State is at 1 p.m. at Memorial Stadium. Both teams are 1-0.

Osborne pointed to the Blue Raiders' defense as a source of concern for the Huskers.

"They play off the ball on defense, which is different than teams like Washington," he said. "These guys are two to three yards off the ball which is a little bit different for our offense to block somebody that far away from them and it does present some problems."

"You'd think it would be easier and it's not necessarily better or worse than what some of these other teams are doing, but it does present some different concepts."

On offense, the players at the skill positions stand out, Osborne said.

"Their I-back, Walter Dunson, is an outstanding player," Osborne said. "He supposedly runs the 40-yard dash in under 4.3 (seconds), which is awfully fast. I don't know if we've ever had anybody around here that did that."

The Middle Tennessee media guide reports Dunson's time at 4.28 seconds. Dunson ran for 164 yards on 25



Michelle Paulman/DN

Nebraska split end Trumane Bell is tackled after an incomplete pass in last weekend's game against Utah. The Cornhuskers will play Middle Tennessee State 1 p.m. Saturday at Memorial Stadium.

carries and two touchdowns, including one of 73 yards, in the Blue Raiders' season-opening 35-31 win over Tennessee State last Saturday.

At quarterback, sophomore Kelly Holcomb will call the signals. Last season, Holcomb completed 62 per-

cent of his passes for 1,763 yards and five touchdowns. But his most impressive statistic, Osborne said, was that he threw only four interceptions, in 209 attempts.

Vince Parks at split end and Steve Dark at tight end combined for 67

catches last season and are back to lead the receiving corps for Middle Tennessee.

Osborne said the fact that the Blue Raiders were a Division I-AA team could be misleading to fans who thought the game would be easy for

Nebraska.

"I think this is a team that probably will be better than some others that we'll play," he said. "So I think it's a case where our players can't afford to not play well and I think they will play well."

Blue Raider coach says his team to be competitive

By Jeff Singer
Senior Reporter

Middle Tennessee State football coach Boots Donnelly is hoping to kick his team into high gear for this weekend's game against Nebraska.

Donnelly's Blue Raiders, who are big underdogs for Saturday's game against the 11th-ranked Cornhuskers, will battle Nebraska at 1 p.m. at Memorial Stadium.

Donnelly, in his 14th year at the helm of the Division I-AA Blue Raiders, said his team would compete as hard as it could against the heavily favored Huskers.

"We approach these types of games as an opportunity on the Division I-AA level to see how well our players can represent themselves and represent this program," Donnelly said. "I do know this: We will come into the game and play as well as we are capable of playing."

Donnelly said his team didn't play up to its capabilities in last weekend's 35-31 win over archrival Tennessee State.

He also said Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne's assertion that many Blue Raiders were being looked at by National Football League scouts may have been premature.

"If we had eight or 10 NFL-caliber players, we wouldn't have played as poorly as we did last week," Donnelly said. "I don't think Coach Osborne has anything to worry about, because none of (the NFL scouts) are turning backflips after our opening ballgame."

Probable Starters

SE 2 Corey Dixon	5-8 155 Jr.	LOLB 93 Travis Hill	6-2 240 Sr.
LT 77 Lance Lundberg	6-4 300 Jr.	LT 92 John Parrella	6-5 290 Sr.
LG 62 Ken Mehlin	6-4 265 Jr.	NG 73 David Noonan	6-3 275 Jr.
C 51 Jim Spott	6-2 265 Sr.	RT 70 Jamie Liewer	6-4 270 Sr.
RG 75 Will Shields	6-1 305 Sr.	ROLB 34 Trev Alberts	6-4 230 Jr.
RT 72 Zach Wagner	6-5 310 So.	SLB 48 Mike Anderson	6-2 235 Jr.
TE 89 William Washington	6-3 260 Sr.	WLB 32 Ed Stewart	6-0 205 So.
QB 1 Mike Grant	6-3 305 Sr.	LCB 19 Kenny Wilhite	5-8 175 Sr.
FB 26 Lance Lewis	5-8 225 Sr.	RCB 6 John Reece	6-0 200 Jr.
IB 44 Calvin Jones	5-7 210 Sr.	SS 31 Steve Carner	6-2 210 Sr.
WB 38 Vincent Hawkins	5-10 210 Sr.	FS 8 Tyrone Byrd	6-0 180 Sr.
PK 13 Byron Barnes	5-10 180 Sr.	P 47 Mike Stigge	6-2 190 Sr.

Offense		Defense	
SE 20 Vince Parks	5-9 160 Jr.	LT 83 Montrell Toney	6-2 232 Jr.
LT 78 Steve McAdoo	6-4 262 Sr.	LG 91 Randy Houston	6-2 240 Sr.
LG 64 David Watson	6-4 235 So.	RG 95 Preston Sensabaugh	5-10 260 Fr.
C 68 Burt Talley	6-3 265 Fr.	RT 72 Mike Jordan	6-4 212 Jr.
RG 62 Pat Hicks	6-2 275 Jr.	ROLB 34 Danny L...	6-5 190 So.
RT 77 Onesimus Leslie	6-5 250 Jr.	LB 9 Jabbar Footman	5-11 230 So.
TE 81 Steve Dark	6-2 230 Sr.	LB 44 Shingo Weems	5-11 210 So.
QB 12 Kelly Holcomb	5-8 170 So.	RE 22 Mike Caldwell	6-2 222 Sr.
TB 16 Walter Dunson	5-8 170 Sr.	RE 22 Mike Caldwell	5-11 180 Sr.
FB 1 Walt Crowder	5-9 190 Sr.	FS 8 Tyrone Byrd	6-4 205 Sr.
FL 18 Curt Watkins	6-1 180 Sr.	FS 8 Tyrone Byrd	5-8 178 Sr.
PK 5 Joel Alsbrook	6-2 190 Sr.	P 47 Mike Stigge	6-2 190 Sr.

Scott Maurer/DN

The Blue Raiders also competed against a nationally ranked team last season when they played a road game against then-No. 1 Florida State.

Middle Tennessee State lost 39-10 to the Seminoles, and Donnelly said he saw significant differences between Florida State and the Huskers.

"Florida State is pure finesse, while Nebraska combines speed, finesse and power," Donnelly said. "You have the choice — death by the bullet or death by the sickle."

The Blue Raiders will be compet-

ing in front of the largest crowd ever to see Middle Tennessee State play, as more than 76,000 fans are expected in Memorial Stadium to continue Nebraska's NCAA-record string of consecutive sellout crowds.

Donnelly said his team should be prepared to play in front of a large audience, after competing in front of 60,202 fans in Tallahassee, Fla., last year.

"It didn't overwhelm us against Florida State," he said. "They might be shellshocked early, but they should get over it."

Volleyball tournament marks return home for NU's Shannon

By Jeff Singer
Senior Reporter

For one last time, Eileen Shannon is going home as a Cornhusker.

Shannon and her Nebraska teammates will be traveling to Shannon's home state of Illinois to compete in this weekend's Big 10-Big Eight Challenge at Champaign, Ill.

Fourth-ranked Nebraska will open the tournament tonight against No. 17 Ohio State and conclude the four-team tourney Saturday against No. 14 Illinois. Colorado, ranked 15th in the latest Volleyball Monthly poll, will be the other Big Eight team competing in the challenge.

Shannon, a 6-foot outside hitter from Elmhurst, Ill., said she was looking forward to the tourney for a couple of reasons.

Shannon said she was anxious to compete again against her sister, Kathleen, a reserve setter for Illinois.

"I look forward to this tournament more than most tournaments, because my family gets to see me play as well as a lot of people who don't get to see me play a lot," she said.

Shannon, this season's kill leader, needs 165 more kills to catch Husker career-leader Virginia Stahr, who had 1,395 total kills during her All-American career from 1986-89.

The Huskers defeated Illinois

last October 15-7, 15-7, 15-1, and followed that effort with an 15-5, 15-8, 15-12 win over the Illini in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Ohio State, on the other hand, jumped into the Top 20 this week following last week's 4-0 start.

This is the first meeting between Nebraska and the Buckeyes since Ohio State upset the Huskers last year in the NCAA Midwest Regional final. The Buckeyes won 9-15, 15-9, 17-16 and 15-7 over host Nebraska to advance to the Final Four in Los Angeles.

Shannon said this weekend's tourney would be a good indicator for the Huskers for the rest of the season.

"This is a very important tournament," Shannon said. "It's our first road trip and it will help us see how we play on the road."

Nebraska opened the season by winning last weekend's First Tier Invitational at the NU Coliseum. The Huskers went 2-1 in the Invite by losing to No. 9 New Mexico but rebounding to beat Pittsburgh and fifth-ranked Pacific.

Pettit said he was looking for improved play from his squad tonight and Saturday.

"Illinois is playing a little better and Ohio State seems to be in a rhythm, but I think we'll play better this weekend," Pettit said. "We'll need to be mentally ready."