

Former Husker up to challenge of NFL

By Jeff Singer
Senior Reporter

After a successful first year in the National Football League, an encore may be difficult for former Nebraska linebacker Mike Croel.

But challenges are nothing new for the Denver Broncos' newest star.

Croel, who earned NFL Rookie of the Year honors for his play in the 1991 season, is again leading the charge at linebacker for the Broncos in his second campaign in Denver.

Croel leads the team in sacks with 2.5 so far this season after registering 10 last year.

The 6-foot-3, 231-pound Croel said that getting the opportunity to play football in the NFL after his career at Nebraska had been like a dream come true.

"It's been a good experience," said Croel, who was the fourth selection in the 1991 NFL draft. "It's been a good opportunity because not everybody gets to go. It's something to treasure."

Croel was an All-Big Eight selection his senior season as a Cornhusker, in which he helped lead Nebraska to a 9-3 record and a berth in the Florida Citrus Bowl.

He said his career as a Husker had helped him on the professional level.

"One thing Nebraska was good for is that they used me all over—they had me rush a little bit as well as play me in pass coverage—and that's what the Broncos have done with me here," Croel said.

Croel is not the only former Husker playing defense for Denver, as former All-American Kenny Walker and fellow linebacker Jeff Mills are on the roster of last year's AFC Western Division champions.

Croel said he enjoyed playing with Walker and Mills because "it's good to have one or two people from the same school to talk about old times."

After having completed his first season,

Croel said there were some big gaps between college and professional football.

"One major difference is that it's more technical here, and another major difference is that you don't have any classes," he said.

Croel led the Broncos last season in forced fumbles with four to accompany his 84 total tackles. He also had a streak of six games in which he netted at least one sack per game.

Croel was on pace to break the rookie record for sacks in a season before he sprained his ankle midway through the season. And in an attempt to return from the injury, he came down with chicken pox and was forced to sit out the majority of the rest of the season.

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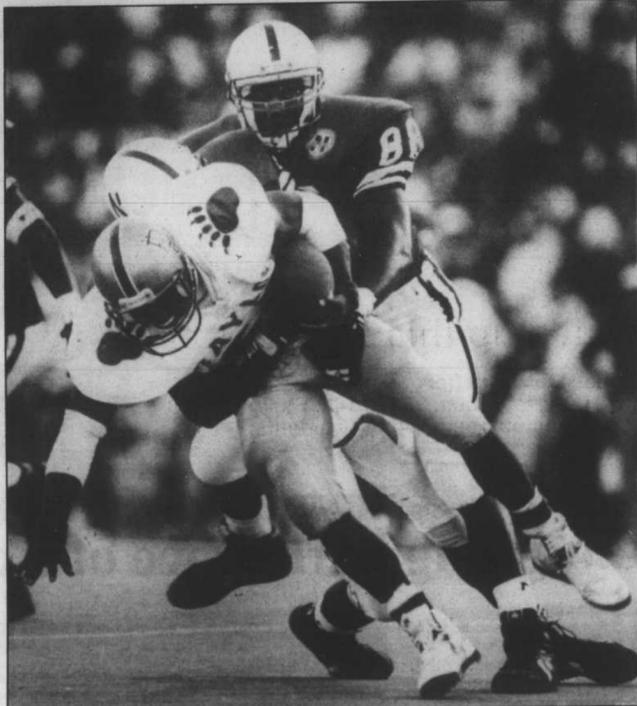
—Croel
Denver linebacker

Injury and illness couldn't prevent Croel from contributing in the playoffs, as he had eight tackles in helping the Broncos advance to the AFC Championship game before losing to the Buffalo Bills.

So far this season, Denver is 3-1 and tied for first place with the Kansas City Chiefs after registering wins over the Los Angeles Raiders, San Diego Chargers and Cleveland Browns.

The Broncos only loss this year was a 30-0 shutout at Philadelphia two weeks ago. Croel said Denver's ability to rebound with a win over Cleveland last Sunday showed the Broncos could compete with anybody.

"Even though we had a down point with Philadelphia, it was just a little setback," Croel said. "I think we're real strong and we'll do real well."



Nebraska linebacker Mike Croel brings down a Baylor runner in a 1990 game. Croel, who was last year's NFL rookie of the year, leads the Denver Broncos in sacks this season.

Cross country team prepares for upcoming Minneapolis meet

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

Preparation is the key word for Nebraska cross country coach Jay Dirksen as his team gets ready for this weekend's Minnesota Invitational.

"This will prepare us for the end-of-the-year championship meets," Dirksen said.

More than 30 teams will compete in Minneapolis this Saturday. Dirksen said it would be a tough test for his team.

The men will compete in the 8,000-meter run and the women in the 5,000-meter run.

"This meet will give our young people a taste of competition," Dirksen said.

"You try to finish as high as you can," Dirksen said. "Hopefully the men can place in the top 10 and the women can place in the top five."

The men's team will welcome back David Itelja—the top men's runner for Nebraska last season—for tomorrow's meet.

"He's healthy but we're not expecting too much out of him," said Dirksen. "He gives us a little more depth and he takes the pressure off the other runners."

"When you replace your fifth runner with a runner who's better than your first runner, it will help," he said.

Fran ten Bensel, who won last year's Minnesota Invitational, is looking for her second first-place finish of the year. Ten Bensel won the Woody Greeno/Nebraska Invitational earlier this season.

"Fran's got a chance to win it," Dirksen said.

Dirksen is also looking for a strong performance from Theresa Stelling.

Dirksen said this invitational and others would help his team gear up for the Big Eight Championships.

"The season really starts at the Big Eight meet," he said.

DN weekend picks

Daily Nebraskan staffers pick the winners of the ten major college football games this weekend, with winners in bold:

- Iowa St. at **Oklahoma**
- Oklahoma St. at TCU
- Marshall at **Missouri**
- New Mexico St. at **Kansas St.**
- Stanford at **Notre Dame**
- USC at **Washington**
- Iowa at **Michigan**
- Georgia Tech at **N.C. St.**
- Tennessee at **LSU**
- UCLA** at Arizona
- Miami 23, Florida St. 17

Football team prepares for scrimmage

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska football team practiced for two hours Thursday in preparation for Friday's scrimmage at Memorial Stadium.

Injured quarterback Tony Veland—who has been out since late August with a broken collarbone—will not play in the scrimmage and probably not against Oklahoma State, Nebraska's next opponent.

"We'll see what the x-rays say and wait for the doctors to clear him," Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said. "He'll probably suit up for Oklahoma State, but won't play until Missouri."

Planetarium expands color, graphic capabilities

By Ingrid Youngquist
Staff Reporter

This year there is more than one reason to celebrate the opening of another season of laser light shows at the Mueller Planetarium.

This is the 15th year of laser light shows at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln planetarium and the first year for a new custom designed laser system, said Jack Dunn, planetarium coordinator.

Laser technology has come a long way since Lawrence Goodridge brought his "Laserworks" show to the planetarium in 1977.

The new state-of-the-art system was created by and installed by Greg Makhov from Lighting Systems Design of Florida, Dunn said.

In the past Makhov has worked with laser display systems as grand as the one at Epcot Center in Orlando, Fla., Dunn said.

"The new system has expanded graphic capabilities and is capable of producing a huge variety of colors and color variations," he said.

To be exact the new system has the capability in its palate to produce 16.8 million subtle color variations across the spectrum, Dunn said.

The biggest change in the graphic capabilities of the new software program is the ability to create blank spaces in laser designs, Dunn said.

For example, this means that to spell out a word the letters don't have to be connected, he said.

Because the software is more advanced than the software used with the old system, there will have to be all new shows, Dunn said.

"That means a lot of work for us," he said.

However, Dunn said, the work should be worth it.

"More colors, vibrant colors and

graphic capabilities will change the experience for the view a lot for the better," Dunn said.

"The shows before were good and now we have the capability to be in the state of the art."

Dunn said that one of the reasons they purchased the new system was to continue to grow instead of staying the same.

The Mueller Planetarium is one of only two places where visitors can go to see laser light shows in Nebraska. Until the University of Nebraska at Omaha added a laser system two years ago, UNL had the only system, Dunn said.

This weekend will be the opening of the "Laser Fantasies" and "Laser Visions" shows.

Friday and Saturday nights at 7, 9 and 11 p.m. will be the opening of the "Laser Fantasies" rock series when a special double-length 25th anniversary tribute to the British rock group Pink Floyd will be presented. Admission to that show will be \$6.

Sunday, Oct. 4, at 3:30 p.m., the "Laser Visions" family series will open when a new vision of the planetarium's Garth Brooks show will be presented. Admission will be \$4 for adults and \$2 for children.

What's up this weekend

James McMurtry (folk/country/blues) at the UNL Culture Center, 333 N. 14th St., today at 8 p.m. \$3 for students, \$4 non-students.

Jim Thackery and the Drivers (blues) at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., today and Saturday from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. \$5.

B.B. King at the Lied Center for Performing Arts, 12th and R streets, Saturday at 8 p.m.

Ames piano Quartet, Sheldon Art Gallery auditorium, 12th and R streets, Saturday at 8 p.m.

Lincoln Blues Fest, (features 8 bands) at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., Sunday at 5 p.m. \$4.

Moody Blues' performance successful, Lied director says



From Staff Reports

Tuesday night's Moody Blues concert, the first rock-oriented group to appear at the Lied Center for Performing Arts, went off without any problems, the center's director said.

"We're just too small," Chumbley said.

Chumbley complimented the sound technicians on both sides for working so well together in the "acoustically perfect" Lied Center to prevent any sound distortion or overamplification.

The sound technicians for both The Moody Blues and Pat Metheny "were very accommodating," he said.

Chumbley also said he had high hopes for the B.B. King concert this weekend and had not ruled out the possibility of another rock-oriented group appearing at the Lied.

"We'll take them when we can get them," he said.

New comedy's cheese-coated plot forces Hoffman into hero's role



By Laura Ray
Staff Reporter

"Hero" is a comedic satire about a small-time crook (Dustin Hoffman) and a hard-headed journalist (Geena Davis) and the tongue-in-cheek plot that brings them together.

Bernie LaPlante is a petty-theft con artist whose motto is "watching out for No. 1." He has a terrible day that climaxes when a plane crashes in front of his car.

Against his motto, Bernie halfheartedly saves the trapped passengers. Gale Gayling, the TV journalist, just happens to be on the plane and Bernie saves her life.

After the rescue, Bernie searches for, but fails to find, one of his \$100 loafers and disappears into the night.

Soon after, Gale's Channel 4 shows the shoe on national television with a reward of \$1 million for the hero of Flight 107. Unfortunately for Bernie, he gave him a ride after the fire trucks pushed his car off the bridge.

The homeless man's name is John Bubber (Andy Garcia), and as the world discovers, he is hero material inside and out.

While Bernie does time for credit card fraud, Bubber is America's newest



Dustin Hoffman, right, stars as a con artist who stumbles into heroism in the motion picture, "Hero."

est fad in heroism.

The movie overdoes some parts, such as Chevy Chase as the Channel 4 news director, but it worked as comic relief. But the plot thins when the satire gets too heavy.

Hoffman's character choice had a few remnants of "Rainman," but his acting shined through as always.

Garcia played the martyr to a hilt. He was perfect as the soft-spoken

hero.

The movie's ending declines somewhat as the plot gets coated in cheese. Aside from the two-by-four sarcasm slaps, the plot has an interesting basis, but Hoffman carries the film. Without Bernie, a man who knows his place, and knows when to step out of it and swear about it later, the movie could have been tragic.

"Hero" opens in theaters today.

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