

Best NU team ever not true, coach says

By Nick Hytrek
Senior Reporter

For now, Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne would like to see talk about this year's team being the best ever at Nebraska wait for a while.

"That's very premature," Osborne said. "We've played two excellent games."

After Nebraska dominated Big Eight foes Colorado and Kansas in back-to-back games, talk surfaced that this year's edition of the Cornhuskers might be the best Nebraska has ever fielded.

But Osborne said that little of that talk was heard after the Huskers beat Missouri three weeks ago.

"I think that after the Missouri game very few people would have said (we were the best ever) and we had the same cast of characters down there," he said.

But the Huskers were better than when they beat the Tigers 34-24, Osborne said.

"I think we have improved," he said. "I think we're a better team now than when we played Missouri. But to say that this is the best or one of the very best Nebraska teams would be very premature because we've got three, hopefully four games left."

"After the season's over I'll tell you how I feel about it."

Although he wouldn't say that this was the best Husker team ever, Osborne said there were positions on this year's team that would rank among the best in school history.

"This is one of our better offensive lines," he said. "I wouldn't say it's the best, but it's got a chance to be the best."

Derek Brown and Calvin Jones help make this season's offensive backfield one of Nebraska's elite units, Osborne said.

"At running back, when you throw Lance Lewis into the mix, those three guys are certainly very comparable to the very best we've had. At quarterback we're green but (Tommie Frazier's) a good athlete," Osborne said.

Osborne also cited the defense and said the kicking teams had done a good job.

"The kicking game is good," he said. "(Mike) Stigge's one of the best punters we've ever had. (Byron) Bennett's done a good job kicking off. The coverage teams have really been good."

But it's not like this year's Husker team had become good all of a sudden, Osborne said.

"I felt good about our team after the Washington game when nobody was saying it's a very good football team," he said. "I thought we played pretty well out there."

Thater ready for UCLA challenge

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

With the Big Eight-Pac 10 Volleyball Challenge coming up this weekend, Stephanie Thater is as confident as ever about her team's chances.

"Every weekend from here on out is so important," said Thater, Nebraska's All-American middle blocker. "Now it's pretty much a battle to see who can stick with it to the end."

The challenge, which will be played at Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles, will pit the Cornhuskers against top-ranked and undefeated UCLA on Saturday and against No. 10 USC on Friday.

The UCLA-Nebraska match will also pair two of the country's best players in Thater and Bruin outside hitter Natalie Williams, a two-time NCAA Player of the Year.

Thater said she wasn't looking to make the match into a showdown between her and Williams.

"I'm not focusing on that at all," Thater said. "I'm just concentrating on what I have to do to help the team be successful."

The tournament will also be the first match between UCLA and Nebraska since last season, when the Bruins won a four-game match in the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Last season, 11,032 fans — the most ever to attend a collegiate volleyball match — watched in

Lincoln.

Thater said she expected a similar turnout in Los Angeles.

"I'm sure they will have a big crowd there, but I don't think that will affect us at all," she said. "We have probably the toughest place to play, leading the nation in attendance, so a big crowd won't affect us."

Despite last year's loss to the Bruins, Thater said there was no revenge factor necessary for the Huskers to prepare.

"There is none (revenge) at all," Thater said. "They are a great team and deserve all the credit they have (gotten). I'm just glad to say I had the opportunity to play them."

Thater said every match was big

for the 18-2 Huskers, starting with this weekend. Just two weeks down the road is the Big Eight Tournament, followed by the NCAA Tournament.

"This is the best part of the season," Thater said. "Our toughest games are coming up and it's especially exciting since this is my last month."

Nebraska's gradual improvement is one reason Thater and her teammates are fired up for the weekend.

"We're doing real well right now and we keep improving," she said. "Any time you play well against a top team, it will help your confidence."



Shaun Sartin/DN

Nebraska fans attempt to tear down the goal posts in Memorial Stadium following the Cornhuskers' 49-7 win over Kansas on Saturday.

Postgame celebration skids to halt

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

Although the Kansas game resembled the Nebraska football team's thrashing of Colorado, the Cornhusker fans' postgame celebration did not.

Fans who stormed the field after Nebraska's 49-7 victory over Kansas were in for a surprise when they tried tearing down the goal posts as they did the week before.

This time the goal posts were greased down.

The precaution saved the university anywhere from \$4,000 to \$5,000, one UNL official said.

"Greasing the goalposts 'had been mentioned by a number of people, but I was the one who went through with it," said Butch Hug, athletic events manager. "There (weren't) as many people as the week before, but still enough to cause destruction."

Crowd control was a problem again, with oranges being tossed on the turf. A beer can was also thrown onto the playing surface by a student.

Nebraska athletic director Bob Devaney said he wasn't pleased with the fans' conduct, especially when Nebraska coach Tom Osborne had to use a referee's microphone to reprimand the crowd.

"Tom Osborne got on the microphone and told the fans to quit throwing things and that made it somewhat better, but he shouldn't have to do that," Devaney said.

Ken Cauble, chief of the UNL Police Department, said the crowd was much better behaved at the Kansas game than it was against Colorado.

"Colorado was probably one of the worst and unruly crowds I've ever seen," Cauble said. "A lot of people think it is just the students causing the trouble, but we have had plenty of trouble with other non-students and older people."

Cauble said rushing the field should not be something done after a win over a good Big Eight team.

"It's not like we just snapped a 50-game losing streak," Cauble said.

Hug echoed those sentiments.

"I didn't understand it against Colorado either," Hug said. "I can't figure out what the purpose of that kind of destruction and vandalism is."

Some students may be creating a bad name for Nebraska students and fans in general, Devaney and Hug said.

"There is a certain group of stu-

See GOALPOSTS on 7

Modern sports re-energized by 1970s revival

There's a possibility of Pittsburgh playing Dallas in the Super Bowl.

Alabama is again a collegiate football power, and the running game is being hailed at Nebraska.

Members of two of baseball's greatest dynasties — the New York Yankees and Cincinnati's "Big Red Machine" — have been all over the news, each landing managing jobs last week.

Did I miss a time warp to the 1970s?

Not that I mind. For me, some of sports' best memories come from that decade.

They were the years that formulated a lot of opinions that I still hold.

For example, listening to Denny Matthews and Fred White call Kansas

City Royals games on radio convinced me that the Royals were the most underrated, lucky team in the history of the sport. And even though Kansas City hasn't seen a glimpse of a division title in the last couple of years, my opinion hasn't changed.

Those same years also forged a hatred for the Steelers that still hasn't died. What's worse than a Cowboys fan suffering through a close loss to Terry Bradshaw and Lynn Swann in the Super Bowl?

Suffering through it twice.

Dallas has started 8-1 this season and the Cowboys are arguably the best team in football. Maybe, just maybe my '70s dream will come true this season and Dallas will finally get its shot at Super Bowl revenge.



John Adkisson

Let's put that thought on hold until January.

For me, not every '70s football memory has to do with the silver and blue.

There were great Husker running backs that will forever be linked with the decade. Guys like Rick Berns and I.M. Hipp and the traditional Oklahoma shootout made me look forward to Thanksgiving season for reasons other than the traditional grade school

party.

Maybe that's why, amid all the calling for an "Air Nebraska" the fans and the media have all been a part of, it's neat to see the 1992 Nebraska team run over opponents with the best ground attack in the country.

A look at this week's Top Ten shows that Alabama, Michigan, Nebraska and Notre Dame — four schools that embody strong coaching histories and reek of tradition — are again at the pinnacle of college football.

That's not a knock on newfound superpowers like Florida State and Colorado. Instead, it's a salute to programs who have stood the test of time and weathered the glare of the spotlight.

Just as college football teams have

achieved greatness, so have the baseball players that used to fill my time between sitcoms such as "One Day at a Time" and "Alice."

Tony Perez was hired as Cincinnati's manager last week, and Lou Piniella took the job as skipper of the Seattle Mariners. It's eerie when old, fat managers that you don't recognize turn into old, fat players that you do recognize.

But at least former greats are recognizable. When my kids ask me about the playing days of their team's manager, now I'll be able to give them some sort of an answer.

In a way, this whole '70s revival thing isn't much more of a phenom-

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