

Trip to Tokyo no vacation, Osborne says

By Nick Hytrek
Senior Reporter

For many people, a trip to Tokyo might be a nice vacation.

But for Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne and his players, their trip to the Far East won't be all fun and games.

The Cornhuskers will finish their regular season Saturday by playing Kansas State in the Coca-Cola Bowl in Tokyo.

The team left Tuesday for Kansas City, Mo., to make its flight to Tokyo. That means Husker players will miss four days of class.

Osborne said missed time left some of the players with mixed feelings about the trip.

"There are some guys that are really fired up about going over there and some that have a lot of papers and tests and things," Osborne said. "One of the concerns the players have had is if they can have some computer terminals and some word processors available over there so they can type papers and they want to set up a study room over there where they can do some school work."

Osborne said the time change could also affect his players. The team will arrive in Tokyo in the middle of the day, but it will be the middle of the night in Lincoln.

"I just am very hopeful that (the players) have been able to get a little bit of rest going into the trip. I hope we handle all of the travel and the time change," he said. "I hope everything works out."

Traveling in the middle of the week will disrupt the team's normal preparation schedule, but the Huskers have been able to compensate somewhat, Osborne said.

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NU football coach

Nebraska played Oklahoma last Friday and then took Saturday off. The Huskers then practiced Sunday, the normal day off when the team plays on Saturdays. The coaching staff has also put in its normal amount of preparation, Osborne said.

Osborne said missed preparation and classes were not the only concerns. Stadium facilities could also make things interesting, he said. The stadium the Huskers will play in is usually used for baseball.

"I know it will be a little bizarre," Osborne said. "My understanding is that the pressbox facilities are such that you can't see the field very well when it's set up for football. So in the past they've had pressbox coaches sitting the stands with headphones on."

Osborne said another team that played in Tokyo a few years ago brought a lot of video equipment. But once there, it was discovered the electrical sockets in the stadium didn't fit the equipment.

But the trip isn't all negative, Osborne said. Besides the money the athletic department will receive for playing in the game, the players should get something out of the trip, too, Osborne said.

"I think it may be an educational experience for our players," he said. "I'm sure most of them will never get to Japan otherwise."

Wildcats, Cornhuskers to meet on foreign soil

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

Kansas State hasn't been able to beat Nebraska on American soil for 23 years, so the Wildcats will try something different this year.

In an effort to reverse their luck against the Cornhuskers, Kansas State will play Nebraska halfway around the world in Japan's Coca-Cola Bowl.

The two teams will meet in the Big Eight's final regular season game in Tokyo 10 p.m. this Saturday.

Wildcat linebacker Brooks Barta

said that he hoped the change in scenery would be beneficial to Kansas State, and he looked forward to playing the Huskers in Japan.

"It's going to be a unique experience, plus we get to play Nebraska," he said. "It'll be neat to see a whole different culture."

But Barta said that the Wildcats couldn't let the attractions of Tokyo distract their attention from playing Nebraska.

"This could quite possibly affect

See WILDCATS on 8



Staci McKee/DN

Nebraska's Kate Galligan stumbles over Arizona State's Stacey Johnson after chasing a loose ball.

Huskers' second-half surge scorches Devils in opener

By Tim Pearson
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's basketball team started off their season with a fight, but it took the Cornhuskers some time to deliver the knockout punch.

Husker coach Angela Beck was pleased with her team's 86-79 win over Arizona State Tuesday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

"We put up a great fight," she said. "We hung in there and really battled hard. We could have folded, but we didn't."

The Sun Devils, who have been ranked as high as ninth in pre-

season polls, came out of the gates ready to run, jumping out to a 14-11 lead.

From then on in the first half, the Huskers adjusted to the Sun Devils' running game.

Guard Sara Offringa scored three straight baskets to give the Huskers a 26-20 lead, including one three-pointer.

Beck said that Offringa's baskets gave the Huskers a needed boost.

"Offringa hit a couple of key threes tonight," she said. "We didn't have to lean on (All-American Karen) Jennings as much."

The Sun Devils double-teamed

Jennings most of the night, but she still finished with a game-high 20 points, with 12 coming in the second half.

"(In the first half) we didn't get the ball inside at all," Jennings said. "Other people were doing the scoring, like Rissa (Taylor), who had a great first half."

Taylor, a senior forward, scored 10 points in the first half, making four of five shots.

The Huskers took a 43-35 lead into the locker room at halftime, but with three seconds left in the first half, they received a scare

See HUSKERS on 8

Miami QB deserves Heisman because he wins games

I haven't heard anyone in this state say that Miami quarterback Gino Toretta deserves to win the Heisman Trophy.

In Nebraska, the logic for not wanting to give Toretta the award goes something like this: We hate Miami. Nobody can seem to get past a deeply rooted disdain for the Hurricanes.

But Miami's 31-30, 23-3 and 22-0 Orange Bowl wins over the Cornhuskers are all history. There's no reason to hold a grudge. After all, it doesn't look like the Hurricanes will get another shot to bury Nebraska this season.

So here's why Toretta deserves the award:

He wins football games. Imagine this: A Nebraska quarterback, playing in a pass-oriented offense, leads the Huskers to 25 straight wins, a

national championship and breaks the records of former greats like Jerry Tagge, Vince Ferragamo and Turner Gill.

Would that guy deserve the Heisman if the Huskers were again 11-0 and headed into a second consecutive game for the national title on New Year's Day?

Sure he would.

As Tom Osborne says, though, it's more than winning. It's about being the best college player in the country.

Detractors will argue that any quarterback could step into Miami's system and throw for 2,500 yards in a season. But a look at the statistics shows that Toretta has fared better in his career than any Miami quarterback.

Others say that because Toretta isn't mobile, he won't be a good pro



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player. Agreed. But the Heisman Trophy isn't reserved for the best prospect in the country.

And the Hurricanes haven't feasted on the Sisters of the Poor. Toretta and Miami didn't play a schedule full of patsies, as did his two closest competitors—San Diego State's Marshall Faulk and Georgia's Garrison Hearst.

The Hurricanes won games against four teams that have been ranked in the Associated Press Top 10 (Florida State and Arizona at home and Penn State and Syracuse on the road), and beat two other teams (San Diego State

and West Virginia) that were at one time ranked in the AP Top 25.

His stats didn't come against a regular diet of teams like Georgia Southern, Vanderbilt, Kentucky, UTEP and Colorado State.

Playing behind a green offensive line, Toretta was able to make the plays in the big games that counted: He hit Lamar Thomas on a 33-yard pass to beat Florida State late in the fourth quarter while his opposition couldn't muster an offensive touchdown.

Add to all this the fact that the Hurricanes' practice facility was destroyed just a week before Miami's first game, and it's clear. Toretta has led his team through a difficult season and again put them in a position to win it all.

Who else has even come close?

Not Faulk, who was held to under 100 yards by Wyoming. His biggest outings came early in the year, and he wasn't even able to play in the Aztecs' season finale against Miami.

Certainly not Hearst, who admittedly has put up Herschel Walker-type numbers, but was not enough to lead his team to wins over either Florida or Tennessee.

The Heisman should go to Toretta, hands down. The silver lining for Nebraska fans is that they won't have to watch him prove he deserves the award in the Orange Bowl on New Year's Night.

Instead, they'll get a chance to see next year's likely winner—Florida State's Charlie Ward—run wild over the Huskers on Toretta's home turf.

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