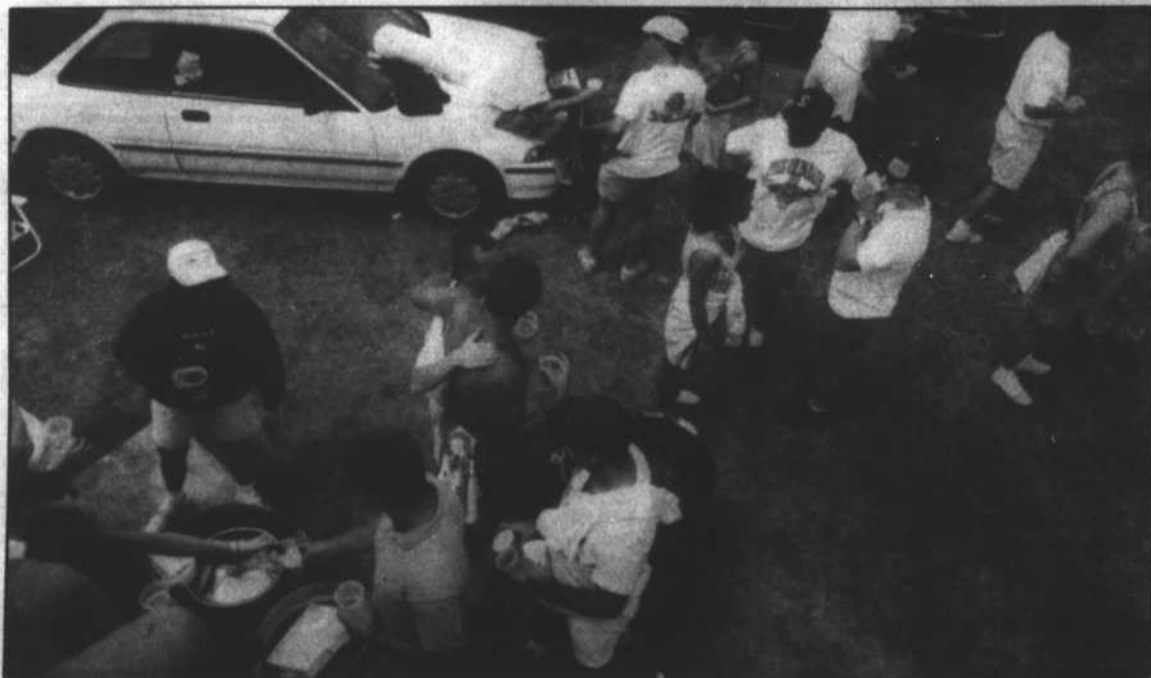
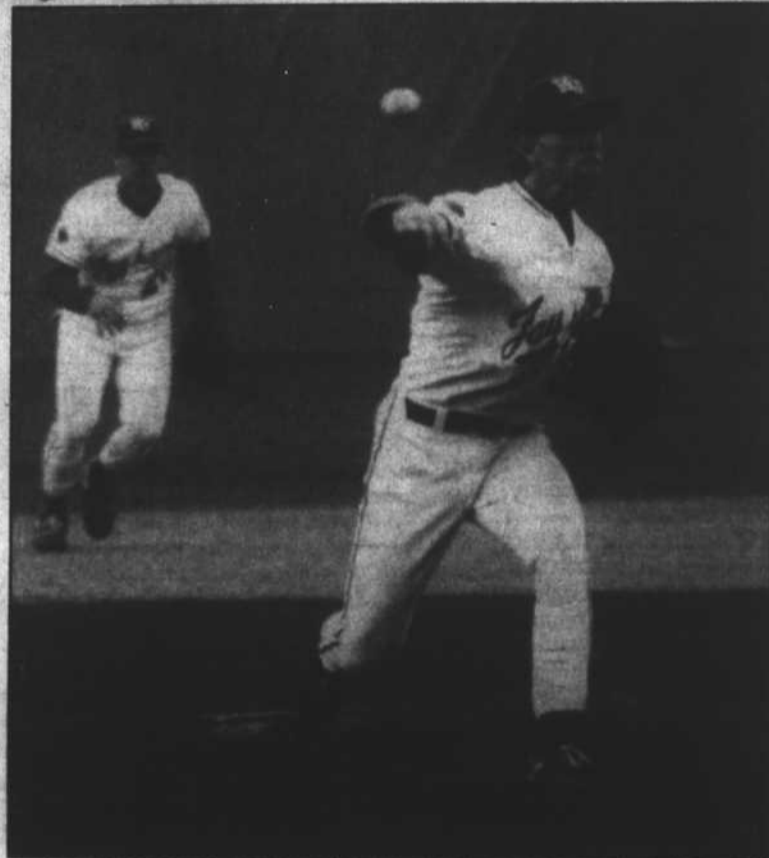


College World Series Blvd



Damon Lee/DN



Jeff Zelony/DN

Series brings tradition

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

OMAHA — Once again, the College World Series at Rosenblatt Stadium is drawing people from all ages and all places, who have nothing but praise for the annual event.

And the list of those who have made the trek to the CWS include students from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Many students say the CWS is a good way to kick off their summers while watching the best college baseball teams in the country.

"A group of my friends have come down here for probably the past five or six years," UNL student Brian Hickey said. "It's a great way to get our summer going and this is quality baseball out here."

Although Creighton is considered the host school, UNL students can be found in abundance throughout the crowd.

"This and Nebraska football games are the two best sporting events the state has to offer," Matt Miller said. "They're both great to party before and after."

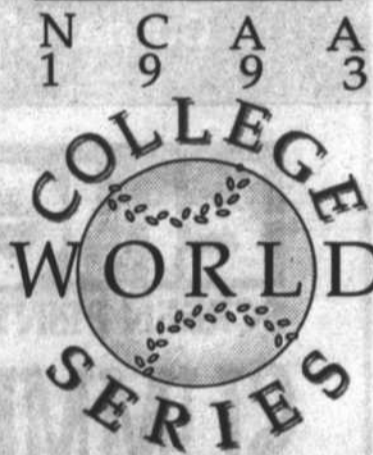
With its annual boost in attendance, the nationally-televised, week-long event, which ends on Saturday with the national championship game, has become more popular every year while bringing notoriety to Nebraska.

"I'm a long, hard fan of the College World Series. I love Omaha, the people are friendly and down to earth," said Ron DeFord of Austin, Texas, who has been coming to the CWS since 1981. "I think it would be absolutely criminal if they ever moved the College World Series from Omaha; you couldn't pick a better place in the country."

A group of friends from the Air Force have met for the past four years and consider themselves "Pro-

fessional Tailgaters." One of the tailgaters said they set up their trailers in Rosenblatt's parking lot on the day before play begins and leave after the first weekend of games is over.

"I live for this weekend," Dave Bartholet said. "This is a great place for baseball. People come in, do what they want, have a good time and everyone is easy to please."



Bartholet said he had seen people from such places as New York, Boston, Washington D.C., Minnesota and Los Angeles present at this year's gathering.

"Nebraska doesn't have beaches or mountains, but they do have the College World Series and they make the most of it," he said.

Jen Stock of Minneapolis said she meets a group of friends in Omaha every year for the CWS.

"We come here because we love the atmosphere and the College World Series in general," Stock said. "It is always such a friendly crowd wherever you go."

Saturday's contest between Arizona State and Wichita State also had more than just the average baseball fans in attendance. Nick

John and Chris Felt were married in the morning and then headed straight over to Rosenblatt with the rest of the wedding party to take in a game before their evening reception.

The Johns, who currently live in St. Louis, said baseball was a vital part of their lives, and Nick even went as far as to have St. Louis Cardinals all-star shortstop Ozzie Smith propose to Chris from him at a game in St. Louis.

"Baseball is kind of our life. The crowd we brought is having a good time," Nick John said. "It took some time convincing them to buy into this idea, but I got everyone to come."

The highlight on the afternoon for the newlyweds at the stadium was when a foul ball blooped down the left field line into the wedding party crowd and landed in Chris John's seat.

"This has to be an omen — especially about baseball," she said.

But baseball isn't the only reason the seats are so packed during the College World Series week, according to one UNL student.

"There is always a lot of guys here," UNL student Makayla Steinhoefel said. "I mostly enjoy going to the games with my friends and having a good time. We've been going for quite a few years now and I guess it's turning into tradition."

Mel Delich, director of the Professional Tailgaters, said the CWS is an experience that should be enjoyed by all.

"This is a real laid back atmosphere," Delich said. "I recommend to anyone, especially from the Omaha area, that hasn't gone to a College World Series to get here soon — they don't know what they're missing."



Damon Lee/DN



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Clockwise from top: a tailgate party in a parking lot across from Rosenblatt.

Kansas pitcher Jimmy Walker fires a pitch in the Jayhawks' elimination game against Long Beach State.

With the addition of more than 1,500 seats to Rosenblatt, the CWS is on pace this year to break its attendance record set last year.

Chirs and Nick John, accompanied with their wedding party, came from their nuptials to Rosenblatt last Saturday to watch a CWS matchup between Arizona State and Wichita State.