

## Swede digs her spot on NU's team

By Tim Pearson  
Senior Reporter

When freshman outside hitter Maria Hedbeck walked onto the volleyball court at the NU Coliseum before her first home match at Nebraska, she was astonished at what she saw.

She came out to a crowd that was 50 times larger than any that she had ever played in front of.

"I'm used to playing in front of 50 people back home," Hedbeck said. "So I was nervous the first time I played in front of that many people."

"My legs were shaking, and I didn't do anything right. It took me about 1 1/2 games for me to get used to it."

Hedbeck, who is from Sollentuna, Sweden, is just the second foreign athlete to ever play for Cornhusker coach Terry Pettit in his 19 seasons. Debbie Brand, of Australia, completed her eligibility last year.

Hedbeck established herself in Sweden as one of the top volleyball players in the country. She was the left-side starter on the Swedish National Team last year as a high school athlete.

Hedbeck said international competition was similar to collegiate volleyball except for a few things.

"They played at a higher level there, and the blockers are much big-

See HEDBECK on 8

## Stokes looks for big test against NU

By Mitch Sherman  
Staff Reporter

UCLA split end J.J. Stokes has some big shoes to fill, but that doesn't seem to bother him at all.

In fact, Stokes said, it drives him to perform at an even higher level.

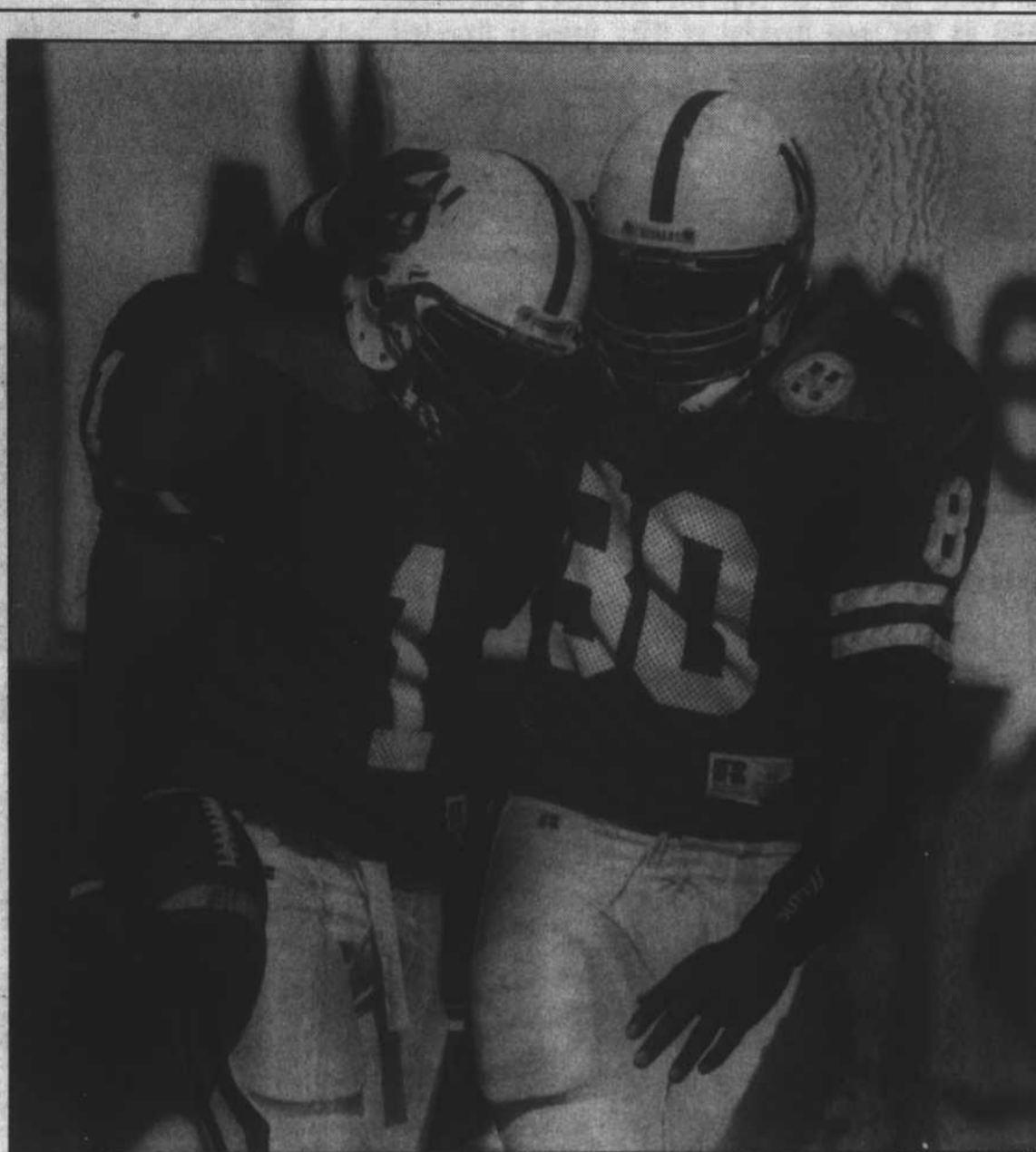
Homer Smith, UCLA's offensive coordinator, said Stokes had the potential to be better than four former UCLA receivers including two players playing in the NFL — the Los Angeles Rams' Flipper Anderson and San Francisco's Mike Sherrard.

Stokes said only hard work and good luck would get him to that point.

"I think that I have all the tools to match up with them," the 6-foot-4, 214-pound junior said. "I just hope I get all the chances they had."

As a sophomore, Stokes ranked fifth in the Pacific 10 Conference with 66.2 receiving yards per game. He also set a UCLA sophomore record

See STOKES on 8



Travis Heying/DN

I-back Lawrence Phillips is congratulated by tight end Trumane Bell after scoring a touchdown in the second half of Nebraska's 50-27 victory over Texas Tech. Phillips fumbled on the two-yard line but recovered the ball before it bounced out of bounds.

## What a rush Freshman I-back starts with a bang

By Jeff Singer  
Senior Editor

Two months ago, becoming Nebraska's No. 2 I-back was probably the farthest thing from Lawrence Phillips' mind.

But because of a combination of Cornhusker injuries and a quick start to his college career, Phillips is now one of the main components of Nebraska's rushing attack.

Just a couple of months ago, the 18-year-old freshman from West Covina, Calif., was living in the Tina Mack Youth Home for boys.

Now on his first trip back to Southern California, Phillips will be the first backup to starting I-back Damon Benning when Nebraska plays UCLA Saturday at the

— 66 —  
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—Phillips  
Nebraska I-back

Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

"A lot of people told me when I left California that they would maybe see me in two or three years on TV," Phillips said. "They probably didn't think they would see me so soon."

And a few years ago, Phillips might have had a hard time believ-

ing he would be a key part of a Top 10 college football team.

While growing up in one of Los Angeles' suburbs, he often skipped school, eventually leading him to become a ward of Los Angeles County at 13. He then lived at the

See PHILLIPS on 8

## NU back won't go to UCLA

From Staff Reports

I-back Calvin Jones will not make the trip to UCLA this week, Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Wednesday.

"He's a ways off," Osborne said. "He might possibly play some against Colorado State, but I look for him maybe at Oklahoma State, unless things really improve drastically."

Osborne said quarterback Tommie Frazier was better but not at full speed yet.

Outside linebacker Donta Jones also continues to improve, Osborne said.

"He was moving better (Wednesday night)," Osborne said of Donta Jones. "It's still touch and go, but at least he was better."

And he put himself in a better position to travel to Los Angeles for the UCLA game, he said.

"If he can go full speed, fine," Osborne said. "But a guy in his position, playing 75 to 80 percent isn't going to be any good. We'd be better with (linebackers) Dwayne Harris in there or (Jerad) Higman."

Linebacker Darren Williams hurt his foot during practice, Osborne said. His status is not yet known.

## Strickland will wait to decide on third sport

By Jeff Griesch  
Senior Reporter

Erick Strickland said Tuesday that he would wait until after the upcoming basketball season to decide whether he would play football at Nebraska.

Strickland is still considering playing football, he said, but he feels it is in his best interests to wait until he completes his sophomore season of basketball.

"I won't decide until spring if I am going to play football," Strickland said.

Strickland said he might still occasionally observe practices this season.

While trying to decide last week, Strickland watched parts of at least two football practices.

Strickland also met with Nebraska basketball coach Danny Nee last week.

After a week of weighing his options, Strickland said he "decided it would be best to wait until after the basketball season to make a decision on football."

## You gotta love the sissies at the U.S. Open — and Nancy

The first two weeks of September represent a special time of year for me.

Not only is it the two-week period that I designate as "shower time," but it is the magical fortnight of the U.S. Open Tennis Championships.

Some people might say tennis is a sissy sport and if your only exposure to it is the Nebraska men's team, then that might have some validity.

But the U.S. Open captures the true essence of sport.

It's the only tournament in the world where a common street thug can sit next to New York mayor David Dinkins and they can yell "hit a forehead, hairball" to Andre Agassi in unison.

And speaking of the hairy one, what a tourney Andy Agassi had. He battled perennial superstar Tomas — uh, who? — Enquist in the first round for four hours finally succumbing to the Swede's big groundstrokes 6-2 in the fifth.

In his defense though, he apparently said that his hair was beginning to mat by the fourth set.

In all seriousness, the "Zen master" looked sluggish and tentative on the court. A player of his stature should be rolling through an unranked 20 year-old in a fifth set.

Instead, the only thing rolling was me trying to imagine him and Barbara Streisand together.

Maybe he can be in Yentl II: Hanukkah and Overheads. I only kid the barber-hater. Hey, image is everything — although a first-round win might be something, too.

Anyway, the Open has become a gathering of the gods for me. Players like Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe and Pete Sampras — whom I regard as the ugliest man in tennis — have held me in awe for a decade.

But it is not the tennis that enamors me, it is the atmosphere of New York.

The New York tennis crowds are a melting pot of types and nationalities



Beau Finley

of people. Just sitting in the stands at Flushing Meadows, you can hear conversations in 10 different languages. It's a lot like going to a Nebraska men's tennis match.

However, there are drawbacks to the U.S. Open crowds. At times, I've seen some nasty fights in the crowd. Usually, the police are able to separate Jim Courier and McEnroe from the spectators before they really hurt anyone. But, still, it's scary.

I figure if Monica Seles had been stabbed at the Open, the assailant would have gone after her purse, too. It's a rough crowd.

This year, the players were rough, too. The biggest problem the Open

faced was all the complaining the players did about the line calls. Granted, there were several poor calls by the judges but these players turn into Steve Austin, the bionic man, once they step onto the court.

My remedy would be this: A player can moan twice in a match about whatever they choose — line calls, the weather, the weight of their spouse, how their mother never loved them, etc. But after the second time, if a player whines, the line judge can take a swing at them.

Tennis players, though hot-tempered, are invariably big wussies. I figure any line judge under the age of 60 could take a tennis player. Not only would this curtail that insufferable complaining, it would be another source of entertainment for the restless Open crowds.

Maybe Las Vegas could get involved and tennis wagering could be heightened. This would produce more tennis revenue and perhaps spark more

interest in the sport, especially in the Mafia.

Picture this: I call Vegas and put down a C-note on Jennifer Capriati getting floored by the net judge in the third set. Tennis, fighting and money — uhh, huh-huh, huh-huh, that's cool.

Even cooler is this dream I have. There is this pony and it's got a tutu on and it's sitting between Nancy Reagan and myself and ... wait, that's my other dream. Sorry about that.

I have this dream of going to the U.S. Open just once — not to play or anything, just to be a part of the majesty. No other sporting event matches up to it. I mean, what other event would allow you to stalk Boris Becker for an entire two weeks. That's what I call a good time.

I hope I bump into Nancy while I'm there. Then my life could be complete.

Finley is a first-year law student and a Daily Nebraskan Sports columnist.