

November game could revive Sooner-Husker rivalry

Gibbs' Sooners against the "Big Three"



	Overall record	Colorado, vs. Texas, and Nebraska
1989	7-4	0-3-0
1990	8-3	1-2-0
1991	9-3	0-3-0
1992	5-4-2	0-2-1

DN graphic

By Jeff Singer
Senior Editor

The Nebraska-Oklahoma rivalry hasn't meant much beyond conference pride in the last few years.

But this year, the Sooners and Cornhuskers could be on a collision course for their first meaningful matchup since 1988, when Nebraska beat Oklahoma 7-3 in a battle for the Big Eight Title.

Sooner coach Gary Gibbs said that if things continue to go right this season, the Huskers could see an undefeated Oklahoma team come into Lincoln on Nov. 26.

"I think we've improved and can realistically expect to compete with

everyone on our schedule," Gibbs said. "If we can stay healthy and have a little luck, you just never know."

The prospect of the two teams battling for the Big Eight title improved on Saturday when the No. 10 Sooners beat Iowa State 24-7 in Ames, Iowa, to raise their record to 4-0. Oklahoma has also beaten Texas Christian, Tulsa and upset then-No. 5 Texas A&M 44-14 for its other victories this season.

This year's start for the Sooners might be a sign that they have begun to recover from the sanctions placed on them by the NCAA for recruiting and other violations. The probation lasted for three seasons.

Despite having winning records

during their probationary years, the Sooners had a 1-10-1 record from 1989-92 against their "Big Three" rivals — Nebraska, Texas and Colorado.

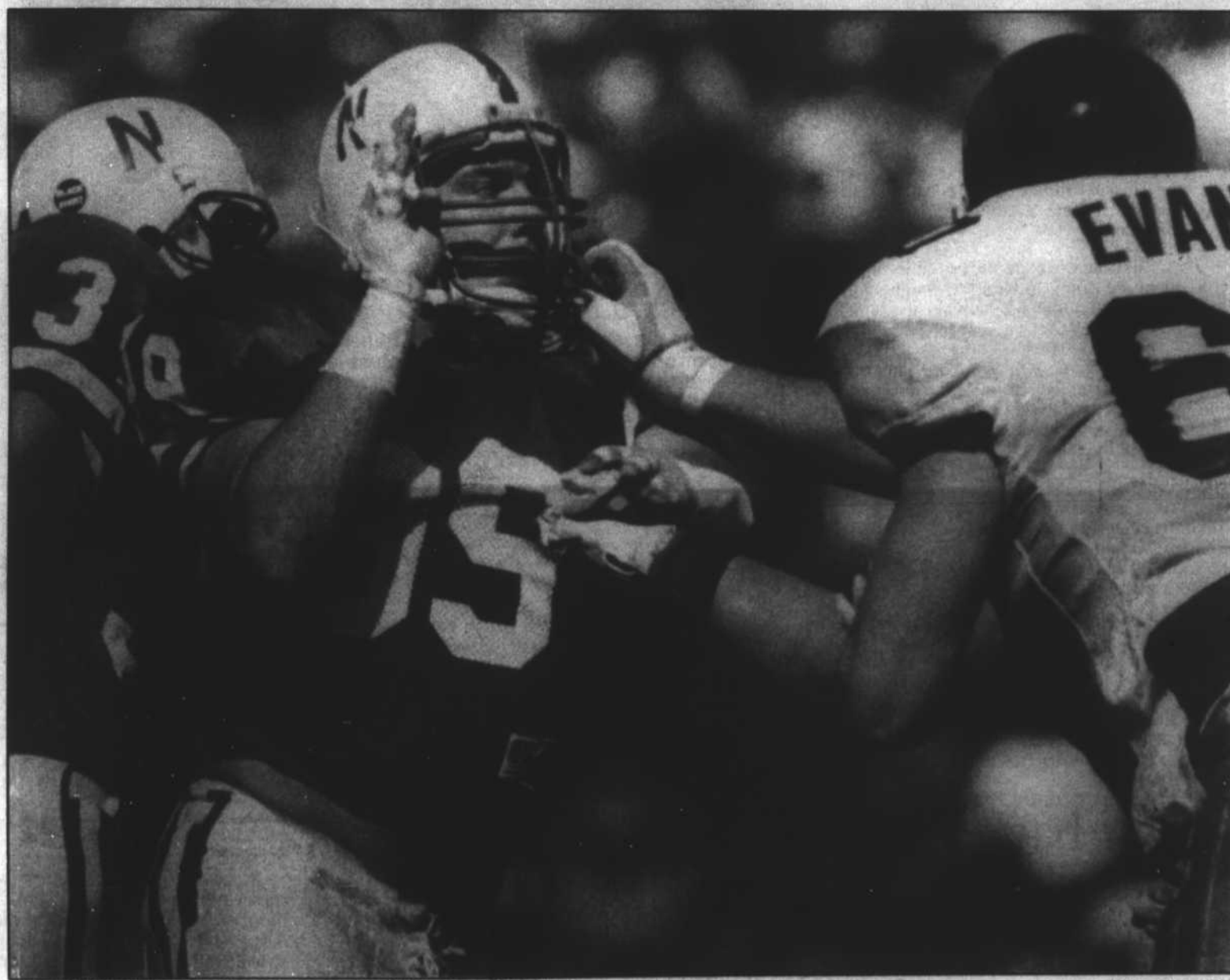
But, Gibbs said, he wants to see that record improve starting this season.

"We're not where we were at in the mid-'80s when we were dominant," he said. "But even with being hit hard by the sanctions, our last two recruiting classes have been solid in their depth and quality, and the foundation is there for us to continue to build."

Oklahoma will get its first shot at the "Big Three" this weekend when

See **SOONERS** on 8

Huskers spend week evaluating progress



William Lauer/DN

Nebraska nose tackle Terry Connealy, left, fends off the block of Colorado State's Brandon Evans during the Cornhuskers' win over Colorado State. Connealy, a 6-foot-5, 275-pound junior from Hyannis, has a season total of 11 tackles, including 4 1/2 for losses. Connealy had just 4 1/2 tackles for losses during all of last season.

Connealy calls for better effort in Big 8 hunt

By Derek Samson
Staff Reporter

Nebraska nose tackle Terry Connealy said the Cornhuskers' week off wasn't exactly devoted to rest and relaxation.

Despite a 4-0 record, Connealy, a 6-foot-5, 275-pound junior from Hyannis, said the Huskers were far from satisfied.

"It was definitely a goal of ours to go undefeated, so I'm not surprised we made it through the non-conference without a loss," Connealy said. "The thing about it is we didn't play too great and we're going to have to play better if we want to go through the Big Eight undefeated."

"But I think it will help us prepare and help our injury situation."

The plethora of Husker injuries — including those to outside linebackers Donta Jones and Bruce Moore — could be looked at in a positive way, Connealy said.

"We would have liked to get to this point without all the injuries, but in a way that could help us," he said. "It should make us a little tougher. We had a lot of good players beat up and we still came through. It is going to benefit us in the long run."

As will the Huskers' switch to a 4-3 defense this season, Connealy said. While it took some getting used to, he said, the defense is beginning to reap rewards from the attacking style. Connealy has benefitted with 11 total tackles so far this year — 4 1/2 for losses.

"We played just a little of this defense last year and I thought it

See **CONNELLY** on 8

Bus ride almost busts NU volleyball bubble

By Tim Pearson
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team's first bus trip almost resulted in a loss to Iowa State on Saturday.

The three-hour drive to Ames to play the Cyclones took a toll on the seventh-ranked Cornhuskers, Nebraska assistant coach Cathy Noth said.

The Huskers improved to 13-1 with a 15-8, 15-6, 13-15, 15-5 victory over the Cyclones before 617 fans at the Iowa State Physical Education Center.

"Coach (Pettit) and I were talking about it," Noth said. "If we had an experienced team with five seniors, we'd be able to handle the trip and get the job done in an hour."

"We, as coaches, have to tell ourselves that we have some inexperienced players. But we can only use this excuse once."

The Huskers — with two freshman

starters and two others seeing significant playing time — improved to 2-0 in the Big Eight, but it wasn't easy, Noth said.

"This was basically a match where we weren't too organized," she said. "We were able to come back and win the first two games, and they won the third game."

"Iowa State is not a strong and competitive Top 20 team. But when we got disorganized, they ran off some points on us."

Nebraska had 24 attacking errors and 17 service errors against the Cyclones.

Part of the organization problem was because of setter Nikki Stricker's sore ankle, Noth said.

Stricker was held out of a couple of practices last week because of her ankle, Noth said, so she wasn't as

sharp as usual.

"It wasn't one of her best matches," Noth said. "She wasn't connecting with Allison Weston or Jen McFadden."

"We wanted to be cautious with Nikki, so we held her out a couple days last week."

With Stricker at less than 100 percent, other Huskers had to step up and perform.

Noth said she was pleased with the performances of junior Kelly Aspegren and freshmen Stephanie Clerc and Kate Crnich.

Aspegren, an outside hitter from Callaway, had a career-high 15 kills against the Cyclones.

"Kelly played a good match on the right side," Noth said. "She was organized out there."

Noth said the play of the Husker bench keyed the win, which was the Huskers' 41st straight victory against

the Cyclones.

"People came off the bench and contributed," she said. "Kate Crnich came in and served five points for us and Stephanie Clerc came in and dug some balls."

Sophomore outside hitter Billie Winsett led the Huskers with 22 digs, which was 4 shy of Kathi DeBoer's Nebraska school record of 26.

The Huskers used the bus ride back to Lincoln to see what they did wrong against the Cyclones, Noth said.

"We watched the tape of the match all the way home," she said. "We didn't have a lot of blocks, and we couldn't get balls to attack."

"This opens their eyes, and now we really have to buckle down and get ready for road trips."

The Huskers' next two matches will be on the road. They will play at Oklahoma on Saturday and at No. 12 Colorado on Oct. 13.

Match stats

Nebraska def.
Iowa State

15-8, 15-6, 13-15, 15-5

Nebraska leaders:

BLOCKS: 7 Jen McFadden

ASSISTS: 46 Nikki Stricker

KILLS: 15 Kelly Aspegren

HITTING PERCENTAGE: .421 McFadden



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