

## Healed Huskers ready to take field

By Jeff Griesch  
Senior Reporter

The list of players that had been injured seemed to run on forever during Monday's press conference.

The names of Calvin Jones, Tommie Frazier, Bruce Moore, Donta Jones, Joel Wilks, Abdul Muhammad and Corey Dixon rolled off Tom Osborne's tongue in a steady and methodical fashion that made it seem like Osborne had reported their injuries 1,000 times.

But for the first time since the start of the season, these were not the names of newly injured players, but newly healthy players.

The Husker football team was hoping to heal during its week off, Osborne said, and it did.

Frazier's and Donta Jones' ankles are healthy. Muhammad's ankle and knee are both better but still not com-

pletely healed.

Dixon's sore back and Moore's sore groin are improved, and Calvin Jones' knee is nearing 100 percent.

"The week off has been good," Osborne said. "Overall, we should be in better shape than at any time this season."

Osborne said Calvin Jones' return should have the biggest impact on Thursday night's game against Oklahoma State. Jones probably will start, Osborne said.

Although freshman Lawrence Phillips was the leading rusher in the Big Eight after four games, Osborne said, the Huskers had been missing something at I-back.

However, it was not noticeable until Jones returned to practice.

"He just gets through things faster," Osborne said. "You don't realize that you're missing it until you see it again."

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*I think (Calvin) will be ready to go. He'll start and he'll play just like nothing ever happened. At least that's what I plan on.*

— Osborne  
Nebraska football coach

Osborne said Jones' return would add experience and stability to the I-back position.

"We have not been unstable at I-back, but I would say on the average these younger guys have made, I think, collectively four or five mistakes a game," Osborne said.

"I am not talking a major thing like a fumble or something like that. It may be something like going the wrong way or missing a pass-protection block

or an audible."

Osborne said he thought Jones would be close to full speed Thursday.

"I think the question is, 'Is Calvin Jones 90 percent better than someone else at 100 percent?'" Osborne said. "If for some reason, he is not feeling well, then he is not going to play."

"I think he'll be ready to go. He'll start, and he'll play just like nothing ever happened. At least that's what I plan on."

### BIG 8 CONFERENCE Round-up

All Games				
Team	W	L	T	Pct.
Oklahoma	4	0	0	1.000
Kansas State	4	0	0	1.000
Nebraska	4	0	0	1.000
Oklahoma State	3	1	0	.750
Colorado	2	2	0	.500
Kansas	2	3	0	.400
Missouri	1	2	1	.375
Iowa State	1	4	0	.200

Saturday's Results	
Oklahoma 24, Iowa State 7	
Oklahoma State 27, Texas Christian 22	
Kansas 24, Colorado State 6	
Missouri 10, SMU 10	

DN graphic

## New limits to take toll, coaches say

By Jeff Griesch  
Senior Reporter

Even though Iowa State lost to Oklahoma on Saturday, Cyclone coach Jim Walden said he thought the Oklahoma football program was a long way from where it was before probation.

The Sooners are 4-0 and have moved into the Top 10, but Walden said that Oklahoma was far from the skill level of its national championship team in 1985.

Walden said his opinion was not based on his view of Gary Gibbs' ability as Oklahoma's coach, but on the talent level of Division I football programs around the country.

Because of new limitations on recruiting and scholarships, and the new academic requirements that will be implemented in 1995, Division I college football will never again reach the overall talent level it achieved in the mid-1980s, Walden said.

"The talent level in the United States is dropping, and it is not going to get better," Walden said during the Big Eight coaches' weekly teleconference. "The talent level of '85, '86, or '87 is never going to be seen again in the '90s."

The NCAA has cut the number of football scholarships a school can give

See COACHES on 8

## Ex-tight end tackles move from offense

By Mitch Sherman  
Staff Reporter

As a true freshman in 1989, Billy Wade envisioned himself as the Nebraska tight end of the future.

Little did he know that two years later, he would go from blocking and catching passes to chasing down quarterbacks and taking on 300-pound offensive linemen.

"I pretty much thought I was going to play tight end when I came here," Wade said. "That's what I was recruited for."

After catching one touchdown pass as a sophomore, the 6-foot-5, 260-pound senior from Houston switched to defensive tackle during the 1991 season.

While he missed the glory of offense at first, Wade said, he has come to appreciate playing on the other side of the ball.

"It would have been interesting to see where my career would have went at tight end," Wade said. "But once I was committed to defense, I was committed to it and I loved it."

He has reaped rewards from his switch.

See WADE on 8



Al Schaben/DN

A storybook ending thwarted: Nolan Ryan, shown here pitching in July during one of his last starts at Arlington Stadium, was scheduled to pitch against Kansas City's George Brett in the final game of both players' careers Sunday. But Ryan was unable to pitch after tearing a tendon in his elbow in September.

## Brett, Ryan leave legacy, lifetime of memories

When I woke up Monday, I felt a void.

Something was wrong. Something inconceivable. Something unbelievable.

Something unthinkable.

Baseball without George Brett. I've lived 21 years. Brett was in the big leagues for 20 seasons.

Brett and baseball: That's all I — and a generation of fans — have known. And that's all I ever wanted to know.

Before I was old enough to truly know who Brett was, my dad was dressing me up in "Property of Kansas City Royals" baseball shirts with Brett's No. 5 on the back.

Before I even knew how truly amazing approaching .400 was, I was in the upper deck of Royals Stadium watching Brett go 3-for-5 to raise his average to .405 in 1980.

Before I knew what pine tar was, I watched with a 12-year-old's astonishment as Brett cycloned out of the Yankee Stadium dugout, fists clenched, arms raised, eyes bulging as he tried to



Todd Cooper

get back the home run that Billy Martin and four umpires had stolen from him.

Before I ever won anything, I watched as Brett led the Royals to two of the most amazing come-from-behind victories — against Toronto and St. Louis in 1985 — in postseason play.

And before I could bottle and cherish all that Brett stood for, he left the game.

It was supposed to be a storybook ending Sunday.

Brett vs. Nolan Ryan. Midwestern royalty vs. the true Texas Ranger. Their careers ending on a collision course.

Ryan glaring out from below the bill of his cap and just above the high kick of his left leg.

Brett peering over his right shoulder while leaning back on his left leg. Ryan ripping a few heaters by Brett. Brett banging a few hits back past the mound.

But it didn't work out in these baseball gods' — George's and Nolan's — plans.

Even with the farewell tour, Ryan's season disappeared faster than his Texas heaters did in a catcher's mit.

And fittingly, Brett left the game just like he used to stretch a routine single into a double.

Faster than you could catch — and hold onto — him.

Maybe it was the best way for both players to end their careers. With a handshake. Brett and Ryan sought each other out after the game, flashed their ear-to-ear smiles and shook hands.

Brett and Ryan were what Joe Dimaggio, Ted Williams and Sandy Koufax were to our fathers: heroes to a generation.

In a world that desperately needs dreamers, they gave generations

one last image Sunday to ponder forever:

Two gritty players leaving baseball behind in the sunset of Texas. Their accomplishments glowing over them. Their careers long, but all too short.

Thankfully, Brett left the way he played.

With dignity. With passion. With that smile on his face, the dimples in his cheeks, the glow in his eyes.

And with him, he left a part of me and a generation.

No one — certainly no pampered player today — could have ever shaped my childhood the way George did.

No one but Brett could have compelled me to stuff 10 pieces of baseball card bubblegum into my mouth to imitate the chew in his cheek. No one besides Brett could have possessed me to pull my stirrups up to my knees during 10th grade baseball despite my teammates' catcalls.

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