

Nebraska setter Nikki Stricker, who broke the school career assist record last Saturday, is leading the Cornhuskers through one of their toughest seasons.



Tuesday

50/25

Today, partly sunny and breezy. Wednesday, dry with highs in the 50s.

Four picked as finalists for NU president

By Steve Smith
Senior Reporter

The NU presidential search committee unanimously selected four men as finalists for president Monday.

The NU Board of Regents likely will narrow the list to one this weekend.

The finalists for the position are:

• Warren Baker, president of Cal-

ifornia Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif.;

• Constantine Curris, president of the University of Northern Iowa;

• Dennis Smith, the executive vice chancellor at the University of California-Irvine;

• Gregory O'Brien, University of New Orleans chancellor.

University of Nebraska Corporation Secretary J.B. Milliken said he expected the four finalists to visit Lincoln this week to meet campus

chancellors, students, administration officials and the media.

Although plans for the finalists' visits have to be finalized, Milliken said, Smith and Baker probably will be in Lincoln on Wednesday. O'Brien and Curris are expected to visit Thursday.

Milliken said he expected the regents to call a special meeting this weekend, where they would select Martin Massengale's successor.

Regent Chairman John Payne of

Kearney said the board would interview the candidates during their Lincoln visits and decide shortly thereafter.

"It's not set in stone when we'll meet," Payne said. "We're shooting for this weekend." Search Committee Co-chairman Rob Raun of Minden said the nine-month search was "a grueling process," but it had excellent results.

"I feel that (the search) has led to a successful progression for the univer-

sity system," Raun said. "We feel we've made great progress."

Committee Co-chairwoman Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said the nearly completed search was surprisingly successful.

The search process seemed impossible at first, she said, but things soon fell into place.

"This is the first time I've been involved with a search of this magni-

See SEARCH on 3

Witnesses tell of house searches, stolen guns

Bjorklund trial update

► A .38-caliber shell casing was found under Bjorklund's washing machine by his landlord. Police say Bjorklund used a .38-caliber revolver in the slaying of Harms.

► Harms purchased a green B.U.M. Equipment jacket at Maurices in July, the store manager testified. Harms was wearing the jacket when she disappeared.

By Alan Phelps
Senior Reporter
and Jeff Zeleny
Senior Editor

During the sixth day of Roger Bjorklund's first-degree murder trial Monday, witnesses told jurors of house searches, stolen guns and clothes worn by Candice Harms.

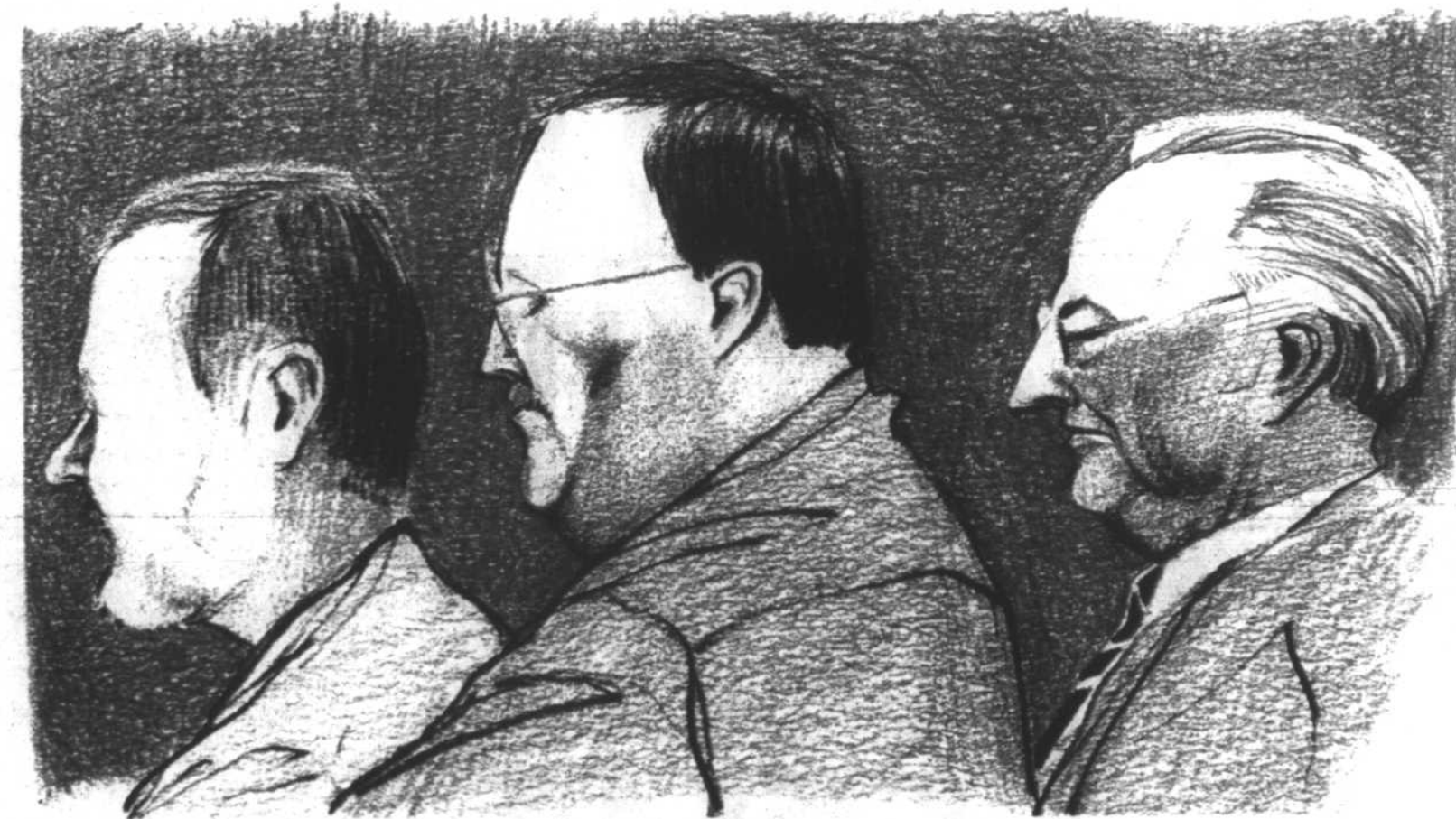
Law enforcement officers and Bjorklund's former landlord testified that a .38-caliber shell casing was found under a washing machine in the house where Bjorklund lived before he was arrested.

Police say Bjorklund used a .38-caliber revolver and Scott Barney used a .380-caliber handgun in the 1992 slaying of Harms, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln student.

Dennis Duckworth, a Lincoln Police Department investigator, said he searched Bjorklund's former residence, 610 S. 52nd St., on Dec. 2 with three other officers and an FBI agent. At the time, the police were searching for evidence to connect Bjorklund with a string of robberies.

Duckworth said they seized .223 rifle ammunition, .357-caliber rounds, a pair of brown gloves and an address book.

Duckworth and another officer, Richard Kohles, returned to the house



David Badders/DN

Chief Deputy Public Defender Scott Helvie (left), Roger Bjorklund and Special Deputy Public Defender Richard Goos during Bjorklund's first-degree murder trial.

Dec. 8 to look for evidence in connection with the Harms' murder case.

Kohles said he took from the garage of the house a plastic wheel with duct tape and a shovel with dirt. The dirt was later sent to the FBI crime lab in Washington, D.C. along with samples of dirt taken from Harms' grave site, he said.

In their testimony, Duckworth and Kohles said the two house searches

were very thorough. Kohles said the houses' air ducts and floors were checked on Dec. 8, but no .380-caliber or .38-caliber ammunition or spent shells were found.

"Would you say you examined the whole floor of the top level and basement of the residence?" Chief Public Defender Scott Helvie asked Kohles. "Yes, sir," he replied.

However, Terry Kraft, Bjorklund's

landlord at the time, told the jury he found a .38-caliber shell casing under a washing machine on Jan. 31.

Kraft said Mike Livingston moved into the house about two weeks before Christmas, after the Bjorklunds' lease had been terminated. A month and a half later, Kraft was called to the property to fix a washing machine the Bjorklunds had left behind.

Kraft said he put the casing in his

pocket and later turned it over to police. Neither Kraft nor Livingston said they owned a .38-caliber revolver.

All items police found were offered into evidence and accepted by District Judge Donald Endacott.

Andrew Lyons of Lincoln testified that a .380 semi-automatic pistol and

See TRIAL on 3

Assault victim plans to stay at UNL

By Andrea Kaser
Senior Editor

Boon-Chung "Marco" Ong said he and his friends expected to spend the early morning hours of Oct. 17 talking and smoking cigarettes at Broyhill Plaza.

Instead, the UNL student from Malaysia was beaten to semi-consciousness in front of the Nebraska Union before his friends arrived.

It was just after midnight on what police called an otherwise quiet Homecoming night. Ong said he was walking along the ledge of the fountain while waiting for his friends.

Ong said that while he was standing on the ledge, he noticed a group of about 10 black men leaving the Nebraska Union.

They didn't seem to be intoxicated or to be behaving out of the ordinary, he said. They looked as innocuous as a group of people leaving a movie theater, he said.

Ong said he didn't feel threatened when one of the men began running toward him. Ong said he moved aside, thinking the man

wanted to jump onto the ledge of the fountain.

"Instead, he stopped in front of me. He grabbed me by the jacket and threw me into the fountain," he said.

Ong said that being drenched, confused and angry, he wasn't aware of the group's reaction. He got out of the water and followed the group as they walked toward the parking lot east of the union.

When he caught up to the man who had thrown him into the fountain, Ong said he asked him, "What is your problem?"

"He didn't say anything He took one step forward and punched me on the right side of my face," Ong said.

Ong said he must have been knocked unconscious because he didn't remember anything after that first blow.

Witnesses told police they saw the group huddling around Ong while two or three of the men beat Ong and kicked him in the head.

When Ong came to, he was in Lincoln General Hospital. He did not know how he got there.

Ong was released from the hospital with stitches inside his mouth, a swollen left cheek, a bruised right cheek and cut lips.

Ong, who is in his first year at UNL and in the United States for the first time, said he wouldn't let the assault keep him from completing his education at the university.

The junior marketing major transferred to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln from Malaysia in the second half of his sophomore year.

Ong said his family was worried about the incident, but they didn't think UNL was a dangerous place. Ong said he agreed with them.

The same incident could happen in his hometown of Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, he said.

Despite initial concerns from international students, Ong said he didn't think the assault was racially motivated.

"I don't see it that way at all," he said.

Although Ong said the cause of the beat-

See ASSAULT on 3

Florida State to interview Massengale

By Matthew Waite
Staff Reporter

A 44-member screening committee, a governing board sub-committee and the press all will be waiting for NU President Martin Massengale next week at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Fla.

Massengale has been selected as one of 10 candidates for the presidential post at FSU. His contract expires next January.

Pat Heyward, associate dean of FSU's Colleges of Arts and Sciences who has assisted in the selection process, said it was too early to speculate on Massengale's chances of being selected for the post.

"It's a wide open search at this point," Heyward said.

The screening committee will meet with

See MASSENGALE on 3