



Kiley Timperley/DN

Nebraska's Eric Piatkowski dribbles by a University of Texas-San Antonio defender during the Cornhuskers' season opener.

Refocusing Senior: NU can win league

By Tim Pearson
Senior Reporter

Eric Piatkowski has been a part of Nebraska basketball for five years.

But the way he talks about his performance in the Cornhuskers' loss to Appalachian State on Wednesday, you'd think he was taking a step backward into the past.

Although the basketball season is only starting, Cornhusker fans may have seen both the best and worst of Piatkowski.

Mention Appalachian State to the All-Big Eight player, and you'll see him cringe.

"It still hurts real bad," he said. "That's the worst game I've played in a couple of years."

"I was very immature on the offensive and defensive ends. It

was a learning experience, and I'm glad it happened at the beginning of the year. I'm not going to let that happen again."

Piatkowski's performance against Appalachian State came after a 35-point performance in a loss to Texas.

But Piatkowski said scoring 35 points in a game televised by Prime

See PIATKOWSKI on 8

Huskers bypass usual week off

By Jeff Griesch
Senior Reporter

Six years ago, the Nebraska athletic department built Cook Pavilion to better prepare for bowl-game conditions.

Six bowl losses later, the Cornhuskers aren't even using the indoor practice facility — it hasn't been cold enough yet. They're simply working harder.

In the past, Osborne has given the Huskers a week off after their final game of the season, but Nebraska practiced on Nov. 30 and Thursday after beating Oklahoma in its final regular-season game.

The Huskers had two light workouts of about an hour each that were designed to keep Nebraska's option offense in sync.

"We started a little earlier this year because we have found that the week off hurt our timing," Osborne said. "With option football, timing is very important, and we are hoping we can keep our timing a little better with the extra practices."

And after four practices this week, Osborne said, the Huskers will likely practice two or three times during finals week.

Nebraska also will get in extra workouts in Miami, Osborne said.

He said the Huskers would leave for the Orange Bowl on Dec. 22, instead of Christmas Day, the team's normal departure day.

Osborne said the extra time in Miami will give his team a better

Second player hurt on court

From Staff Reports

Another Nebraska football player was injured last week — not on the football field, but on the basketball floor, Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said.

Clester Johnson was held out of Monday's practice because of a sprained ankle he suffered during a pickup basketball game late last week.

Johnson's injury comes after defensive tackle Billy Wade tore his left patellar tendon in his knee playing basketball Friday. Wade underwent successful surgery Saturday, but will miss the Orange Bowl.

Osborne said this should be the last of those type of injuries.

"We have put a 'no basketball' rule in until after the bowl game," he said.

chance to become acclimated.

This year's game against the Seminoles will mark the fourth time in seven years that the Huskers have played Florida State in a bowl game.

The Huskers have lost their last three games to the Seminoles, but Osborne said he did not plan to make

See PREPARATION on 8

After two tough seasons, nose tackle makes strides

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

For most Nebraska football players, the chance to play is a small step toward becoming an established Cornhusker.

For nose tackle Christian Peter, just playing once was a huge leap.



Peter

statistics, Nebraska defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said, is Peter's

In his first significant playing time since coming to Nebraska two years ago, Peter made four tackles, including one for a four-yard loss against Oklahoma.

But more impressive than the

presence on the defensive line — a presence he hopes Florida State will feel Jan. 1.

McBride said Peter wreaked havoc on the Oklahoma offensive linemen, causing them to double-team him at times during the second half.

"He played well," McBride said. "But he doesn't know that. I told him that he got lucky."

Peter said he felt lucky just to have the opportunity after two hard years.

Peter was forced to sit out two seasons upon his arrival at Nebraska two years ago. In 1991, the 6-foot-2, 310-pound sophomore from Locust, N.J., failed to meet Proposition 48 requirements.

Last year, he redshirted. "It was very difficult not being able to play, and especially when I

See PETER on 8

Warm-up for finals with the Sports 101 practice test

Now that finals week is almost upon us, I figured it was time for a little warm-up before next week comes.

While this test might be a little more challenging than your calculus or chemistry finals, with perseverance a passing grade is possible.

And if there are any Oklahoma State athletes taking this test, it can be given orally so you don't have to go through the agonizing burden of actually having to read.

Question No. 1: The university is looking for a name for the new blow-up mascot that seems to appear at every Nebraska sporting event possible, similar to a curse that is impossible to get away from. What should it be named?

a) "I wonder why there aren't any recruits signing with Nebraska any more?"

b) "I'm glad the university is making cuts in academic programs, yet still has money for this crap."

c) "In the contest of looking for a worse mascot than Kansas State's

Willie the Wildcat, we have a winner!"

Question No. 2: Which of the following is a requirement for becoming an Associated Press college football voter?

a) Try to show your stupidity as effectively as possible on each week's ballot.

b) Be as biased as possible without letting your conscience or pipe smoking interfere with your decisions.

c) Become a member of the "Bobby Bowden Booster Club" and participate in one of Chief Osceola's "rain dances for a national championship."

Question No. 3: Which of the following are not synonymous?

a) Southwest Conference schools and athletic programs that don't cheat.

b) The Cincinnati Bengals and the rumor that they really are a professional football team.

c) Oklahoma State football coach Pat Jones and employment in 1994.

Question No. 4: Which of the following are things that can be overheard at a Colorado home foot-



Jeff Singer

ball game?

a) "Hi, you're not wearing Colorado colors — would you mind if me and my friends beat the hell out of you?"

b) "I think I see one of the Colorado cheerleaders on the field — oops, I'm sorry, that's Ralphie the Buffalo."

c) "It sure is nice that the Colorado players' parole officers care enough to show up to the games."

Question No. 5: What was the best moment for Iowa State sports fans this year?

a) When the floods came, and therefore the Cyclone fans didn't have to sit through any of Iowa State's summer football scrimmages.

b) When it was revealed that Cyclone basketball coach Johnny Orr

hasn't really been in a coma, despite the fact that Orr hasn't made a single movement on the Iowa State bench for the last four years.

c) That Iowa State could finally beat cross-state rival Iowa in a sport. (The Cyclones beat the Hawkeyes 2-1 in a women's field hockey game Iowa forgot to show up for.)

Question No. 6: Which of the following is a person least likely to want to see?

a) Nebraska basketball coach Danny Nee's acting ability in his numerous television commercials.

b) The AFC's representative in the Super Bowl.

c) Major League Baseball's World Series trophy being used as a hockey puck while being housed in Canada.

Question No. 7: If you're an athletic director and have the choice of the following bowls, which bowl and payout would you choose?

a) The Carquest Bowl in Miami, which gives the winners a free two-day rental car, complete with bumper stickers that read "tourists on board,"

to drive around the streets of Miami.

b) The Poulan Weed Eater Independence Bowl and the 200 pounds of fertilizer that go to the winning team.

c) The Poulan Weed Eater Independence Bowl and the 300 pounds of fertilizer that go to the losing team.

Question No. 8: What will Nebraska need to pull off an upset against Florida State in the Orange Bowl?

a) A nice blizzard, accompanied with about eight inches of snow, to hit Miami at about 6 p.m. on New Years.

b) An accident in which Seminole quarterback Charlie Ward falls into the shark tank at Marine World in pre-Orange Bowl activities.

c) Florida State kicker Dan "Mr. Hook Right" Mowrey to resume place-kicking duties for the Seminoles.

If you didn't do so well on this test, don't despair — I guarantee finals won't be half this tough.

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