



DN file photo

Nebraska freshman Tyrone Williams said the Orange Bowl loss was encouraging to the young defensive backfield. The Cornhuskers "have to be confident because we were so close — and the goal is definitely reachable," Williams said.

Williams

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On the Seminoles' opening drive of the second half, Ward and Knox struck again with the biggest play of the game, a 41-yard reception that set up Florida State's first touchdown.

But again, Williams remained positive.

"Those are the breaks of the game," Williams said. "I had good coverage, but they just beat me. I won't let that get me down because I was giving everything I had."

Williams finished the game as the Huskers' leading pass defender with three pass breakups. He was also Nebraska's leading tackler with nine.

Williams wasn't happy about losing, but he said Nebraska's performance gave him a lot to smile about.

"We showed the country that all this 17-point underdog junk was crazy," Williams said. "Everybody that was there saw that we came to play."

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Player's talent creates sparks

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Nebraska forward Nafeesah Brown knew what lay ahead of her when she watched teammate Karen Jennings finish her final game last year.

Brown, who has led the Cornhusker women's basketball team to an 8-7 record this season, said that when Jennings, an All-American, graduated, she knew she would have to carry the load.

"After she left, I knew I was going to have to step up my play," Brown said. "I knew I would be in a leadership role. I just wanted to go into the season and become a better player than I was last year."

Brown has done exactly that. The 6-foot-1-inch senior from Chicago is averaging 21 points and 10.7 rebounds a game, compared to her 13.4 points and 9.6 rebounding averages last season. She is also shooting 53 percent from the field and 74 percent from the foul line.

But Brown said producing big numbers wasn't her top priority.

"I really haven't set any goals for myself," she said. "What I achieve as an individual is great, but it's what my team achieves that matters."

Coach Angela Beck said Brown was most important to the Huskers in the clutch.

"I think she is a gamer," Beck said. "She's capable of putting down the big-time shots when she wants to. She is also an exciting player. We'll definitely miss her scoring and rebounding next year."

Brown, a team-oriented player, said she was disappointed with Nebraska's 8-7 start.

"I thought we'd be a lot better right now, but a lot of those games we've lost have been real close," she said. "We're pretty young and that makes a difference. Hopefully, me and my



Jon Waller/DN

Cornhusker forward Nafeesah Brown drives past Rometris Davis during practice Wednesday.

teammates will become more relaxed because we're a good team."

Foul trouble forced Brown to watch a lot of the Huskers' first two Big Eight games last weekend. Nebraska lost to Oklahoma State Friday and Oklahoma Sunday to begin the conference season at 0-2.

Brown said the losses would spice

up the next meetings between the teams, which will be played in Lincoln.

"It gives you the adrenaline and makes you really want to show them what you can do the next time," Brown said. "Next time, we play those teams on our court and I'm really looking forward to it."

Chubick

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pounds since I started school here, and I think most of it has gone to the right place.

"Guys bounce off me a lot more than they used to. Instead of me bouncing all over the floor, they're bouncing off of me."

The extra muscle has allowed Chubick to crash the boards with the trees of the Big Eight Conference. Chubick and the rest of the relatively short Husker front court have had to match up with 7-footers like Loren Meyer of Iowa State and Bryant Reeves of Oklahoma State.

"It's a personal challenge to go up against bigger guys most of the time," Chubick said. "It's fun to look back and say, 'Hey, I just got a rebound over a 7-footer.'"

"I like it. I can get up to play against a guy like Loren Meyer or a Big Country (Reeves) a lot easier than

I could a guy my own size, because I know it's going to take about everything I've got to help shut him down."

Chubick, who has twice set a new career high for scoring in the past month, and his teammates have out-rebounded nine of their first 13 opponents this season, despite playing without a true center.

"Without a big man, my role has increased this year," Chubick said. "I have a little bigger role. I have to score a little more. Defensively, with Derrick Chandler leaving and the true big man disappearing, I've had to pick up some of the slack, and that's given me a chance to increase some of my numbers."

Chubick, a two-time Academic All-Big Eight forward who graduated with a degree in history last month, has taken advantage of the opportunity to increase his numbers. His per game average has jumped from 8.4 points last season to 11.2 points this

year, and his rebounding is up from 5.7 to 6.9 per game, placing him ninth in the Big Eight.

As his career as a Husker begins to wind down, Chubick has one major obstacle left to overcome. He and senior Eric Piatkowski are the only two players in Nebraska history to participate in three NCAA tournament games, but they're also the only two players in Nebraska history to lose three NCAA tournament games.

"In the past," Chubick said, "we've been good, but as far as nationally, we've been very mediocre. We would get in the NCAA and Big Eight tournaments and get our butts kicked. It was kind of embarrassing."

"We still have a long way to go before we can say we're in (the NCAA tournament). But if we keep things going, I think we should get in. And I don't think anybody would be satisfied with just getting there."

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