



Nebraska safety Tony Veland warms up before Wednesday's practice at Memorial Stadium. Veland said he didn't plan to make the switch back to quarterback anytime soon.

Jon Waller/DN

Playing it safe

Player changes positions to avoid injuries

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Tony Veland had to try something different. After two straight season-ending injuries halted his chances at quarterback, Veland decided it was time to test his luck at safety.

"The opportunities I had at quarterback were there, but there was just something that wasn't letting me accomplish what I wanted," Veland said. "It was a decision I made on my own. I thought if I started delivering the licks instead of taking them, I'd stop getting hurt."

Veland, who is sitting out of spring practice while he rehabilitates his knee, said he needed a change of pace. And, he said, he could use a change of fate, too.

Veland, who will be a junior in the fall, became the No. 1 quarterback during spring practice in 1992 as a freshman, after redshirting in 1991.

But Veland broke his collarbone in an August scrimmage, which took away most of his season.

Last season, Veland injured his knee in the fall, ending his sophomore season as a Husker.

"I'm always in the thick of

things, battling for No. 1, and then something happens and I'm hurt for most of the season," he said. "By the time I make it back, it's the end of the season, and I'm at the bottom of the depth chart. I just want to play now. I don't care where it is."

"It's been kind of hard, especially when I'm by myself, not to think of what's happened in the past."

The Nebraska quarterback has been an endangered species during spring practices as Tommie Frazier, Brook Berringer and Matt Turman

See VELAND on 8

Coaches patiently await spring crop

Nebraska still after some post players as signing period begins

By Mitch Sherman
Staff Reporter

The first day of the spring signing period for basketball recruits has come and gone, and the Nebraska basketball team has nothing new to report.

"We haven't signed anyone," Coach Danny Nee said Wednesday afternoon. "But it is not unusual or alarming to not sign anyone on the first day."

The spring period runs from April 13 to May 15.

Nee said the Cornhuskers, who have three scholarships available, plan to hand out one or two this spring.

The Husker coaches missed out on a few big players they were reportedly recruiting. John Jackson from Butler County (Kan.) Junior College committed to Mississippi. Jermaine Thomas of Tyler (Texas) High School turned down the Huskers in favor of New Mexico.

Despite failing to sign those players, Nee said, the Huskers plan to haul in a couple of post players.

One player Nebraska is still pursuing is Northeast Oklahoma A&M forward Ray Poindexter.

NEO coach Lonnie Spencer said Poindexter, who will visit Nebraska this weekend, may not be the answer to the Huskers' need for a power player inside.

Despite his height, the 6-foot-11-inch, 220-pound Poindexter "does not have a post-man mentality," Spencer said.

NU hires new football official

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska athletic department named a new associate athletic director for football operations on Wednesday.

Steve Pederson, who currently holds a similar job at Tennessee, will fill the hole left by Dave Gillespie, who accepted an assistant coaching job at Kansas on April 4.

Pederson will perform administrative recruiting coordinating duties for Nebraska.

"We are glad to have him," Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne said. "I was a little surprised. I didn't know it was going to happen until this after-

noon."

Pederson, who is from North Platte, served as Nebraska's recruiting coordinator and administrative assistant under Osborne from 1982 to 1986.

He left athletics in 1986, only to return two years later as Ohio State's recruiting coordinator in 1988. Pederson then joined Tennessee's staff in 1991 as recruiting coordinator and was named the Tennessee assistant athletic director a year later.

"I think he is a very bright, very innovative guy," Osborne said. "He can benefit the athletic department in many ways. I've been impressed with the job he has done at Tennessee."

— Spencer
Northeast Oklahoma A&M coach

"I just don't see him banging inside in the Big Eight Conference," he said. "If he is dedicated and he eats well and gets stronger, he could. But right now, he just isn't that type of player."

Poindexter, who averaged 12.5 points and 7.3 rebounds per game last season at NEO, will visit Tulsa next weekend, Spencer said.

Tulsa coach Tubby Smith, who turned down an offer to coach Oklahoma on Wednesday, has done a good job of recruiting Poindexter, Spencer said.

But so has Nebraska, he said.

"(Nebraska assistant coach) Gary Barga has done an excellent job of recruiting Ray," Spencer said. "Right now, I honestly do not think that he has made up his mind."

During the fall signing period, Nee signed four high school players: Chad Ideus, a 6-foot-7-inch forward from Adams; Andy Markowski, a 6-foot-8-inch forward from Ord; Chester Surles, a 6-foot-8-inch guard-forward from Saginaw, Mich.; and Leif Nelson, a 6-foot-10-inch center from Riverside, Calif.

Grab a pop tart, as gerbil and gerbil-brains toast 1994

My gerbil Mookie and I were lounging around this weekend, wondering about this summer and how we were going to stay out of prison and stuff.

That's when I realized this is my last column for the year. The summer — that robber of my expressiveness, that thief of creative outlets, that six-letter word with two humpbacks in the middle — is coming, and I'm a goin'.

Mook and I then got reflective.

We'll miss so many things about this wonderful, exciting and beyond-groovy year. Thus, I've compiled an abbreviated list of the loves we will soon leave behind.

So sit back, grab a pop tart and let me take you for a stroll down neurosis lane.

I will be reminded throughout the summer of all my hopes that never came to fruition.

There was my challenge of a one-on-one game to Nebraska women's

basketball player Meggan Yedsena. She failed to accept my offer.

But I understand. She's a busy student-athlete. Her life's probably too routinized to get a silly game with me and Mookie in. I mean it's probably like: Basketball, study, basketball, study, wish Karen Jennings was still here, cry, study (you get la pictura).

See, the life of a point guard isn't so easy. But she's still a wussy.

Mook just reminded me of the marriage proposals I have out there. Boy, will I miss those.

An update on my proposals: I currently have marriage offers on the table to Nancy Kerrigan, volleyball player Ali Weston and golfer Kim Lefler.

I also had one issued to gymnast Jennifer Hawkinson, but I guess I can't talk about that due to that ... uh ... what do ya call it ... oh yeah ... restraining order. The "Hawk" has a



Beau Finley

strange way of showing affection.

Perhaps the toughest thing to say goodbye to is women's golf.

The Husker hacker squad epitomizes everything good about college athletics. They're players, students and campus leaders.

This team knows about adversity. I mean, sometimes they make bogeys and sometimes they're in the sand. But do they allow this to get to them? Negatory, Daddy-O. They're unflappable.

They look those three-footers in the eye, unflinching, and drain the

putt like a cheap bottle of wine.

These Cornstrokers know courage. Oh, do they know courage.

Do you know why? (It's rhetorical, so don't answer. I'm on a roll). It's because they've faced their fear and domesticated it. In fact, they now call their fear "Walter."

Maybe Chuck Barkley doesn't want to be a role model. I say let that tub of goo with a little shooting touch go. Players like Nebraska superpower Heidi Wall are the real role models.

I tell you, just sitting here realizing how special and privileged my coverage of the Huskah Hammers was gets me all misty. In fact, Mook is weeping openly.

I want to throw a big hug around the whole team. I just hope they put their putters down first.

Finally, I'll miss that Kevin Ramaekers. For the three of you who actually have read my column for the

past year, you know that I've joked around with Kevin on many occasions.

Sometimes I even went overboard, especially the time I said he should ice skate in the Olympics with Tonya Harding. Or the time I joked that he showered weekly. Or the time I quipped that he scared his teammates with his nakedness.

Or the time I imagined him getting frisky while playing Husker Twister.

But Mr. Ramaekers has shown an exceptional degree of restraint in dealing with my satire, probably more than I would have shown in a similar situation.

Ramaekers has demonstrated that he's not only a talented player but also a tremendously good-natured man.

But I'm still prettier.

Finley is a first-year law student and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.