

SPORTS

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Berringer handled adversity well, coach says

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Reporter

Since joining the Nebraska football program in the fall of 1991, Nebraska quarterback Brook Berringer had attempted only 46 passes in his career before Saturday.

Yet when the 6-foot-4, 210-pound junior from Goodland, Kan., was thrown into the fire, down 14-0 against Wyoming on Saturday, he didn't feel the pressure.

"I wasn't nervous," Berringer said. "I treated it like I had been there for four years."

And after being hospitalized with a partially collapsed lung, Berringer will probably be cleared to start the next two weeks, said Nebraska assistant coach Ron Brown at the Extra Point Club luncheon Monday.

Brown said doctors had indicated that Berringer would be able to return to practice by Tuesday or Wednesday. Until then, sophomore

walk-on Matt Turman will run the first-team offense.

"If Brook could not play (Saturday against Oklahoma State), we would want to start Matt Turman but have Tony Veland waiting in the wings," he said.

Brown said Veland, the Huskers' starting free safety, would continue to take a few snaps at quarterback each day in practice.

The Nebraska coaching staff is eyeing the Huskers' game at Missouri Oct. 22 as a target date for the return of No. 1 quarterback Tommie Frazier.

Although he didn't rule Frazier out of the Kansas State game on Oct. 15, Brown said the Huskers would not rush the junior back into action. Frazier, a three-year starter, is recovering from a blood clot behind his right knee.

"We don't want to do anything with him until the soreness is gone," Brown said. "When he begins to practice, of course, there will be no

"I wasn't nervous. I treated it like I had been there for four years."

BROOK BERRINGER

Nebraska quarterback

contact."

Brown said he was pleased with the way the team—especially Berringer—handled adversity against Wyoming. Nebraska trailed 14-0 at the end of the first quarter and 21-7 until just before halftime.

"To see him respond the way he did on Saturday," Brown said, "that was a proud moment for me, for the rest of our staff and our

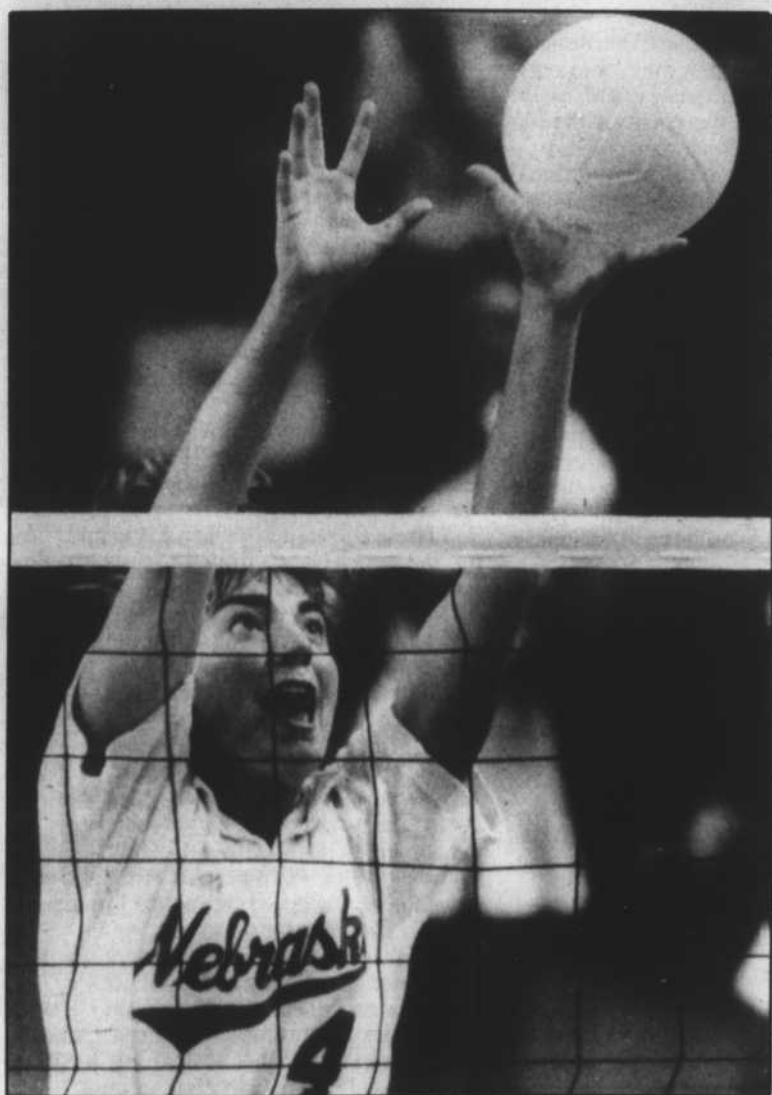
football team."

Brown said the entire team's confidence in Berringer grew as the Wyoming game grew closer.

"The great thing that came out of this game was that Brook Berringer experienced everything he experienced," Brown said.

He said Nebraska's eight-play, 64-yard drive at the end of the first half, in which Berringer completed seven consecutive passes for 59 yards, was crucial. Berringer's 5-yard run capped the drive and cut the Wyoming lead to 21-14 with 12 seconds to go in the first half.

"That was a great piece of execution by Brook Berringer," Brown said. "A lot of that has to go to that young man's confidence and his poise under pressure. That was probably the biggest series we've had all season. If we hadn't gotten that ball in the end zone, it could have been a very long day with Wyoming getting the ball in the second half."



Nebraska's Billie Winsett blocks a Duke spike during the Huskers' win Saturday night. Winsett and the Huskers are looking to regain the Big Eight title this season.

Jon Waller/DN

Lady Huskers hope to regain Big 8 title

By Trevor Parks
Staff Reporter

For the first time in 17 years, the Nebraska volleyball team is in an awkward position.

The Cornhuskers are trying to regain the Big Eight title.

Last season, Colorado won both the Big Eight regular season title and Big Eight tournament. Colorado also won the 1992 Big Eight Tournament.

The second- and third-ranked Huskers had won the Big Eight those past 17 seasons, but this year Colorado is the team defending the title.

However, the Huskers have put themselves in a good position to dethrone the No. 19 Buffaloes.

Nebraska is off to its best start since 1989 at 14-0. That start ties the school record from 1987 and 1989.

The 1989 team went to the NCAA championship match before losing to Long Beach State.

The Huskers have lost only two games — Arizona State and New Mexico — in 14 matches this season.

Husker outside hitter Billie Winsett said the quick start would benefit Nebraska.

"I didn't know we tied a record (after beating Duke)," Winsett said. "I knew we won all of them, but we don't dwell on past games."

Nebraska started out conference play 1-0 with a 15-1, 15-4, 15-9 victory over Missouri.

Now after competing against a rugged nonconference schedule, the Huskers play 11 of the next 13 matches against conference opponents.

The Huskers will play four straight road matches at Oklahoma, Kansas State, Iowa State and Kansas.

The Sooners defeated the Huskers 15-10, 9-15, 15-9, 15-8 last season in Norman.

Winsett said conference play would present a new challenge for the Huskers.

"We know we are going to see teams more than two times," Winsett said. "Players from last year have also seen us, too."

The return of blocker Jen McFadden should also give Nebraska a boost.

Coach Terry Pettit said the Huskers had done well in her absence.

"We're playing top 20 teams without an All-American player, and that's a tough thing to do," Pettit said.

Winsett said with the injuries, other players had been getting experience, which made Nebraska even stronger.

"We focus on the game at hand first, but we're always thinking a little ahead," Winsett said. "Hopefully we can take the Big Eight."

Berringer may be out Saturday

By Clay Short
Staff Reporter

Walk-on quarterback Matt Turman may start against Oklahoma State Saturday, Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Monday.

No. 1 quarterback Tommie Frazier and his backup, Brook Berringer, both missed practice Monday.

Osborne said a decision wouldn't be made on whether Berringer would start until this afternoon.

"Brook has a doctor's appointment scheduled for 11 Tuesday morning," Osborne said, "and the doctors should know then if he can play."

Berringer suffered a partially collapsed lung during Saturday's victory over Wyoming.

"Brook had no pain Saturday," Osborne said. "He just took a freak hit in the right spot."

Osborne said Berringer's left lung was 30-40 percent collapsed, but doctors were able to insert a tube to reinflate the lung.

Berringer attended practice Monday, as did Frazier, but both were not allowed to take any contact.

If Berringer can't play Saturday, Osborne said he was confident with Turman leading the team, even though he had thrown just five passes and had only run the ball seven times as a Cornhusker.

Also gone from Monday's practice was safety Tony Veland, who was out with an illness.

Both gerbil and quarterback relationships prove wacky

I tell you, my vast readership, from experience that gerbils can be so petty.

Just yesterday, my gerbil, Mookie, and I were busting a few moves and grooving to the timeless Juice Newton classic "Angel of the Morning."

For those of you who don't know me, I do some of my best thinking while shaking my booty. I also can do some substantial pondering while baking.

However I digest, er I mean, digest. Anyway, Mook and I were cookin' and chillin' when I just blurted out, "Hey, I bet if Tommie Frazier played basketball, he could cover the whole court."

Of course my hypersensitive and fuzzy buddy misheard me as saying, "Hey, Commie, gerbils can't boogie; their legs are too short."

Well, imagine my surprise when Mook stormed out of the room (I mean as much as a 2 1/2 inch rodent can "storm"). Mook has subsequently moved his running wheel out of the house and refused to appear in future columns.

Mookie also now threatens that he's going to move in with Danny Nee, but I know this to be but idle banter from the hairy, little freak.

The last time Mookie tried that "I'm going to move in with coach Nee" crap, Danny attempted to start him at point guard. Actually, I think Mookie does look a bit like ex-Husker Andre Woolridge, especially from the neck up.

But Mook ain't no court general. He's not leaving, either.

I guess I'll have to just suck up to the squirrely punk for a little while.

This is my point: relationships are compromises, babies. Ya gotta give a little to, you know, get a little. And what am I getting? A pint-sized rat to hang out with.

I tell you, if Mookie weren't my second-best friend, I'd sell him.

Relationships are wacky things, and Nebraska's relationship with Tommie Frazier is something else.

Three or four weeks ago, I stated that it was premature to be handing the Heisman Trophy to Tommie



Beau Finley

"Dairy Queen" Frazier after only playing three games.

People thought I was getting down on Tommie. Nothing could be further from the truth, baby. Frazier is like a brother to me. Well, I mean, like a brother that I've never met before, that I don't have any common relatives with, and whom I'd never really heard of until he wore a Cornhugger jersey.

OK—maybe Tommie is more like a distant third cousin to me, but I still dig the guy.

Anyway, I hadn't missed him more than I did on Saturday against the Wyoming Cowboys. Without "DQ," our team looked lethargic, lazy, lucky and longitudinal. I don't even know

what "longitudinal" means, but I really needed an "L" word.

This lackluster performance—hey, there's an "L" word. I guess I didn't have to use that "longitudinal" word after all—translated into a slim 42-32 victory over perennial powerhouse Wyoming.

The Blowboys, er I mean Cowboys, racked up something like seven billion yards in total offense in the loss.

Now, I seriously attribute this not to poor play, but to a loss of security that the Cornfluffers had because their best player was on the sidelines.

I like to call this phenomenon the "Tommie-Mommy complex."

Much like a child without his binky, the 'skers ran around confused and listless.

Could this have been because Wyoming was such a comparable team to Nebraska? I don't think so.

The truth is that without Tommie, the Corndumpsters look like a miniature (a child if you will) of the Husker team we've become accustomed to

seeing this year.

Now, I know people will try to interpret what I'm saying as a criticism of Brook Berringer. For those people, I will give you the immortal words of one famous social commentator: uh, huh, huh, uh, huh, huh — you're stupid.

Brook played well. The problem was no specific player. The problem was the mind-set. Emotionally, I just don't think the Huckfinnsters played the way they do with Tommie.

Do I think that without Tommie they'll continue to play this way? I don't friggin' know. I know they can play well without him. I mean, with or without Frazier, they're still one of the most talented teams in the country.

I just hope that the Hornhonkers can "grow" to know this.

Nebraska Women's Golf Update: The Husker Hackers still rule.

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