

SPORTS

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Page 7

Christo one play from spotlight

By Trevor Parks
Staff Reporter

Even though he's been involved in only six plays as a Cornhusker, Nebraska walk-on quarterback Monte Christo has had an eventful career.

At Missouri last Saturday, Christo got his first taste of playing time as a Husker, and he said he enjoyed every minute.

"It was amazing," Christo said. "It was a situation where we were already on top, and I wasn't going to do anything but hand off the ball anyway. So I will always remember that first play, and it will stick in my mind forever."

Although he handed the ball off every play, one resulted in a 2-yard Damon Benning touchdown.

Christo, a freshman from Kearney, said he had a stomachache most of the game, and when it came time for him to replace an injured Matt Turman, he wasn't prepared.

"It was a crazy deal because I didn't figure on playing," Christo said. "By the fourth quarter I had undone my belt and my drawstring, so I was just kind of hanging out."

That wasn't his only problem.

"I threw my helmet down after warm-ups. I didn't know where that was. I didn't have a mouthpiece there. My thumb wasn't taped, so I had five or six things going against me right off the bat."

A major reason Christo was surprised about playing this season was a severe thumb injury he suffered earlier in the year.

Christo was quarterback for the scout team when his injury occurred.

The 5-foot-11, 175-pounder hurt his thumb the week following the

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MONTE CRISTO

Nebraska quarterback

Kickoff Classic when rover Kareem Moss came in to block a pass during a blitz drill. Moss's helmet hit Christo's thumb, tearing a ligament.

"His arm caught it and just ripped it straight back to the forearm," Christo said. "It hurt a lot ... I knew it was pretty serious."

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said he was happy with the way Christo kept himself ready to play while he was injured.

"Monte is a good player," Osborne said. "He kept up a good mentality while he was hurt."

The coaches had figured on redshirting Christo, but with Turman injured, Nebraska had only one healthy quarterback.

"It was kind of a hard situation, both on me and on the coaches," Christo said. "But with Matt probably not going to be able to play this week, then that makes me the No. 2 guy."

Osborne said usually a player like Christo would have redshirted this year with an injury as serious as his thumb injury.

"Certainly in most years, he would have been redshirted and would probably be on the scout team," Osborne

said. "This year it's not going to be that way, so we're going to try and get him ready to play."

Coming out of Kearney, Christo said only two Division II schools — the University of Nebraska-Kearney and South Dakota — offered him a scholarship.

But he made his choice to come to Nebraska, hoping to receive a scholarship in a couple of years.

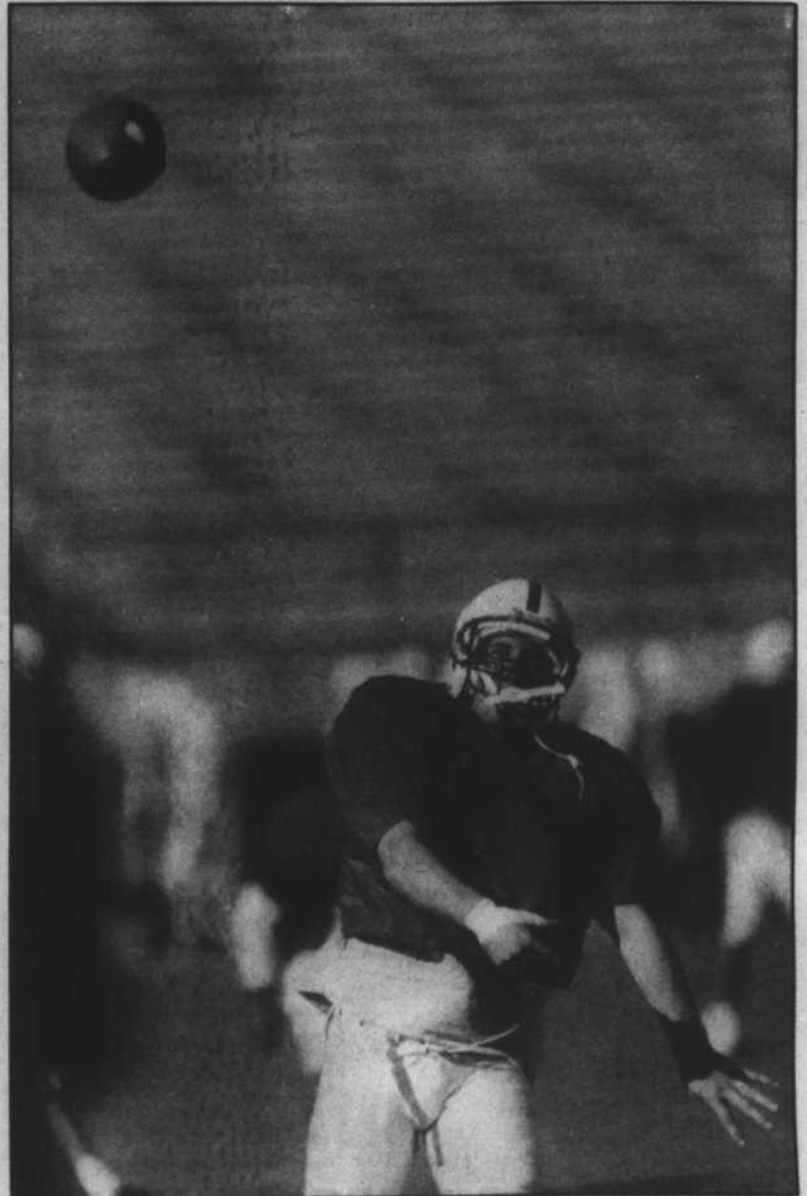
Christo said he was more of an option-oriented quarterback. However, his skills aren't limited only to running.

"I can do bootlegs and the rollouts," Christo said. "I can throw the ball pretty good too."

Last year at this time Christo was doing that in high school, preparing for a game against Norfolk High School.

Now because of injuries at the quarterback position, Christo is just one play away from playing against No. 2 Colorado on Saturday.

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Jay Calderon/DN

Nebraska quarterback Monte Christo throws the ball during Wednesday's practice. Christo will back up Brook Berringer Saturday against No. 2 Colorado.

Volleyball middle blocker to miss rest of season

From Staff Reports

Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit said Wednesday that Jen McFadden would miss the rest of the season because of an injury suffered in the Huskers' three-game sweep over Illinois on Tuesday night.

McFadden, a sophomore middle blocker, tore the anterior cruciate ligament in her right knee during the first game of the match in Champaign, Ill. Pettit said contact did not cause the injury.

The 6-foot-2 Dubuque, Iowa, native was a member of the Vol-

leyball Monthly all-freshman team last year. She also was the 1993 Big Eight newcomer of the year.

McFadden, who has been hampered by back spasms for much of the season, will have surgery sometime next month.

She will be replaced in the lineup by senior Peggy Meyer.

Junior middle blocker Allison Weston was limited in practice Wednesday because of a sore shoulder. Pettit said Weston would be fine for Saturday night's match against defending Big Eight champion Colorado.

NU to travel to Lone Star state

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska women's soccer team will travel to Austin, Texas, this weekend to take on Texas and Michigan after coming off a 4-2 loss to third-ranked Stanford.

The Cornhuskers will put their 11-3 record on the line Friday afternoon when they face the 8-4-2 Texas Longhorns. Nebraska will then face the 5-4-1 Michigan Wolverines on Sunday morning. All three programs are in their inaugural seasons, as is Nebraska.

Nebraska was tied with the third-ranked Cardinal 2-2 until the last 10 minutes of the match last weekend. Then Stanford scored two goals to give the Cardinal a 4-2 victory.

The victory raised Stanford's

record to 13-1. Stanford's only loss of the year was to North Carolina, which just had a 102-game winning streak snapped last week.

Nebraska coach John Walker said he was pleased with his team's performance against Stanford.

"What our team did was a major accomplishment," Walker said. "Stanford had only given up five goals all season."

All three of Nebraska's losses have come against ranked teams. The Creighton Bluejays defeated the Huskers 3-1 on Sept. 6 and 1-0 in overtime on Sept. 27.

Walker thinks this weekend's competition should be tough, considering that both Michigan and Texas are first-year programs.

But the Huskers will be without

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JOHN WALKER

NU coach

freshman defender Brenda Siczkowski for the rest of the season. Siczkowski injured her hamstring against Stanford.

Injury bug can't kill Huskers' drive for national title

The injury bug has left Nebraska. At least, that's what the Nebraska football team hopes.

The injuries have mounted after each game, especially at quarterback.

In what was supposed to be a storybook season culminated by Tom Osborne's first national title, this season has taken a wrong turn.

But that wrong turn may turn out to be a shortcut to the national title.

Penn State coach Joe Paterno has said that Osborne would win the national title when everybody least expected it.

Why not now, when the Cornhuskers are being led by a quarterback who has started just three games?

Nobody expects a team whose backup quarterback is a walk-on to win the national title.

Nobody expects this Nebraska team minus Tommie Frazier to come close to a national title, much less a Big Eight championship.

Nobody expects this Nebraska team, riddled by injuries at two of its most important positions on the field, to contend with anyone.

Nobody expects this Husker team to win a championship of any kind. But expect the unexpected.

And what Nebraska has experienced this season certainly has not been expected.

It's been a season in which the talk has been quarterback, quarterback, quarterback. Nothing but quarterback.

After the Cornhuskers' 31-0 win over West Virginia in the Kickoff Classic, everybody jumped on the Nebraska bandwagon. Frazier's name was being mentioned in the same sentence as Heisman.

Then came Texas Tech, and the first quarterback made his departure for the season. Free safety Mike Minter, the Huskers' defensive quarterback, was lost for the season.

UCLA was the Huskers' next vic-



Tim Pearson

tim, and Frazier still was being showered with praise.

Pacific was blown out the next Saturday, which was expected.

But then came the big blow that threw all these great expectations for a loop.

After Frazier's season-ending blood clot, everybody jumped off the bandwagon. Then the quarterback talk, as well as injury talk, started.

Brook Berringer suffered a partially collapsed lung against Wyoming and again the next week against Oklahoma State.

Against Missouri, Matt Turman went down with a badly bruised shoulder.

The rash of injuries this season is not unusual, though.

Nebraska trainer George Sullivan has seen it all happen before.

In 1970, when the Huskers went on to win the national title under Bob Devaney, Nebraska had the same type of problem.

Both Jerry Tagge and Van Brownson were fighting injuries before the Huskers' second game against Southern Cal. Nebraska came out with a 21-21 tie against the third-ranked Trojans.

But Sullivan can't remember a season when Nebraska had so many quarterbacks to go down to.

Look at the list of who's taken snaps at quarterback: Tommie Frazier, Brook Berringer, Matt Turman, Adam Kucera, Ryan Held, Tony Veland, Clester Johnson, Barron Miles, Monte Christo, Jon Elder.

But the season has gone on no matter who gets injured. And the

Huskers are sitting near the top of both polls with an 8-0 record.

With the Colorado game coming up Saturday, Nebraska fans may soon forget about all the injuries at quarterback.

Berringer will finally get the chance to pitch a complete game. The defense will go for the shutout.

Berringer's performance against Missouri may have told the nation that Nebraska wasn't just going to lie down and forfeit the rest of the season.

And if the injury bug stays away from the Nebraska skies Saturday morning, the Huskers' national title hopes will continue to live on.

But maybe the injuries will finally die.

Pearson is a junior news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan sports editor.