



Huskers in Washington



Jeff Haller/DN

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne, left, signs a copy of Sports Illustrated in front of more than 500 fans at a reception in the Russell Senate Office Building.

Husker faithful cheer for team in Washington

By Jeff Zeleny
Editor

WASHINGTON — Red T-shirts underneath business suits and national-championship hats with blue blazers were the rule Monday for Nebraskans on Capitol Hill.

More than 500 people with ties to the Cornhusker state gathered in the Caucus Room of the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington to

meet the national champions.

Sen. James Exon played host to the afternoon rally. Husker fight songs and cheers of "Go Big Red" echoed throughout the ballroom.

"Nebraskans, this is your time to howl and do your thing," Exon told the crowd that had gathered to see the Nebraska football team. "If there is a Penn State fan here, sorry about that."

Nebraska's Orange Bowl win over Miami gave the Huskers the top rank-

ing in the country. Despite Penn State's undefeated record, the Nittany Lions were rated second in both The Associated Press and USA TODAY/CNN polls.

All five Nebraska congressmen came to the event to cheer for the one thing that all Nebraskans, regardless of their political affiliation, agree on — Nebraska football.

"Nebraska made history on the football field on January 1," Exon

said. "You are making history by being here today."

The crowd, largely made of NU alumni and members of Washington, D.C.'s Nebraska Society, cheered for minutes as Coach Tom Osborne was introduced.

"Let's not get carried away," Osborne told the screaming crowd. "I'm the same guy who lost seven (bowl) games in a row."

Throughout the daylong tour of

the nation's capital, Nebraska football players and coaches were recognized by many passersby. The team captains signed autographs at every stop they made.

"I've really enjoyed coaching every team we've had, but this one was a little special," Osborne said. "These guys had extraordinary resolve and discipline."

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