

SPORTS

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NU hauls in recruits as signing day nears

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Reporter

With less than a week remaining until the beginning of the spring signing period, the Nebraska basketball team appears to have nearly lined up a commitment from a second high school senior.

Larry Florence, a 6-foot-6, 215-pound forward from Phenix City (Ala.) Central High School, is leaning heavily toward attending Nebraska next fall, his coach said Tuesday.

"He has been visiting some junior colleges," said Central coach Bobby Wright, "and he is going to look at Hutchinson (Kan.) Community College this weekend. But I think he wants to go Division I."

Wright said Nebraska was the only Division I school Florence was considering. But Wright said Florence might not be able to sign a letter of intent during the spring period, which runs from April 12 to May 15.

He said Florence had not yet qualified academically. If he remains ineligible, Florence will be permitted to sign, but if he qualifies after signing, his scholarship could put Nebraska over the NCAA limit of 13.

The Huskers return 10 scholarship players next year, not including senior guard Erick Strickland, whose tuition is covered by the Florida Marlins. Nebraska has already promised scholarships to fall signees Bernard Garner of Western Nebraska Community College and Alvin Mitchell of Omaha Burke.

Mitchell, who also has not qualified academically, said he expected to pass his ACT this spring and become eligible. If he is eligible, Mitchell said he would most likely redshirt next season.

Nebraska's 13th scholarship would then be filled next season by Tyrone Lue, a point guard from Raytown (Mo.) High School, who said he planned to sign during the spring period.

Florence, who averaged 19.1 points, 14

rebounds and 4.3 blocks per game this year while leading Central to a 27-2 record, may come to Nebraska without a scholarship if he is unsure of his academic future, Wright said.

If he doesn't sign and becomes eligible in the fall while paying his own way, Florence could be put on scholarship next year, filling the first of five scholarships that will be unoccupied after the 1995-96 season.

"He still has hopes of passing the test," Wright said. "But if he doesn't pass, he will have another decision to make."

Florence, who has played on Central's varsity team since the ninth grade, is a natural swingman or shooting guard, Wright said.

"If he had been able to play his natural position," Wright said, "he would have scored a lot more points, but I needed him to play the post position because he was our best rebounder."

"He has shown great leadership and that he can be the go-to guy. Without question, he was the best athlete on our team. No one in the area

"Without question, he was the best athlete on our team. No one in the area could defend him in the post."

BOBBY WRIGHT

Phenix City Central basketball coach

could defend him in the post. He's an excellent passer, and he dribbled the ball better than anybody on our team."

Lue, Nebraska's other potential recruit this spring, said in February that he committed to the Husker coaches during a weekend visit to

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Baseball team's win over Kansas a tight bouncy ride



Travis Heying

Nebraska third baseman Jed Dalton gets picked off by Kansas first baseman Alex King in the first inning of the Huskers' 6-5 win over Kansas at Buck Beltzer Stadium Tuesday night. Dalton scored the winning run in the bottom of the ninth inning when Alvie Shepherd walked with the bases loaded.

By Todd Walkenhorst
Staff Reporter

A windy day at Buck Beltzer Stadium helped propel Matt Meyer's bat and the Cornhuskers to a victory over Kansas Wednesday.

Wind gusts of 30 mph helped Meyer, a junior right fielder, hit two home runs — including the game-winner in the ninth — and ring up four RBIs as the Huskers defeated Kansas 12-10 in front of 630 fans.

Nebraska improved to 18-11 and 7-5 in the Big Eight as Kansas fell to 10-22 and 2-8 in the conference.

Nebraska coach John Sanders said he was pleased with the victory, but not with how it was attained.

"It bounced back and forth," Sanders said. "Fortunately we ended up on top. That's not a good sign to give a game up late, but a good sign is that we did win it."

The Huskers jumped in front of the Jayhawks 1-0 in the first inning when junior center fielder Mel Motley lined a two-out double to center field to score Darin Petersen. The Huskers added another run in the second when junior Alvie Shepherd led off the inning with a solo home run.

The Jayhawks came back in the third to tie the game at two. Nebraska took a 6-2 lead in the fourth on a two-run double by Petersen. In the fifth, the Huskers took advantage of a leadoff double by freshman Todd Sears as Meyer hit his first home run of the day to give Nebraska an 8-4 lead.

A sacrifice fly by Motley and a Jayhawk error in the sixth put the Huskers up 10-6.

The Jayhawks scratched back and tied the

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Heisman would top off Frazier's career of beating odds

Plenty of good signs are coming out of Nebraska's spring football practices, and most of them center on quarterback Tommie Frazier.

Not only do they center on Frazier, but they center on his competition.

Frazier should be the leading Heisman Trophy candidate going into the fall, but he won't know if he is Nebraska's full-time starter until a week or so before the first game.

And that should be a good indication the quarterback position will be strong.

If not, the Cornhuskers will start Brook Berringer, who led Nebraska to seven wins, including a rout of then-No. 2 Colorado, and the Huskers will use the leading Heisman Trophy candidate as a back-up.

Not likely, but it's still a positive sign.

Assuming Frazier starts and does nothing to hurt his Heisman chances, then what player in the

country would be his biggest competition for the award?

Look no further than in the same backfield, as I-back Lawrence Phillips will be another leading candidate for Heisman, although Frazier may steal some of his limelight.

It's also not a bad sign when Nebraska has so much talent at the I-back position that it has to move Clinton Childs — who would be a full-time I-back for any other Big Eight school this season — to fullback.

Frazier has had his share of good signs this spring as well.

The Florida native has shed more light on Nebraska football than almost any other athlete — and he still has his senior season left.

Frazier started as a freshman — unlike any other Tom Osborne-coached freshman — and accomplished more for Nebraska by playing than sitting on the bench.

As a sophomore, he led Nebraska to its first undefeated



Derek Samson

regular season since 1983 and came within a field goal and/or a few bad calls of a national championship.

The only things that need to be repeated from last season are Heisman candidate, blood clot, season over, season not over, Orange Bowl starter, benched in Orange Bowl, Orange Bowl savior, national championship.

So what could Frazier possibly have left to prove?

"I have a lot to prove," he said. "I had that major lay off last year. I have to come back and keep playing to the ability I played at the

last three years."

Oh yes, the lay off that put the exclamation point on last year's season.

Nothing could have better typified Frazier's career than having to rally for two late-scoring drives in the Orange Bowl after sitting out eight games with a blood clot.

He beat the odds by playing as a freshman, beat the odds makers by leading the 17-point underdogs to within two points of a national championship in 1993 and beat the odds to play again when his season was declared over last year.

So only one thing remains for Frazier to prove to cap off his career — Heisman.

"I think it's too early to talk about that," Frazier said. "But people are either going to talk about it now or talk about it later. You just have to push it aside and just do what you have to do."

Frazier even admitted that another national championship would be icing on the cake, but

Nebraska has already met its ultimate goal.

"I thought I'd have two already," he said. "It almost happened. I would like to go out with another one this year, but if we just go out and have a successful season, I'll be happy with that."

"The chance of a team winning back-to-back is slim these days. But if we win another one, I'll be one of the happiest guys around."

It's hard to pity Coach Tom Osborne when you read about all the injured I-backs missing spring ball. Or when you read that injuries and baseball are to blame for Nebraska missing both extra points and both field goals it attempted in Saturday's scrimmage.

Osborne is stacked with talent and, as for Frazier, he enters the spring knowing he has already accomplished everything that has been asked of him.

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