

A las Herbie, we hardly knew ye

From cartoon to icon, Herbie filled the void

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Before marketing. Before search committees. Before Nebraska even had a mascot, an ugly cartoon character caught Don Bryant's eye.

It was the 1974 Cotton Bowl, and Bryant, sports information director for the NU Athletic Department at the time, was in the press room when he "discovered" the Cornhuskers' new mascot.

"They had a drawing of a very ugly cartoon guy representing Nebraska because Nebraska didn't have any logo like the Texas Steers," Bryant said.

"It was kind of cute, but it was ugly."

"It" was Herbie Husker.

The first Herbie Husker looked like a beat-up farmer covered in Band-Aids, Bryant said.

Bryant got in touch with cartoonist Dirk West in Lubbock, Texas, and had him draw a "cuter, happy-looking guy" with a victory sign.

The drawing made it into the 1974 media guide, and Herbie grew from cartoon to icon. It was a fate Bryant never intended.

"It was just a cartoon of a cute, little Nebraskan," he said. "It was never designed to walk around the field."

Herbie filled a void for a football team without a mascot.

Marketing started out small. Compared to the thousands of dollars in-

volved in advertising today, two or three businesses paid \$25 each to use the logo, Bryant said.

Then it caught on, Bryant said, and Herbie, a name given to the mascot by the media, became big business.

"Once he got walking around the football field, he became more and more known," he said. "As the program grew, networks used the Herbie cartoon and entrepreneurs started paying the rights for it."

"It took awhile."

Twenty-one years after Herbie's discovery and claim to fame, Bryant took Herbie's dismissal "like a man."

Though he admitted Herbie wasn't the best-looking guy in the world, Bryant said Herbie always would remain a popular cartoon figure.

"I'm not necessarily in mourning," he said. "If there's something better that comes along, that's fine with me."

Herbie was under scrutiny from day one, he said.

"There were some people who didn't like it because they said, 'Oh, gosh, farmers don't wear overalls today,'" he said. "I knew that, the artist knew that — it was done for fun. It wasn't a portrayal of the farmer or agricultural business leader."

Even if some people didn't like Herbie in the beginning, Bryant said, he became part of Cornhusker football tradition. Yet, he said, fans will be able to live without Herbie.

"Nebraska had a football tradition



Don Bryant, associate athletic director for community relations, mimics the response of some Nebraska fans who don't want Herbie Husker to retire. Bryant is shown with the original oil painting of Herbie Husker. At left, Harry Husker, Herbie's predecessor, as drawn by Bill Goggins of Lincoln.

After that came "Harry Husker," a symbol designed by Lincoln resident Bill Goggins.

Goggins drew the character for a Nebraska Farmer magazine article on northeast and northwest ranchers providing meat for the training table.

He modeled the design after the Hastings Chamber of Commerce members who wore maroon suits and cow-

boy hats to football games. In the '70s, with a football tucked under one arm and a corn cob sticking out of his pocket, Herbie filled the mascot void, Bryant said.

But if the '90s is Herbie's time to go, he said, so be it.

"I will try to hold back tears," he said, laughing. "Everybody moves on. It's time for Herbie."

long before Herbie came along," he said.

Bryant, who is now the associate athletic director for community relations, has been with the university for 33 years and has seen mascots come and go.

In the '40s and '50s, Bryant said, Nebraska had a corn cob that walked around in a green and yellow outfit.

First year students...don't forget to meet with your Adviser on Thursday!

Arts & Sciences Adviser Thursday

Attention New Students in Arts & Sciences, Please see your adviser at the appropriate room number listed below

Adviser Thursday: Group Advising Meeting - Thursday August 24, 1995, 4 - 4 - 5 PM

Department/Major

- Actuarial Science
- Anthropology
- Biochemistry
- Biological Sciences
- Chemistry
- Classics/Greek/Latin
- Communication Studies
- Computer Science
- Economics
- English
- Environmental Studies
- European Studies
- French
- Geography
- Geology
- German
- Great Plains Studies
- History
- International Affairs
- Latin American Studies
- Math
- Meteorology/Climatology
- Philosophy
- Physics/Astronomy
- Political Science
- Pre-Dental Hygiene
- Pre-Dentistry, Pre-Medicine, Pre-Mortuary
- Pre-Optometry, Pre-Pharmacy, Pre-Physical
- Technology
- Pre-Medical Technology
- Psychology
- Russian
- Sociology
- Spanish
- Speech Pathology & Audiology
- Undecided
- Women's Studies

Adviser

- CBA Advising Center
- Ray Hames
- Herman Knoche
- Laurie Homer
- George Sturgeon
- Thomas Rinkevich
- Vincent DiSalvo
- Charles Riedesel
- CBA Advising Center
- William Long
- LuAnn Wandsnider
- Tom Carr
- Tom Carr
- David Wishart
- David Watkins
- Priscilla Hayden-Roy
- Fran Kaye
- Tim Mahoney
- Phil Dyer
- Ralph Grajeda
- Gordon Woodward
- Mark Anderson
- Harry Ide
- C. Edward Jones
- Phil Dyer
- Julienne Hunter
- Sci Info, Pre-Nuclear Medicine Tech;
- Pre-Physician's Assistant, Pre-Radiological
- Vicki Fisher
- Gaye Homer
- Richard Dienstbier
- Radha Balasubramanian
- Mary Jo Deegan
- Alejandro Herrero-Olaizola
- Check with Ellen Patterson,
- Henziik 105, 472-8643
- Anne Kopera
- Barbara Di Bernard

Room

- 138 CBA
- 126 Bessey
- 176 Beadle
- 112 Hamilton
- 413 Hamilton
- 235 Andrews
- 428 Oldfather
- 113 Ferguson
- 138 CBA
- 146 Andrews
- 225 Bessey
- 1203 Oldfather
- 1203 Oldfather
- 312 Avery
- 330 Bessey
- 1228 Oldfather
- 1213 Oldfather
- 630 Oldfather
- 534 Oldfather
- 141 Andrews
- 827 Oldfather
- 307 Avery
- 1004 Oldfather
- 120 Brace Resource Rm.
- 534 Oldfather
- 104 Dental College
- 104 Hamilton
- UHC Conference Rm F (3-4pm)
- 117 Bessey
- 1131 Oldfather
- 707 Oldfather
- 1205 Oldfather
- 208 Oldfather
- 337C Andrews

Questions? Contact the Dean's Office, 1223 Oldfather, 472-2891



COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE

August 24, 1995

4:00 p.m.
All School Meeting
Spkr-W. Cecil Steward, Dean
Mary Riepma Ross Theater
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

5:00 p.m.
Ice Cream Social
Hosted by AIAS, ASID, SPAN
East Lawn of Arch Hall
(Rain-in Arch Hall Link)

ADVISER THURSDAY

for New Students in the College of Fine and Performing Arts

AUGUST 24
4-5pm

WESTBROOK
MUSIC BLDG.
ROOM 109

Come and meet your advisers!



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

Freshman journalism majors:
Join the wild and crazy journalism bunch at UNL!
Learn about student organizations, faculty.
Eat free Valentino's pizza!

Avery 22: Thursday, Aug. 24, 4:30 p.m.

Be advised, meet the new dean and find out about college activities at the College of Engineering and Technology Adviser Advantage for first time students. College guides will meet students in the Fish Bowl (southwest corner of Walter Scott Engineering Center) August 24 at 4:20 p.m. Meetings will take place on the first floor of WSEC.