



In mourning

Big Eight mascots lament Herbie's departure

By Doug Peters
Senior Editor

The mood around the Big Eight Conference is bleak this week as news of Herbie Husker's banishment from Memorial Stadium spreads to his fellow mascots throughout the Midwest.

Some of the mascots took time to reminisce about their times with Herbie and to speak out about a mascot's role.

Scott Petty is among the mourners. Petty was Pistol Pete, the mascot of the Oklahoma State University Cowboys, from 1985 to 1987.

"I always saw Herbie Husker as a lovable guy," Petty said, "... a spongy kind of guy."

Petty said the role of a mascot was to promote a positive image of a university, and Herbie and Pistol Pete did that at their respective schools.

"I dealt with a lot of mascots over my two years of being Pistol Pete, but I remember Herbie Husker being one of the more positive mascots.

"I think it's a real loss for Nebraska," he said softly.

In Boulder, Colo., Chip the Buffalo, or "Buffalo Chip," as he is affectionately known,

also expressed dismay at Herbie's unexpected departure.

More surprising to Shane Mood, Chip's alter ego, were the reasons behind Herbie's ousting.

Mood, a senior geography and anthropology major, was surprised that some Nebraskans found Herbie to be too nice and that others thought the blond, blue-eyed "dumb farmer" image was an embarrassment.

Mood said he had always thought that mascots "were more for the kids" than anything else.

"People probably wouldn't like Chip if he were mean," Mood said.

As for the reported survey of 900 season ticket holders who precipitated Herbie's removal, Mood laughed.

"If 900 people in Colorado said they didn't like Chip," he said, "nobody would pay any attention to them ..."

"... Maybe it's a good thing Chip doesn't have blond hair."

In Boulder, where Nebraska was declared an official rival in the late 1980s, even administrators voiced their disappointment with Herbie's abolition.

Joyce Aschenbrenner, CU's associate athletic director for external affairs, said people who thought Herbie was offensive needed a sense of humor.

"I mean, we have this dorky little buffalo named Chip, and we love him here," she said. "People even invite him to wedding receptions."

The Daily Nebraskan asked Aschenbrenner to get a comment from Ralphie the Buffalo, the live buffalo that runs around Folsom Field.

"Uh ... Ralphie can't talk," she said. But, she added, "he might, like, cough up a hairball or something."

Aschenbrenner said the loss of the Husker mascot was unimaginable and that Herbie had always been kind to the University of Colorado.

"Herbie will always be welcome in Boulder," she said.

In Ames, Iowa, Eric Carlson is familiar with the prospect of a mascot change. Cy and Clone, the two Iowa State University Cardinals, have been retired, and a new Cy will be unveiled in a ceremony tonight. Carlson will be inside.

Luckily, the senior marketing major said,

the change is strictly cosmetic. Iowa State's logo has been changed to reflect a more aggressive attitude, Carlson said, but that change will not be reflected in the new mascot.

"A lot of the reason behind the mascots is the kids," he said, adding that menacing mascots scare children rather than entertain them.

Carlson, captain of the six-person ISU mascot squad, said Herbie Husker was great with kids.

At a game where the two mascots interacted, Carlson said, he noticed that every time Herbie was outside, "all the kids came running up yelling 'Herbie! Herbie!'"

"When you cut Herbie, you affect not only the students and alumni, you also hurt the kids.

"It's such a shame," he said.

Some of Herbie's colleagues plan to do more than just talk, however. Some are planning a tribute to their old friend.

At Colorado, Aschenbrenner spoke of action.

"You tell people that Chip will be wearing a black armband at the game with 'H.H.' on it," she said.

Carlson plans to follow suit.

"I'd count on it," he said.

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Licensing bicycles cheap (\$1) precaution

By Catherine Blalock
Staff Reporter

It's a simple solution to a growing problem.

Hundreds of bicycles are stolen each year, and at least half of those are never returned.

But local law enforcement officers say all recovered bicycles could return home if their owners would simply invest an extra buck — \$1 to be exact.

"We don't know who to get them back to if they are not licensed," said Sgt. Bill Manning of the UNL Police Department.

It costs \$1 to license a bicycle in Lincoln. The license is valid for as long as you have the bike, Manning said.

Since Aug. 21, six bicycles have been reported stolen on campus. None of those are likely to be returned, Manning said, if they are not registered.

Manning estimated that 180 to 200 bicycles were stolen last year. One hundred of those bikes found a temporary home in a UNL police warehouse before going to an auction and being sold to the highest bidder, he said.

During 1994, the Lincoln Police Department took reports for 1,056 stolen bicycles, Sgt. Ann Heermann said.

Pam Fittje, supervisor of property for LPD, said about 50 to 100 bicycles were auctioned off every month.

Money left over from paying auction fees goes into a general city fund, Heermann said.

But if students are concerned that they may never see their stolen bicycles again, there might be hope. Before a bicycle heads to an auction and to a new owner, uni-

versity police always check a bicycle's serial numbers against LPD's wanted-bicycle list, Manning said.

Anyone in Lincoln may register bikes at Lincoln Fire Department stations and local bike shops, Heermann said.

Last week, 144 students lined up outside the north entrance of the Nebraska Union to register their bikes, Manning said. There will be more chances throughout the semester for students to register their bikes, he said. A schedule of dates and times will be announced.

Kris Sonderup, owner of Cycle Works, said his store registered 60 to 100 bicycles during the summer. Those numbers tend to decrease when the weather gets colder, he said.

Sonderup said anyone could come into the shop and license a bicycle. If people don't license their bikes when they buy them, however, they will have to bring in their receipt, he said.

"It will not prevent it from getting stolen, but it will help the police recover it," Sonderup said.

Registering a bicycle is a city ordinance in Lancaster County. People failing to do so can be charged a maximum \$100 fine and \$24 in court costs.

The ordinance requires bicycle owners to have the registration ticket attached in visible sight either on the back of the bike or the frame, Heermann said.

Failing to license a bike is not a crime heavily enforced by LPD, she said.

And getting students to register their bikes isn't a high priority of the UNL police department either, Manning said, but it can make its job a little easier.