

Daily Nebraskan

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SINCE 1901

VOL. 95 NO. 16

TUESDAY



WEATHER:

Today - Mostly cloudy.
30% chance of showers.
Northwest wind 5 to 15 mph.

Tonight - Clearing. Low around 55.

September 12, 1995

Speculation around Phillips continues

Osborne addresses Phillips' dismissal at booster luncheon

By Mitch Sherman
Senior Editor

Tom Osborne said Monday that Lawrence Phillips' dismissal from the Nebraska football team would not be overturned any time soon. However, Osborne did not rule out the possibility of Phillips returning later this year. "You never say never," Osborne said after football practice. "But he's certainly got to get some things accomplished. There's no time limit on his suspension. Obviously, if he did return, it would not be any time real soon. He will not play for quite a while, if at all."

The incident leading to Phillips' dismissal took place early Sunday morning—hours after Phillips returned from Nebraska's 50-10 victory over Michigan State in which the star I-back rushed 206 yards.



Phillips

Police allege he broke into fellow NU football player Scott Frost's apartment searching for his ex-girlfriend, Nebraska basketball player Kate McEwen. Police allege that Phillips then assaulted McEwen in Frost's apartment complex. Osborne dismissed Phillips from the football team that night.

The coach said Phillips, a junior Heisman Trophy candidate from West Covina, Calif., would be missed on the football field. Last year, Phillips established a Big Eight

See PHILLIPS on 2

Witnesses describe alleged attack scene as violent, irrational

By Jeff Zeleny
Senior Reporter

Witnesses say Kate McEwen was caught in a violent tug-of-war match early Sunday between two football players.

McEwen, a sophomore guard on the NU women's basketball team, was bleeding, screaming and desperately trying to wake her neighbors for help.

Two women who live in Meadow Wood Apartments, 4440 N. 7th St., said they heard McEwen's cries and went outside about 4:40 a.m. They told the Daily Nebraskan on Monday what they had seen.

"When we went out there, we saw Scott Frost and Lawrence Phillips each pulling on Kate," said a UNL junior, who requested her name not be published. "Phillips was telling Scott he would be the next one."



McEwen

Phillips, a Cornhusker junior I-back, was arrested Sunday evening on suspicion of third-degree assault. Police allege he dragged McEwen down a flight of stairs and into a hallway.

"We were watching TV in the living room when I heard someone screaming 'leave me alone,'" said a second neighbor, a UNL senior, who also requested anonymity.

Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady said Phillips scaled the wall to a balcony of a third-floor residence. Frost, an NU quarterback, rents

See WITNESS on 2

Benning backs his innocence, still on team

By Jeff Zeleny
Senior Reporter

Nebraska I-back Damon Benning said Monday he was innocent of the third-degree assault charge filed against him this weekend.



Benning

Benning was arrested early Saturday morning on suspicion of assaulting his former girlfriend, Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady said. He was released from the Lancaster County jail the same day on \$100 bond.

Police allege Benning assaulted a 19-year-old woman about 3:15 a.m. Saturday. The victim, who police refused to identify, reported that she had been assaulted by Benning after going to his residence to retrieve personal belongings.

Police declined to release further details of the assault. The woman complained of pain to her arm, Casady said. She was not hospitalized or seriously injured.

In a statement released Monday, Benning said he was innocent of the charges against him. "While I would rather keep this out of the press, I feel compelled to tell my side of the story to the public," Benning said. "The information out there right now is totally misleading and inaccurate."

Benning, a junior from Omaha, gave this account of the events that led to his arrest:

After 1 a.m. Saturday, Benning noticed his former girlfriend's car outside his north-central Lincoln apartment complex. When Benning came outside the complex, she told him she wanted to get pictures from his apartment.

"She proceeded to push me into the door and threw rocks at me, ripped my shirt and hit me with her keys, cutting me behind the ear," Benning said.

Benning said he watched from inside the apartment complex as the woman began tampering with his car. She then entered the building and tried to go inside Benning's apartment. He said he held onto the woman to keep her out of his home. After Benning had locked himself into his apartment, he said, she knocked on his door for 15 to 20 minutes.

"Since she has a history of making a scene and harassing me, I called the operator at that time to get the non-emergency police number," Benning said. "But while I was on the phone, the knocking stopped."

Benning said he saw her drive away, so he

See BENNING on 3



Travis Heying/DN

Lt. Gov. Kim Robak would be the second female governor in Nebraska if Gov. Ben Nelson wins a seat in the U.S. Senate.

Robak balances opportunities, family

Editor's note: This is the second story in a five-day series on women in the Lincoln community—their achievements and the challenges they face.

By Matt Woody
Senior Reporter

A year ago Lt. Gov. Kim Robak spoke to the Florence Rotary Club—and no one showed up.

Things are different this year. Among those at the club Monday were reporters and photographers from three TV stations.

But the media attention was growing even before Gov. Ben Nelson announced Thursday his intention to run for the U.S. Senate. Nelson's announcement has put Robak in front of the camera even more.

If Nelson wins the election, Robak will

become governor, reaching the top of Nebraska's government in just more than five years.

Robak is taking the achievement in stride. "I'm just behind the scenes doing the work," she said. "I'm trying to get things done."

And while the scenes may be changing, Robak said, she remains the same.

Robak, 39, entered state government in 1991 as legal counsel to Gov. Nelson, leaving her practice with a private Lincoln law firm to take the job.

During the summer of 1992, Nelson named Robak his chief of staff. She served the appointment until becoming lieutenant governor in October 1993, when Maxine Moul left the post to become director of economic development.

If media attention is any indication, people

are interested in the possibility of Robak becoming governor. And so is Robak.

"I'm excited," the lieutenant governor said. "Obviously, it's an opportunity to carry forward the things Gov. Nelson has worked on and that I believe in."

Although she would become only the second woman governor in Nebraska's history, Robak doesn't believe that being a woman made getting to the top more difficult.

"I don't think people have treated me differently because I'm a woman," she said.

Robak said being a woman probably had opened some doors and closed others. And, she said, some people have misconceptions about her because of her gender.

"There's always discrimination," Robak

See ROBAK on 6