

SPORTS

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Osborne defends team's integrity

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne left his weekly press conference visibly more upset than when it began.

Osborne promptly ended the 30-minute conference when the allotted time was up and said he wouldn't answer any more questions as he left.

Osborne took offense to a question about whether it took violent players to win a national championship. Throughout the press conference,

Osborne spent most of the time defending the character of his players.

"If you look at the record over the past 10 years, we've averaged three to five charges per year, mostly misdemeanors," Osborne said. "I would challenge you to find 150 young men subjected to this kind of scrutiny."

"Obviously I wish it was zero, but to characterize this as being an out-of-control situation, maybe it is. I'll let you guys be the judge of that."

He did discuss the latest on the situations of three Nebraska football players — Riley Washington,

Lawrence Phillips and Damon Benning — who have been charged with crimes in the last two months. Osborne said he was concerned with how some people may have passed judgment on those Huskers.

"What I'd like people to do is not to pull the trigger too quick," Osborne said. "A police report doesn't always mean that somebody's done something."

But one player, Phillips, won't have the opportunity to return to the team any time soon. After dismissing Phillips from the team Sunday,

Osborne would not rule out the idea that Phillips could return to the team, but only after he received some help.

"Certain things would have to happen in Lawrence's case before he would even be considered to be brought back," Osborne said. "What he did was certainly not acceptable."

Phillips was dismissed because he didn't follow certain guidelines Osborne wanted him to follow. His removal from the team had nothing to do with the legal charges, Osborne said.

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SPORTS OPINION



Todd Walkenhorst

Fighting Irish fall from polls, nation gawks

It's a bird.

It's a plane.

It's the Fighting Irish falling from the major college football polls.

Happy times are gone in South Bend, Ind. The football season is already over, and it's not even the middle of September. Fans are focusing their attention on a run for the 1997 Sugar Bowl.

But even though Notre Dame may be in trouble, NBC is smiling.

You see, this may be the best thing that could have happened to the network, which has exclusive rights to Irish home games (what a privilege).

Come on, admit it. You were on the floor rolling in laughter when the clock hit zero and on the screen appeared:

Northwestern 17, Notre Dame 15 — FINAL.

And how many of you were glued to the television last weekend as Lou Holtz's boys took on Purdue, another Big 10 team that should be competitive for the 11th spot in the conference?

I was, too.

But wait, the best still could be yet to come.

Believe it or not, Purdue and Northwestern were not supposed to be the major hurdles on the Irish schedule, despite the Wildcats' newly acquired No. 25 ranking.

In the next four weeks, the Irish will face three ranked teams. They play No. 15 Texas at home, and No. 10 Ohio State and No. 18 Washington on the road.

That's three more losses. This could get interesting by season's end.

But if there's any luck at all left in the mighty Irish, they'll squeak out a winning season. With a 6-5 record, Notre Dame is playing on New Year's Day, and Beano Cook kicks off the 1996 Ron Powlus for Heisman campaign.

Everybody in the nation will be watching the Irish, hoping they lose that sixth game and have to celebrate the New Year in South Bend. On top of that, the Irish will be without Lou.

Holtz had surgery Tuesday on his spinal cord at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. He'll be out of action for three or four weeks.

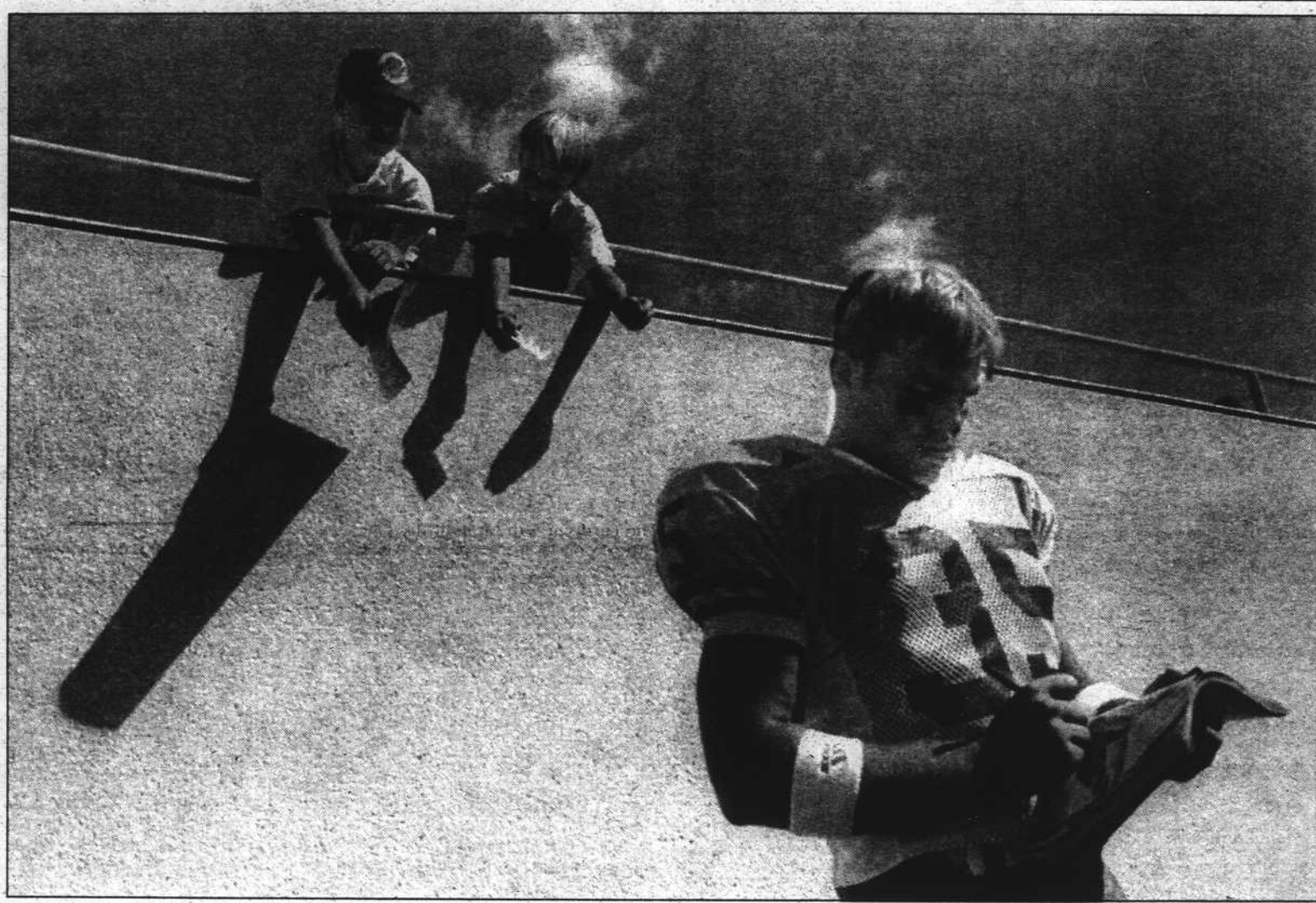
I'm not pathetic enough to take a cheap shot at Lou while he is out of commission. I'm not going to kick a guy when he's down. I'm not going to say that Holtz must be a bad coach given Notre Dame's lack of success, coupled with recruiting prowess and tradition. You probably already know that.

Instead, this may be good for the Irish. They have nothing left to play for. The championship is out. Now they can win one for Lou.

I guess you have to go with whatever works.

Or doesn't work.

Walkenhorst is a senior broadcaster and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter and columnist.



Nebraska kicker Kris Brown signs an autograph after kicking three field goals against Michigan State. Brown is starting for the Huskers as a freshman. Jeff Haller/DN

True freshman kicker contributes greatly

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Tommie Frazier did it. Will Shields did it. And now Kris Brown has done it.

Not too many players have started as a true freshman under Coach Tom Osborne, but kicker Kris Brown has accomplished the

feat.

Not only has Brown earned a starting spot, but he already has contributed greatly.

Brown missed his first college kicking attempt — an extra point against Oklahoma State.

Since then, he has been perfect.

"Right now, as a freshman, my long-range goals are to make everything from 40 yards in and all

the extra points," Brown said. "If I could do this from now on out, I would be really happy with my career."

"You have to set two kinds of goals. You have to set the real high goals and then set the realistic goals. That way, if you don't reach the real high goals, but reach the realistic goals, you're not disappointed."

Brown followed the missed ex-

tra point with a 24-yard field goal and seven extra points in the opener.

Against Michigan State, Brown connected on all four extra points and field goals of 22, 47 and 20 yards.

"I wanted to make everything," he said. "I'm happy with the performance. I'm just feeling really con-

See BROWN on 11

Strickland to bring French experience to NU

Nebraska veteran studies more than hoops in Europe

By Mike Kluck
Staff Reporter

Erick Strickland received an education in French this summer, but the Nebraska basketball team may receive the benefits.

Strickland, a senior on this year's Cornhusker team, spent three weeks in France in August playing for the NIT All-Stars National Team.

Besides helping to lead his team to

a 6-1 record, Strickland said he had many opportunities to visit the sights and historic places of France. He said he also had a chance to meet many people and learn more about French culture.

Strickland said the French were very supportive and knew a great deal about basketball.

"It was a pretty good atmosphere, and from the Americans, they expected a lot of show-time type of stuff," Strickland said. "They enjoyed good basketball, and that's pretty much what they wanted."

Strickland's trademark was a dunk with authority, which the French crowd loved, Strickland said. He said the crowds were more impressed by the dunk because at 6 foot 3 inches he was

one of the shorter players on the team. But Strickland said the American team he was on wasn't there to put on a show, but to win ballgames.

Strickland said the opportunity to play on the all-star team and to be coached by former St. John's University coach Lou Carnesecca gave him a chance to work on different aspects of

his game, which will improve him for the upcoming season as a Husker.

"I got a good feeling of what it's going to be like coming up this year," Strickland said. "I played three positions there, and it really helped me out."

See STRICKLAND on 10

"If it comes down to making money and going over there and playing, I would be there in a heartbeat."

ERICK STRICKLAND

Nebraska basketball player