

SPORTS

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SPORTS OPINION



Trevor Parks

NU freshman experienced in recovering

All Lisa Avery wants to do is play volleyball.

But for now, she would settle for a chance to run on the court with her Cornhusker teammates.

So far in her brief Nebraska career, Avery has spent every home match in the stands with recruits, and she has spent many hours of practice time standing on the sidelines.

Avery is watching it because she tore the anterior cruciate ligament in her right knee on April 25 during a regional high school championship match in Warrensburg, Mo.

This was nearly three months after Avery, Fiona Nepo, Renee Saunders and Jaime Krondak signed letters-of-intent with the Huskers, and were rated the No. 1 group of freshmen in the nation.

For more than a month she couldn't bend her leg at a 90-degree angle. Instead of having torn cartilage scraped out of the inside of her joint, Avery had it repaired. And as a result, she was forced to keep her leg immobilized as much as possible.

"I'm kind of behind," she said after practice earlier this week, "but I'm thinking that in a month or so I will be doing a lot more. I'm hoping by the end of the season I'll be able to warm up, but it depends on how much strength I get back."

But the freshman from Overland Park, Kan. — not Shawnee Mission, her listed hometown in the Husker media guide — hasn't lost faith.

Saturday, when no potential recruits are slated to visit Lincoln, she said she hoped to suit up and stand on the sidelines. She said it would feel a lot better than a hard Coliseum bench.

Avery said sitting out would be even tougher if she hadn't been through a similar experience two years earlier.

During her sophomore year of high school, Avery tore the ACL in her left knee playing basketball, but in retrospect, she said, that may have been a good thing.

"As soon as it happened I said (the second time), 'Oh my God, here we go again.' But I came back the first time. I'm sure I can do it again."

That spirit is pushing Avery to keep going, and she should be 100 percent healthy for next season. But in the meantime, does she feel like part of the team?

"As much as I don't really interact with them in practice and don't go on road trips, they are all supportive."

However, she said watching practice had been difficult.

Hopefully, the next time she says "here we go again," it will be because she is back on the volleyball court.

Parks is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan senior reporter and columnist.

Huskers blast Big 8 rival Buffaloes

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team showed something it hadn't shown all year in beating Colorado Wednesday night at the Coors Event Center in Boulder, Colo.



Weston. Allison Weston, who hit a match-high .444, said Nebraska's ability to come from be-

hind may have resulted from experience.

"They got excited up 11-5 and they were thinking they were going to take the game," Weston said of the matches' third game. "Then I think our experience took over."

The Buffaloes started three freshmen against Nebraska, which starts three seniors.

With Nebraska leading 4-3 in the third game, Colorado turned things around, scoring seven straight points to take a 10-4 lead. Three of those points came on service aces by setter Jennifer Anderson.

After the Buffaloes took an 11-5 lead, Nebraska stormed back. The Huskers reeled off the next six points to tie things up at 11. The comeback was sparked from a Christy Johnson kill, a Lisa Reitsma ace and a Weston kill.

The Huskers cut the score to 11-9 when Colorado's Leah Williams hit a ball into the net. Johnson added a kill and Billie Winsett tied the match with her ninth kill of the night.

After a side out, Colorado's Rachel Wacholder knocked down a kill to give the Buffs a 12-11 lead. But that would be all for the Buffaloes.

Winsett's tenth kill of the match gave Nebraska a side out and with kills by Reitsma, Stacie Maser, Winsett and Maser again ended the match.

Weston said Maser, a redshirt freshman, helped Nebraska a great deal in the third game.

In the second game, Nebraska trailed 2-0 before scoring 13 straight points to take a 13-2 lead. Colorado cut the score to 13-5 before Sarah Lodge hit a ball out of bounds.

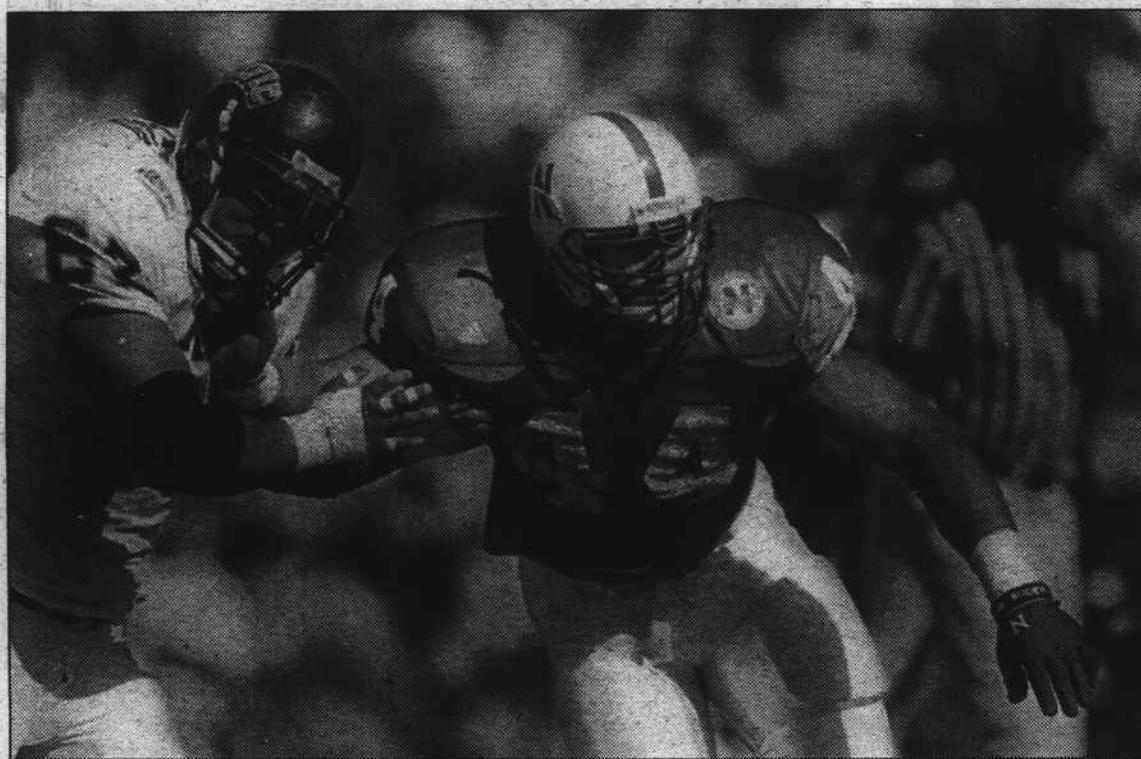
Weston ended the game with her eighth of a team-high 11 kills. Reitsma also added 11 kills for Nebraska, which as a team, hit .411.

The Huskers started the first game trailing 4-0 and won after outscoring Colorado 15-2 the rest of the way.

"I thought for Colorado to be in the match, we would have to make a lot of unforced errors," Husker coach Terry Pettit said on KLIN's post-match radio show.

Weston said Nebraska showed improvement in many needed areas, particularly its serving. Colorado struggled serving, committing 11 service errors. Nebraska committed a season-low three service errors.

"It was much better tonight," Weston said. "They should be used to this altitude, but I guess they struggled with it."



Travis Heying/DN

Nebraska linebacker Jon Hesse fights through a block by Pacific's Bryan Chiu during Nebraska's 49-7 win over the Tigers Saturday. Hesse is fourth on the team with 17 tackles this year.

Linebacker waits his turn

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

For Nebraska linebacker Jon Hesse, everything finally came together during a scrimmage before the 1995 Orange Bowl.

Hesse, who is listed third on the depth chart at both MIKE linebacker and left outside linebacker, said he realized what he was supposed to do at the middle linebacker spot during workouts last December.

"One day it just happens, and it becomes a situation where everything just works," Hesse said. "It just all the sudden kind of switched on, and I felt good again on the football field."

That feeling has continued in 1995. After four games, Hesse is tied for fourth on the team with 17 tackles. Eight of those have been unassisted. Hesse also has two tackles behind the line of scrimmage.

The difficulty in playing the MIKE position, Hesse said, was that he had to do a lot of things before the ball was snapped, and he had to still be ready once the play began.

In Hesse's previous two seasons as a Cornhusker, he recorded 13 tackles in limited playing time, mostly on special teams. Now

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JON HESSE

Nebraska linebacker

given a chance, Hesse said he was trying to make the most of it.

The 6-foot-4, 235-pound junior said he wasn't disappointed that he was playing behind seniors Doug Colman and Phil Ellis at MIKE linebacker.

"Nebraska has a lot of great players, and you often have to get in the back of the line and wait your turn," Hesse said. "That turn comes earlier for some players than it does for others."

"Linebacker is a position at Nebraska where there always seems to be a lot of players and it's kind of unfortunate for me because I'm in the back of the line."

Hesse, who graduated from Lincoln Southeast in 1992, said playing a backup role most of his Nebraska career had been difficult.

"It's hard when you are not playing," Hesse said. "But it's

something that's been worth it to me."

Next year, Colman and Ellis will be gone, and Hesse may get a chance to start. But for now, he said he was only concerned with this season, not what could happen in 1996.

Just getting the chance for additional playing time has helped Hesse's progress, he said.

"Anytime you start playing again, that makes you feel good because we all work real hard for what we get."

Even though Hesse is happy to be on the field, at times even this season has been difficult, too, he said.

"Even this year has been kind of a struggle because I would like to play more, but sometimes in life you have to wait your turn, and that's what I'm doing right now."

Huskers sign with Huskies

By Mike Kluck
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska athletic department announced Tuesday that contracts have been signed for the Cornhusker football team to play a two-game series with Washington during the 1997-98 season.

Nebraska will travel to Seattle to face the Huskies on Sept. 20, 1997, and then Washington will play in Lincoln on Sept. 26, 1998.

Because of a scheduling conflict with Missouri, Washington was able to schedule the home-and-home series against Nebraska, Washington Athletic Director Barbara Hedges said through the Washington Sports Information Department.

"The University of Missouri wanted out of its 1997 and 1998 contract because of some future scheduling they were working on," Hedges said. "We agreed, provided they would work with us to schedule another attractive opponent. As a result, we were able to work out an arrangement with Nebraska."

Washington's agreement to play the Huskers completed Nebraska's 1997 nonconference schedule. Nebraska also will play both Arkansas State and Northern Illinois at home.

Nebraska lost to Washington 36-21 in Lincoln in 1991, the Huskers' last loss at Memorial Stadium. Washington went on to win a share of the national title with Miami (Fla.) that season.

In 1992, Nebraska again lost to Washington, 29-14 in Seattle. That loss put Nebraska's overall record against Washington at 1-3-1.

Next year, when Nebraska begins Big 12 play, its nonconference schedule will be shortened to three games in order to accommodate for an eight-game conference season.

NOTES:

● I-back Damon Benning and split end Brendan Holbein, both of whom missed practice Tuesday because of sprained ankles, practiced Wednesday and should be ready to play Saturday, Coach Tom Osborne said.

Osborne said defensive tackle Larry Townsend (knee strain) practiced, but he still remained doubtful for Saturday's game.

No. 1 MIKE linebacker Phil Ellis sprained a foot during practice. Osborne said the severity of his injury was not immediately clear.