

SPORTS WEEKEND

Friday, October 13, 1995

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SPORTS OPINION



Nathan McKlinney

Hunting season should be good for elk lovers

When picturing the possibilities of hunting big game animals in Nebraska, most people think only of white-tailed deer, mule deer and maybe a few antelope.

Few people would ever imagine that Nebraska was home to a sustainable and huntable elk population.

But we are. And the 1995 hunting season is producing some spectacular results, proving that maybe you don't have to travel west to find the wapiti.

Elk, which can weigh in at 1,000 pounds, aren't the type of animal to take up residence in Nebraska's cornfields. However, in the northwest corner of the state — where the flatlands give way to mountains, trout streams and pine trees — elk herds have found a place they can call home.

According to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, hunters are currently allowed to shoot limited number of elk. Because a congregated herd of elk are capable of causing severe crop damage, the hunting, which causes the herds to spread over a large area of land, will benefit many farmers and ranchers.

The hunting season, which runs from Sept. 23 to Oct. 22, has already netted some monster bulls, including a 7-by-7, which would be a trophy by even the strictest of Western standards.

Unfortunately, not all hunters are going to be able to take advantage of Nebraska's elk season. With only 38 permits granted out of 1,200 applications, the odds of getting a chance to hunt this year weren't very high. And under the current management regime, the numbers will likely remain low until the system is altered.

At this time, the elk herds are being carefully monitored with five specific objectives.

- Determine elk population status in Nebraska, by area, and document expansion into an adjacent or new range.
 - Respond to all elk depredation complaints.
 - Use prescribed hunting seasons, starting in 1995, to provide recreation, and to control elk populations within landowner tolerance levels.
 - Monitor the overall health of the elk population and prevent contamination of domestic livestock through removal or treatment of infected elk.
 - Provide informational and educational materials to the public, recognizing free-ranging elk as a valuable component of our native fauna, and at the same time, facilitate public viewing.
- The number of applicants this year definitely shows an interest in the opportunity to hunt elk in Nebraska.
- Hopefully, the management scheme will be successful and allow more people the opportunity to experience an elk hunt without traveling hundreds of miles.

Green to start against Missouri

By Derek Samson
Senior Reporter

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said Thursday that true freshman I-back Ahman Green would make the first start of his career Saturday against Missouri.

Green, who is the Huskers' leading rusher with 525 yards in five games and is averaging 10.3 yards per attempt, is the second Cornhusker true freshman ever to start at I-back, joining Monte Anthony, who started in 1974.

But Osborne said junior Damon

Benning and senior Clinton Childs — who is 95 percent recovered from a knee strain suffered Sept. 16 against Arizona State — would see significant playing time.

Weighing more heavily on Osborne's mind as Nebraska prepares for its second conference game of the season at 1 p.m. Saturday at Memorial Stadium against Missouri is the Tigers' offense.

Osborne questioned Missouri's logic in changing its entire offense this week. But he admitted the uncertainty left the Huskers with plenty of questions.

"They've talked about changing some things offensively, and that can work for you or against you," Osborne said. "If they happen to make some real good decisions and revamp things that will cause problems, then it will work in their advantage. On the other hand, if you change a lot of things in the middle of the season, it can cause confusion.

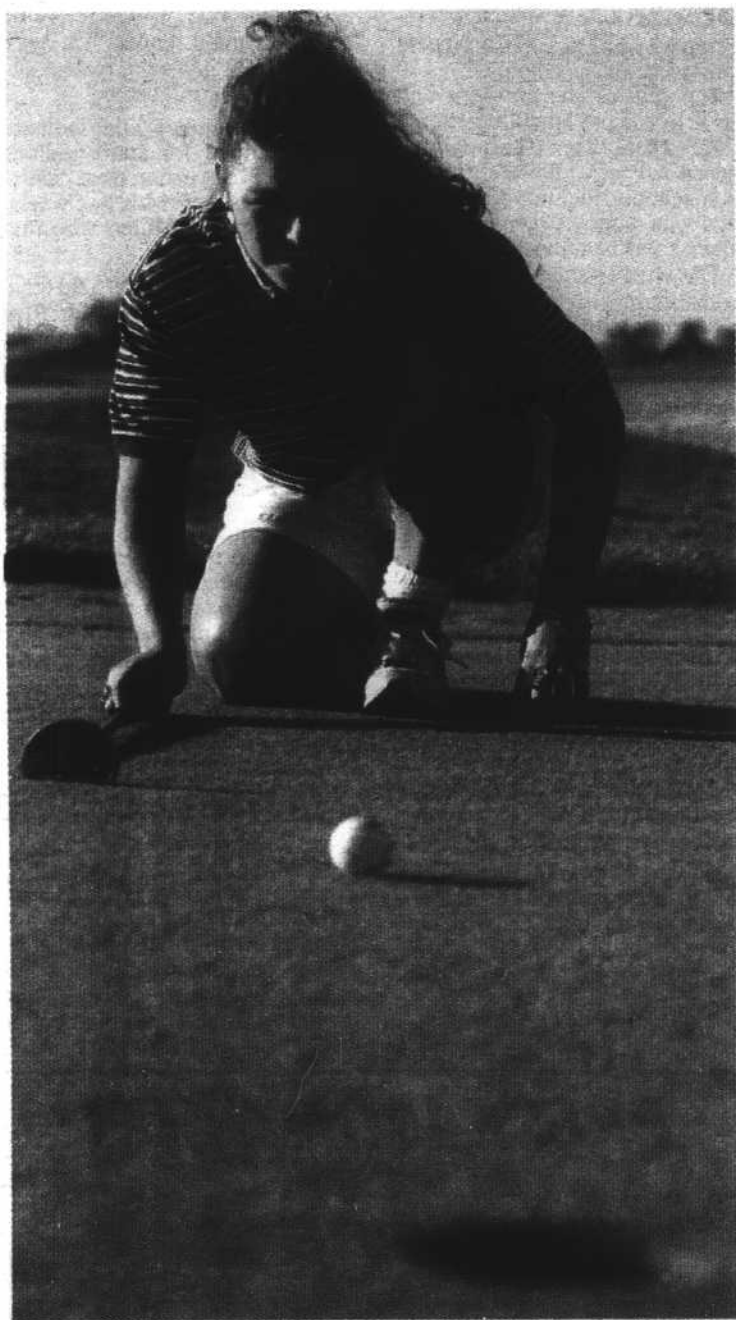
"Sometimes you're not as good as you were before. We'll just have to wait and see what they come up with. I'm a little uneasy because all we can work on is what they've done in the past, and we're just wasting our time

if they totally revamp their offense." Missouri coach Larry Smith decided a change was necessary after a 30-0 shutout loss to Kansas State last week, which dropped the Tigers to 2-3 and 0-1 in conference play.

"Defensively, we have been steadily improving," Smith said. "Offensively, we have been inconsistent. Whenever you go six quarters and only score three points, that doesn't speak well."

Osborne said he thought Smith wanted to put more emphasis on the

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Jon Waller/DN

Sophomore golfer Rachelle Tacha eyes a putt. The native of Wichita, Kan., will return to her homestate on Monday when the Huskers play in Manhattan, Kan.

Heading home to lift lady golfer's spirits

By Antone Oseka
Staff Reporter

Rachelle Tacha is excited to go home Monday.

Tacha isn't going home to do her laundry like most college students. She's going to play golf.

"I'm excited," she said. "I like it when my parents come watch, especially my dad. He makes me feel really relaxed and comfortable. They're really supportive, no matter what."

Tacha, a sophomore, said she had been through an up-and-down season this fall.

"My last tournament was really bad," she said. "It was one of those brain-dead tournaments, I guess. My short game was bad. It was one of those tournaments where you

hit the ball good, but it just doesn't all come together. Hopefully this next tournament it will all come together."

There's no better time for it to come together than Monday for the native of Manhattan, Kan. The Huskers will be golfing in Wichita, Kan., only 134 miles from her hometown.

Tacha said she came to Nebraska to be away and close to home at the same time.

"I wanted to go somewhere away from home, and get out of Manhattan," she said. "But I wanted to stay close enough that if I ever needed anything, I was close enough I could run home."

See TACHA on 8

Healthy Husker team ready for MU match

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

Last year, when the Nebraska volleyball team traveled to Missouri, it played without Jen McFadden, Bille Winsett and Coach Terry Pettit.

Still, the Cornhuskers had no problem with the Tigers.

This year the 15-1 Huskers, who are 5-0 in the Big Eight, will be at full strength when they travel to Columbia, Mo., Saturday to face the Tigers at 7:30 p.m. in the Hearn Center. Missouri is 4-15 and 1-3 in conference play.

Nebraska is on a roll, winning 14 straight matches and 42 consecutive games. The Huskers defeated the Tigers 15-1, 15-4, 15-9 in 1994 without two of its starters and its head coach, who was sick before the match last year.

Another player who also didn't play in last year's match, but is looking forward to the trip this weekend is middle blocker Stacie Maser. Maser

redshirted last season after tearing an anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee before the season.

Maser said the Huskers would use Saturday's match to improve some things.

"The thing we're going to work on is improving with every game," Maser said. "We want to work on things like ballhandling and coverage from the block, and just overall playing together."

Maser said for the last two weeks Nebraska had struggled, but after Wednesday night's three-game win over Kansas State, the Huskers took a step forward.

"We just need to keep moving in that direction," Maser said. "We need to avoid matches where we have been letting up and let teams play with us who aren't on our level."

The 6-footer from Lincoln East said she had seen some improvement in her own play.

See VB on 8

Tiger player sure of team's potential

By Mike Kluck
Staff Reporter

Shad Criss knows Missouri has the potential to upset No. 2 Nebraska.

Criss, a sophomore cornerback for the Tigers, said his optimism was not based on the Tigers' 2-3 record or the fact they lost to Kansas State 30-0 last Saturday. Instead, Criss' confidence comes from

Missouri's 42-7 loss last season to the Cornhuskers.

A year ago, Missouri held Nebraska to a scoreless first quarter and trailed only 14-0 at halftime. In the second half, the Tigers recovered a Nebraska fumble on the 10-yard line.

But two plays later, Tiger tailback Joe Freeman fumbled on the one-yard line, erasing a potential touchdown that would have cut the Husker lead to seven points.

Nebraska recovered the fumble and went on to outscore the Tigers 28-7 the rest of the game.

"I pretty much know what to expect from Nebraska," Criss said. "Last year we were able to stay close with them. That fumble really took some momentum away from us."

Criss said he also knew what to expect from Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier. Frazier did not play last year against Missouri because of a blood clot in his right leg.

"I've been watching films of Nebraska, and Frazier likes to have the ball in his hand," Criss said. "He would rather keep the ball than pitch it."

Although Criss said he knew what to expect from the Huskers, he does not know what to expect from Nebraska's home crowd.

Criss, who began his career as a wide receiver, said dedication and work ethic had made a leader among the young Tiger squad.

"I feel if you bring out the best in yourself by working hard, then it will rub off on them," Criss said. "The coaches say I'm a leader because I lead by example. All I'm trying to do is help the team win."

Criss said he felt no pressure when playing Nebraska, which is averaging 656 yards and 55 points a game. He said the pressure was on the Huskers, because they were predicted to win the game easily.

"We're like San Diego when they played the 49ers in last year's Super Bowl," Criss said. "All San Diego did and we have to do is play the best game we can play, and do the best we can. The pressure is not on us."

Criss said he expected the Missouri offense to perform better this week. Last week, the Tigers were limited to 118 yards of total offense against the Wildcats.

"I have no doubt our offense will move the ball against the No. 2 team in the country," Criss said. "We have a lot to prove and will rise up to do the best we can against them."