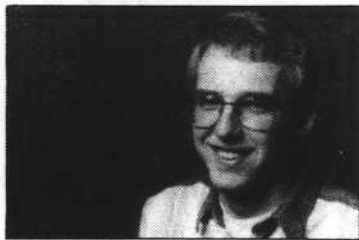


SPORTS

Wednesday, October 25, 1995

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SPORTS OPINION



Tim Pearson

Rusty Phillips couldn't hurt NU machine

You can't help but feel sorry for Iowa State.

Dan McCarney is trying to rebuild the Cyclone machine this year. He's had to face a three-game stretch of Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado — all in a row.

And now he gets to welcome back Lawrence Phillips.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Phillips wouldn't play against Colorado on Saturday, but he could see action against the Cyclones in two weeks.

But who knows how effective Phillips will be.

Will he still be able to turn the corner as quick as he used to?

Will he still be able to burst through holes and fend off tackles as he used to?

Will he be in midseason form after missing six games?

"It just depends on whether he's the Lawrence Phillips of Sept. 9 or the Lawrence Phillips of Aug. 9," said Ivan Maisel, a college football writer for Long Island Newsday. "You have to think that he has to start fall practice all over again."

"You have to think that he will be rusty even next week."

If he is rusty, so what? Ahman Green, Damon Benning and Clinton Childs will be waiting in the wings. For five games, the Huskers' I-back trio did just fine without Phillips.

And now with Phillips back, it just adds to the Cornhuskers' offensive machine.

"He is the same Lawrence Phillips as far as I'm concerned," Childs said. "... It's good to have him back."

But how is Osborne going to get everybody playing time? Because Green — who hadn't played a down before the season — has gained 724 yards in seven games, it makes it even more difficult for Osborne.

Maybe this won't be a problem against Iowa State. But all four I-backs are not going to get a significant amount of playing time against No. 6 Kansas.

Green may not get his 15 carries and 100 yards a game. Benning may not get his 67 yards, and Childs won't get his 64 yards. And Phillips probably won't get his 17 carries and 175 yards rushing.

For the first two games of the season, Phillips got the ball 34 times. Green got the ball 10 times.

Expect more of the same against Iowa State in two weeks. But Green may get the bulk of the workload this time around. Phillips still has to earn his spot at I-back.

"If (Osborne's) smart, he'll petition the NCAA to use more than one ball," Maisel said. "But I assume he'll handle it much as he did at the outset of the year — Lawrence, Lawrence, Lawrence, and then the other guys."

Good luck Iowa State.

Pearson is a senior news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan sports editor.

Husker family welcomes Phillips

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

Lawrence Phillips was welcomed back to the Nebraska football family with open arms Tuesday.

Phillips returned to practice for the first time since being suspended Sept. 11.

Two of Phillips' fellow I-backs were glad to see him return, even though their playing time may decrease.

Clinton Childs, who has talked with Phillips throughout his suspension, said he was glad to see his teammate and friend return.

"He's part of our Husker family," Childs said, "so we can't boot somebody out just because of one incident."

Starting I-back Ahman Green, a true freshman, said he was glad Phillips was reinstated.

"He left, and it was a little surprising," Green said, "but when he comes back, I'll welcome him with open arms because he's my teammate, he's a fellow running back and he's going to take a lot of pressure off my back."

Green, who is averaging 103.4 yards a game, said he wasn't worried

about losing playing time because of Phillips' return.

And Childs said everyone — not just Phillips — on the team needed football.

"I need football, Tommie (Frazier) needs football, all of us need football," Childs said. "It's a part of our lives. If you say Lawrence needs football, make sure you say the whole team needs football."

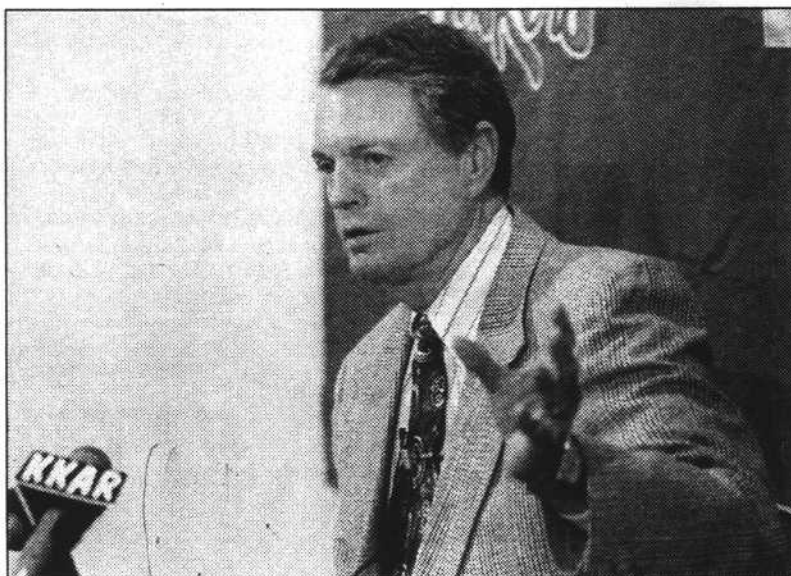
"If you're on this team, you need football; if you didn't, you wouldn't be here."

Having Phillips back can do nothing but help Nebraska, Childs said.

"It's always fun to watch him play, and it's always fun to be around him in practice," Childs said. "I'm glad he can get back to what he was doing, and I hope everybody will drop everything that was wrong with him that happened in the past."

"Incidents could happen to anybody; they could happen to me; they could happen to anybody else on the team."

Childs said Phillips was looking forward to playing football again. Phillips won't play in a game until Nov. 4, when Nebraska plays host to Iowa State.



Jon Waller/DN

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne speaks at his weekly press conference Tuesday. Osborne announced that Lawrence Phillips could return to practice.

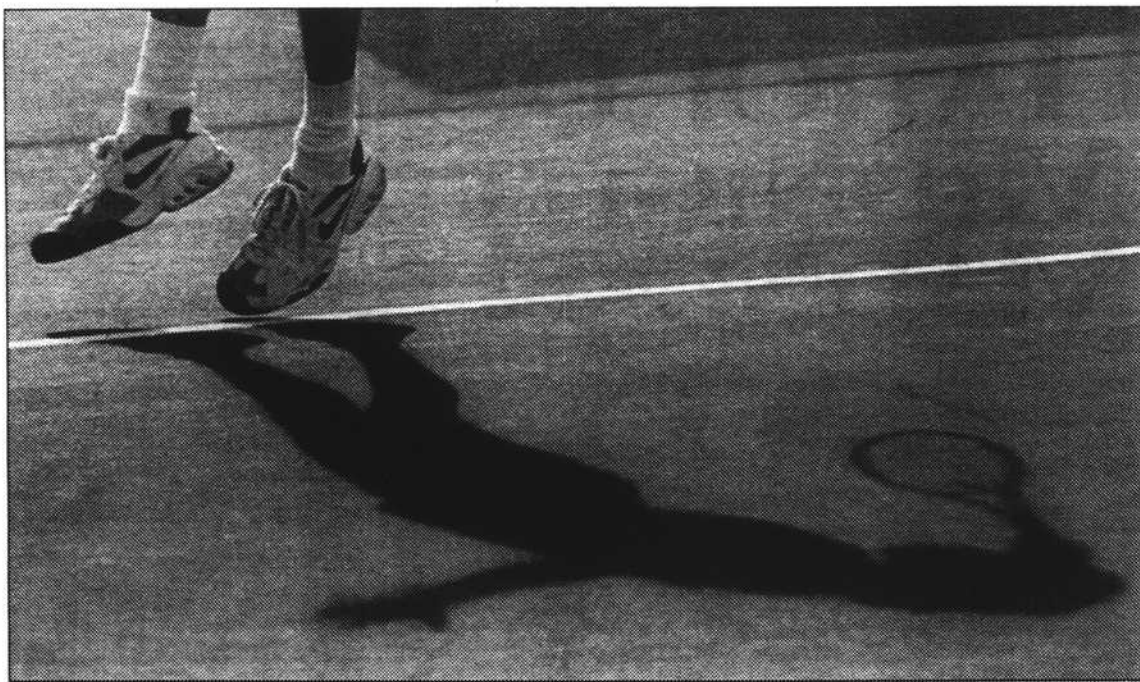
Childs said he and Phillips talked about putting this episode behind him.

"The incident happened, and he knew he had to be punished for it," Childs said. "As far as he's looking at

it, he's been through all the courts, and he's trying to put the people that are going to have negative things to say

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Warming up



Jeff Haller/DN

Nebraska men's tennis player Dino Teppara covers part of the court with his shadow while serving during practice at the Cather-Pound courts Tuesday. The Huskers will compete in tournament action this Thursday.

Tennis team overcoming obstacles

By Vince D'Adamo
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska men's tennis team is using its fall season as a spring season tune-up. The Cornhuskers will compete in the Region V Rolex Tournament beginning Thursday.

The top 64 singles players and top 32 doubles players will participate in the tournament.

Nebraska's doubles tandem of Thomas Wheat and Markus Bergerheim, returning players from last year's team, are one of the top doubles teams participating.

"It's a chance for us to see where our guys are at right now," Husker coach Kerry McDermott said. "Hopefully, we can win a couple of

matches. I think once we get everyone healthy, we'll be more competitive."

A few key Huskers are nursing injuries.

Fredrik Riesbeck, Nebraska's top singles player, is out for 12 weeks with a cracked bone in his hand. Adrian Maizey and Bergerheim are on limited practice schedules. Maizey continues to be bothered by a sore elbow and neck. Bergerheim still is bothered by a foot injury that kept him sidelined for about half of last season.

McDermott said the team was using its fall season to sharpen its fundamentals.

"If a guy has a deficiency in a service motion or is double faulting," McDermott said, "we try to get rid of the bad habits."

For the first time in four years, the Huskers are without former No. 1 singles player Andy Davis. McDermott is taking a gone but not forgotten approach when referring

to Davis.

"He'll be tough to replace because of his leadership. He was a great team player," McDermott said. "We'll miss him, but his spirit lives on."

Riesbeck, Wheat, and Henrik Anderson have improved noticeably, McDermott said.

"They've improved quite a bit for me. They know they can compete," he said. "I don't know if I got that same feeling last year."

While having talented returning players such as Bergerheim, Wheat, Riesbeck, and Anderson is nice for any coach, McDermott knows that talent alone is not enough to win; every team needs a few breaks.

"I feel the guys have worked hard as far as conditioning," McDermott said. "It's a matter of staying injury free, and hopefully we get more talented newcomers as the year goes on."

Nebraska using KU as tune-up

By Trevor Parks
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team will try to keep everything in perspective as it heads to Kansas to play the Big Eight's last-place team.

The Cornhuskers, 17-1 and 7-0 in the Big Eight, travel to Lawrence, Kan., to play the Jayhawks, 6-14, 1-6, tonight at 8 at Allen Fieldhouse. Assistant coach Cathy Noth said Wednesday's match at Kansas and this Saturday's match against Iowa State would be used as tune-ups for three top 14 teams on the upcoming schedule.

"We'll use this week as a stepping stone for Texas, Notre Dame and Florida," Noth said. "Hopefully, we'll play good enough as we head into those matches."

Recently, the Huskers have been playing well.

Nebraska has won 48 consecutive games and 16 straight matches. The Huskers also have a 27-match regular-season win streak in the Big Eight on the line.

In the first meeting between the schools this season, Nebraska won 15-4, 15-6, 15-2 in a match that lasted an hour. Kansas hit a season-low .080 against the Huskers at the NU Coliseum. The Jayhawks had only 18 kills on 88 total attacks.

Nebraska also had 12 total team blocks along with four solo blocks and 16 block assists.

Noth said the Nebraska blockers — Jen McFadden, Stacie Maser and Allison Weston — should cause problems for Kansas, which has lost two consecutive matches.

"We're 2 to 3 inches above all the players on their roster, so we should stuff some balls," Noth said. "Against a block like ours, a smaller attacker could be intimidated."

Noth said lately McFadden was

See ROAD on 8

