

# SPORTS

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## SPORTS OPINION



**Derek Samson**

### Despite past, Veland ends 'picture perfect'

Two years ago, Tony Veland had to try something different.

He needed a change of pace, along with a change of fate — and he got both.

Veland, a 6-foot-2, 205-pound senior from Omaha Benson High School, arrived in Lincoln in 1991 with dreams of being the Cornhusker quarterback.

But something wouldn't let him.

After redshirting in 1991, Veland became the No. 1 quarterback during spring football in 1992. But Veland broke his collarbone in an August scrimmage and would have to wait until his sophomore year to earn back the starting spot.

Meanwhile, he sat and watched true freshman Tommie Frazier take over the quarterback duties and lead Nebraska to a Big Eight title.

In 1993, Frazier went down in the opener with an ankle injury while Veland had been sharing backup duties with Brook Berringer.

But in the following game, Veland ruptured his right patellar tendon and his sophomore season also came to an abrupt end.

After missing spring practice to recover from the knee injury, Veland converted to the secondary and made an immediate impact. Veland took over the starting duties at safety when Mike Minter tore his anterior cruciate ligament in Nebraska's second game last season.

Veland has started ever since, and played his last home game in the 37-0 win over Oklahoma Friday.

"It's been crazy," Veland said. "I never thought I would be playing DB—I always thought I'd be playing quarterback. Some things happened to me, and it turned out for the best. We've got Tommie Frazier as a Heisman Trophy candidate, and I'm a returning starter from a defense that won the national championship."

Veland's final home game perhaps could be the most memorable of any of the 21 seniors.

With the Nebraska offense struggling and clinging to a 13-0 lead, Veland picked up an Oklahoma fumble and sprinted 57 yards for a touchdown.

"I worked real hard here, and I've had a lot of misfortunes," he said. "I kept battling back from any adversity that was in my past. I just wanted to make sure people would remember me after I leave. I wanted to go out with a bang."

"I started out as a quarterback, and I thought I'd be scoring all these touchdowns. Then to switch to defense, and finally end up scoring was just a great feeling."

Veland called the ending 'picture-perfect,' but admitted that perfection really would end with a win Jan. 2.

But for now, Veland is happy with finally getting his touchdown — and finally getting a little luck.

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

## Heisman hype



Travis Heying/DN

Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier is congratulated by Oklahoma tight end Stephen Alexander after the Huskers' 37-0 win over the Sooners.

### Frazier prefers victories to awards

By Derek Samson  
Senior Reporter

Last week, the Heisman Trophy showdown was set.

Both Nebraska's Tommie Frazier and Ohio State's Eddie George each would have their own personal moment in the national spotlight when the Cornhuskers played Oklahoma on Friday and the Buckeyes faced Michigan Saturday.

But neither player had especially impressive games, and a third contender — Florida quarterback Danny Wuerffel — jumped into the picture.

Wuerffel completed 25 of 40 passes for 443 yards to help Florida remain undefeated by beating Florida State 35-24.

Meanwhile, Frazier completed 12 of 25 for 128 yards with one touchdown and one interception. He also rushed 10 times for 35 yards.

George rushed 21 times for 104 yards and one touchdown, but was

*"I think without a doubt Tommie Frazier deserves the vote for the Heisman Trophy."*

**AARON GRAHAM**

Nebraska center

hurt by the Michigan win and the 313 yards rushing by Wolverine back Tim Biakabutuka.

But don't expect Nebraska coach Tom Osborne to lobby for Frazier in what should be the closest Heisman Trophy balloting in years.

"They're going to vote what they're going to vote," Osborne said. "I get kind of tired of coaches always saying that their player is the greatest. Who really pays attention to that anyway?"

Osborne, however, said he would praise Frazier for what he had meant to Nebraska in his four years as a starter.

"I will say this, for four years he has the productivity and results,"

Osborne said. "I don't know what else is out there. I'm not going to talk about anyone else, but he sure has meant a lot to this program."

But Frazier didn't have to look too far for a spokesman, as the man he lines up behind on every play went to bat for him.

Senior center Aaron Graham said he hoped Frazier's performance Friday wouldn't hurt him in the Heisman race.

"I hope nobody is looking at it that way," he said. "He's the general of the offense, and when you go undefeated that says something. I think without a doubt Tommie

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## Osborne to follow same plan

By Todd Walkenhorst  
Staff Reporter

Nebraska will play for the national title for the third straight year.

And Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne isn't going to change much from last year's bowl game routine.

With the Huskers' 37-0 win against Oklahoma on Friday, they should be in line to play in the Fiesta Bowl Jan. 2 at Tempe, Ariz. Most likely they will play Florida if the Gators defeat Arkansas in the Southeastern Conference title game this Saturday.

Nebraska will prepare for this year's national championship game just as it did last year.

"We'll probably follow the same format," Osborne said. "We'll go down the 23rd or 24th, and try to get as much practice as we can in Lincoln."

This year's game could be bigger than last year's Orange Bowl. This year's Fiesta Bowl could pair the No. 1 against the No. 2 team thanks to Ohio State's loss to Michigan. Last year's Orange Bowl paired No. 1 Nebraska against No. 3 Miami.

"There will be plenty of distractions," Osborne said. "It goes with a game of this type."

Osborne said that he had not seen enough of Florida to know how the Huskers would match up with the Gators. Nebraska's defense has been the Huskers' anchor in the latter part of the season and will need to be at its best to stop the Gators.

"Our defense is playing pretty well," he said, "and over the last four or five games, they have stepped it up. Presently we're in the top 10 in several defensive categories, and our scoring defense has been pretty good, which is the bottom line."

In the next couple of weeks, the Huskers will work on conditioning and keeping their timing. Osborne said the Huskers would scrimmage a couple of times between now and the Fiesta Bowl. Whoever plays best in those scrimmages will start in Tempe.

"We'll probably go with whoever is best ready to play," Osborne said. "Nobody has anything locked up. You always go with your best 11 offensively and 11 best defensive players

See FIESTA on 8

## Sam Houston coach Schaefer preps young team for Huskers

By Mike Kluck  
Staff Reporter

Vic Schaefer vividly remembers his first game at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

Schaefer, Sam Houston State's women's basketball coach, made his college head coaching debut at the Devaney Center in 1990 when his team played Nebraska in the first round of the CableVision Classic.

Tonight Schaefer and the LadyKats return to the Devaney Center for a 7:05 game against the 2-0 Cornhuskers.

Schaefer's first squad lost to Nebraska 90-51, but rebounded the next afternoon to defeat Boise State and finish third in the Classic after a two-hour practice at 7 a.m.

"They pretty much dominated us in that first game," Schaefer said. "We only had three players returning that season and were pretty young. But I got their attention the next morning after losing to Nebraska."

Although Schaefer is starting his sixth season at Huntsville, Texas, he is in a similar predicament tonight, returning only two starters from a 13-14 team last season. Sam Houston finished fourth in the Southland Conference last season with a 10-8 conference record.

The LadyKats, Schaefer said, will start two seniors against the Huskers but the rest of their lineup will consist of mainly sophomores and freshmen.

"The average age of our squad is 18.5, so we are a young squad," Schaefer said. "(Playing Nebraska) is going to be a tremendous challenge for us."

Schaefer said the challenge for his squad would be handling Nebraska's pressure defense.

In the Huskers' first two games, they forced their opponents into 57 turnovers and an average of 51.5 points a game, while Nebraska averaged 82.5 points.

But Nebraska coach Angela Beck said after the Huskers won the CableVision Classic on Saturday that they still have to improve their defense.

"I'd like to see us take more charges and have less fouling," Beck said. "We need to go eight deep, and I'm not certain we're eight deep in our defense. I need my next two players to play better in our team situation to be really good. I think our defense is ahead of our offense, and that's what you want at this point."

Schaefer, however, said he also had trouble finding flaws with the Huskers' offense. Nebraska does a good job of getting the ball to senior Pyra Aarden, who complements the four perimeter players, he said.

Aarden is the Huskers' second-leading scorer, averaging 17.5 points a game behind sophomore guard Anna DeForge's 21.5 points a game.

"Over the last five years, I have felt Nebraska is one of the top 40 programs in the country," Schaefer said. "They play hard and are well-coached. No matter what happens in this game, this will improve us for our conference race, which will help us and is our goal."

## Huskers open season with Hawaii sweep

From Staff Reports

Tyrone Lue left Lincoln 10 days ago having never played a college basketball game. Late Monday night he returned as the all-time Nebraska freshman record-holder for points scored in a game.

The 6-foot, 165-pound point guard from Mexico, Mo., directed the Cornhuskers to a season-opening tournament championship in the Big Island Invitational in Hilo, Hawaii, this weekend.

Nebraska, playing without backup point guard Tom Wald and forward Chester Surles, defeated Minnesota 96-85 in the championship game Sunday night. Tournament most valuable player Jaron Boone scored 17 points against the Gophers. Lue and junior center Mikki

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