Hard work rewards Tomich

By MIKE KLUCK Senior Reporter

Patience has always been an important part of Jared Tomich's life.

It is something the senior rush end on the Nebraska football team has needed to succeed in both football and

"My position takes a lot of patience, and a lot of people don't realize that," Tornich said. "You're running 10 yards every play, and you might not get to the quarterback nine out of 10 times.

You can't quit on it. You got to give it that 10th try and try to get through. That's how it is with school, too. In the past, it's been a rough road. You just can't stop.

Tomich's development as an athlete and a person started long before he obedience classes.' walked on to the Nebraska campus as an academically ineligible freshmana casualty of Proposition 48 - in as a student in junior high.

was placed in special education classes and labeled by his teachers as a lazy student who did not care about school.

It was a label that followed and knew he wasn't apathetic toward his a good college education. school work.

"I had a hard time with keeping my focus on school," Tomich said. "I tried He didn't learn like the other children. all the time and never got any success We didn't know until his junior year in out of it. It (school) kind of pushed me high school how to help him." into a hole to kind of give up.

give up on school. They had seen his the freshmen team at Lake Central ability to learn, and his parents knew High School in St. John, Ind. After he wasn't the same person his teachers Jared's freshman season, James

When Jared was 10 years old, he college football. began to train his miniature schnauzer for dog shows and obedience classes, at his high school, Tomich did not start

years of working with the dog proved honors as defensive end.

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> JARED TOMICH NU rush end

that Jared could learn.

"He was better at sight learning, than book learning," James Tomich Tomich had a learning problem in high said. "But he worked hard in his dog school, it didn't hinder him on the foot-

Even though he struggled in school,

It began in the third grade, when he terested in football and weight lifting, which fueled his interest in college, as a senior, but again he had to show Cheryll Tomich said.

weight room, and that also gave him a Jared he wouldn't survive in college, haunted Tomich throughout his school drive to work harder in school," years, even though he and his parents Cheryll Tomich said. "He wanted to get

what his problems were with learning. him to walk on.

As a ninth grader, Tomich again had His parents, James and Cheryll to rely on his patience. At 5 foot 9 and Tomich, said they wouldn't let Jared 160 pounds, he played cornerback for

Tomich said he knew his son could play

But with more than 2,500 students another activity requiring patience. for the varsity squad until his senior James Tomich said Jared's four season. That year, he earned all-state

Elmer Britton, Lake Central's football coach of 29 years, said although ball field.

"Physically, he's the best player I've Jared began planning his college days ever coached, period," Britton said. as a student in junior high. "He's a great kid, humble. He's every-Also at that time, Jared became in- thing college football ought to be."

Tomich was successful in football patience. His grades scared away most "He was determined to work in the college recruiters. A Purdue coach told his mother said.

By February 1992, Tomich hadn't received a single scholarship offer. 'Jared didn't know how to tell us Only Cincinnati and Nebraska asked

> Tomich was set to go to Cincinnati before Britton talked to a friend, Tom Peterson, who trained under Boyd Epley, Nebraska's director of athletic performance.

Peterson contacted Nebraska Defensive Coordinator Charlie McBride, who immediately traveled to St. John to see Jared and his family.

Cheryll Tomich said it was McBride's persistence that convinced Jared to attend Nebraska, even though he knew no one in Lincoln.

'When I came out here, I was taking a chance," Tomich said. "I didn't know anybody, and Phil (Tomich's

iguana) was the only thing I had to talk to. So it was lonely the first couple of days, especially being a prop (48) and not being able to be involved with the team at all.'

During his first year, Tomich said, he questioned his college decision nearly every night and often considered transferring.

However, he did receive some good news shortly after arriving in Lincoln. He was tested and diagnosed as having attention deficit disorder, a learning disability.

"It was a great relief to know that it wasn't me being lazy," Tomich said. "But I think it was more of a relief for my parents to know. Not that they have thought that I was lazy, but it was nice to put a label on it."

Still, that didn't make it any easier for Tomich to learn.

"I have to have patience with things, school especially," he said. "I need to work through my problems with school and take my time. Most people take that hard-working attitude and put it on the field, but I had to take that football attitude and relate it back to school."

Tomich's first season was difficult, and he sat out the following season as a redshirt. But he returned to Lincoln in the summer of 1993 with his girlfriend, Lisa Walczak, who started classes at UNL.

Walczak helped Tomich study and become involved in the academic program at NU's Hewitt Center. Walczak said she noticed a difference in Tomich.

'College was an awakening for him, because in high school it was easy for him not to have to work up to the standards," she said. "Once he showed himself he could do the work, it made it a lot easier for him.

For the next 3 1/2 years, Tomich did his homework both on the field and in the classroom. He also became engaged to Walczak.

Please see TOMICH on 20

NU kickers no longer unproven

By TREVOR PARKS Senior Reporter

Unlike this time a year ago, the Nebraska kicking game is

In August 1995, the Cornhuskers were dependent on a true freshman place kicker and a sophomore punter who had no collegiate experience. But with the emergence of Kris Brown and Jesse Kosch, the kickinggame questions had been erased two weeks into the Huskers' run to a second straight national title.

"We both have a good year under our belt," Brown said. "We have some big-game experience.

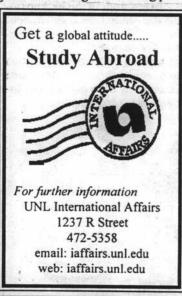
"There is no fear of the unknown anymore. We know exactly what it is going to be like to perform in a game."

One of three true freshmen to play last year, Brown made 58 of 61 extra points and 13 of 16 field goals. Brown, from Southlake, Texas, also set an NU freshman record with 97 points, one more than fellow freshman Ahman Green, an I-back.

Kosch, a junior from Columbus, who took over for Darin Erstad, returns after a successful year in which he averaged 40.3 yards per kick on 27 punts.

Kosch said the year of experience improved his confidence level, especially in big games.

"Last year I always got nervous," Kosch said, "really nervous, probably more than I should have before a big game. But this year, that year of experience will really help.'











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