

OPINION PAGES

OUR VIEW

Yikes!

Herbie's new look just plain scary

Mothers, hide your children. The Nebraska Cornhuskers took the field Saturday for the first time this season, and the Big Red spirit hung thick in the air. But as about 76,000 fans in Memorial Stadium and millions of television viewers looked on, a horrific scene unfolded before them.

No, it wasn't the Huskers' 55-14 thrashing of the Michigan State Spartans. And it wasn't the hordes of red-clad fanatics who screamed their team to victory with slightly drunken and obviously enthusiastic abandon. It was Herbie.

Just one short year after NU Athletic Director Bill Byrne announced his plans for Herbie's retirement — plans which were soon put down by loyal Husker fans — the NU Athletic Department has unveiled Herbie '96. And, brother, it ain't pretty.

Face distorted into a pained, almost tortured expression, traditional overalls overstuffed to the seams at the gut, Herbie '96 is everything his opponents last year claimed him to be — an ugly stereotype of Nebraskans in general and an unfavorable symbol of the Cornhuskers in specific.

If Byrne's plan was to unveil a new-look Herbie that would be horrid enough to garner support for his plans to eliminate the long-loved mascot, this could be the answer.

But why don't we just take a simpler route instead? Give the guy a reasonable diet and a few hours on the treadmill, put a genial smile back on his face and ship him back out for the next game with a new look that everyone can live with.

That way, we can all have pride in our mascot, and we can leave the job of scaring the opposition to the Huskers.

BRIEFLY

Swain's got style

The new voice of Cornhusker football, Warren Swain, made his debut behind the microphone Saturday afternoon at Memorial Stadium.

Swain showed the grace and style that made him a fan favorite at Virginia, but he also displayed his limited exposure to Nebraska football several times.

Along with color commentator Adrian Fiala, Swain described the action of NU's 55-14 romp of Michigan State well. His play-by-play calls were accurate and Fiala's commentary was often insightful.

However, Swain and Fiala mispronounced the name of NU linebacker Jamel Williams; they failed to mention more than one of the true freshmen who were stripped of redshirt seasons, and Swain constantly referred to Nebraska's third- and fourth-team defensive units as the Blackshirts.

For future reference, Warren, only the first teamers are Blackshirts.

In time, Swain will be a great addition.

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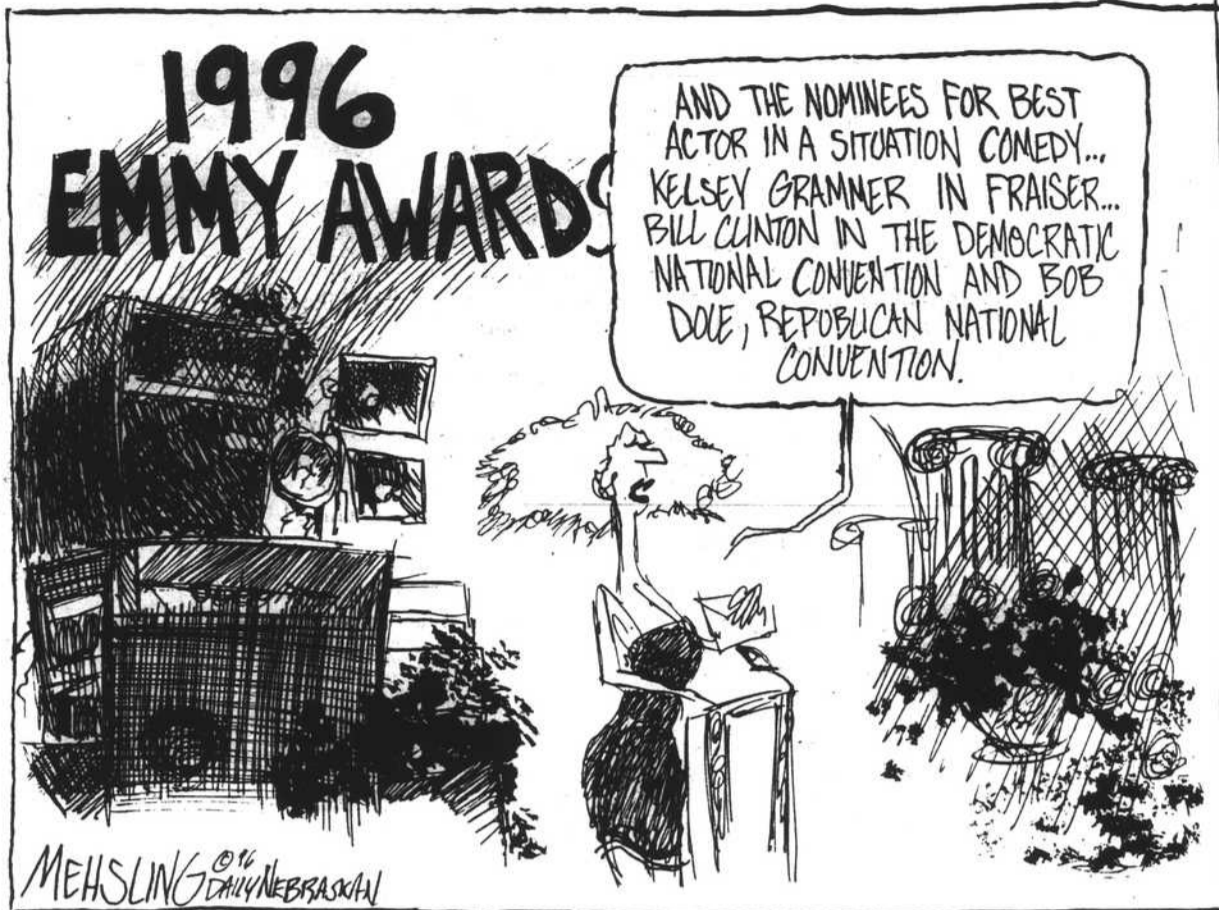
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MEHSLING'S VIEW



LETTERS

WHERE'S WILLEY?

Did someone castrate Steve Willey over the summer? I enjoyed reading all of his columns last year because they took on topics most columnists are afraid to write about (or are smart enough not to). Perhaps he has run out of fresh ideas. No one cares about how he got his hair cut when he was a boy. I want more poim! I want more sex!

Take this letter more as constructive criticism than insult. I thought Willey's Sep. 6 column lacked the luster of his previous work. Whoever castrated this young man deserves to be shot. We need to pump Willey full of testosterone to get him back on track so he can write those fresh pieces about masturbation again.

Jason Flatowicz
sophomore
undecided



It's not that the perpetrators "can't help" what they're doing, or don't know what they're doing — they are very much responsible for their actions. I highly recommend that folks like Sullivan read a book or two on the subject, such as A. Nicholas Groth's "Men Who Rape," before perpetuating such myths about sexual assault.

Kerry Keane
graduate student
unclassified

DANGEROUS MYTH

This is in response to Brice Sullivan's letter (Sin tax, Sept. 5). While I don't have a problem with many of Sullivan's points, I would like to take issue with the statement that legal prostitution "would bring about decreases in ... sexual assaults." This is an all-too-common myth that needs to be addressed.

Brice Sullivan needs to understand that sexual assault and rape are not caused by sexual frustration. Many who commit these crimes are married or have regular sexual partners. To say that these assaults can be avoided by merely providing a sexual outlet is an insult to survivors of sexual violence.

If it is still difficult for some to see why this is insulting, recall that U.S. Admiral Richard C. Macke made similar remarks in regard to the rape of a 12-year-old girl in Okinawa. This kind of thinking lets the perpetrators off the hook a little too easily, and underestimates the violence and terror involved in the crime of rape.

ENLIGHTENING IDEA

How many UNL maintenance faculty does it take to change a light bulb? Evidently more than we have!

One would think that after winning two straight national championships that UNL could maintain its football landmarks in a manner fitting a championship organization. The big red "N" on the west side of Memorial Stadium has not been completely lit for a couple of months.

Do you remember how long it took for UNL to get the "1995" up on the back of the north scoreboard? Four months, which was right before

the red/white game. If it was up to me, I'd be up there as the Fiesta Bowl clock ran out, with screwdriver in hand.

We get so much from our Huskers that the least we could do is treat "their house" with respect that champions deserve.

Michael Petersen
senior
mechanical engineering

GET REAL

I am a returning student to the University after being out in the "real world" for a couple of years. In my first two weeks back on campus I am noticing a lot of the same problems as were present when I left school: parking, class availability, the administration. I would like to say to all students that if you don't think you can hack it in school, then get ready to be slapped in the face hard when you leave school.

I see so many of you wasting so much time whining over trivial campus issues instead of concentrating on the real issue at hand for all students: Pursuing your college education!! Believe me, people, your parking problems, inability to get a ticket to a football game and crying over being locked out of a class are only trivial issues in the big picture.

I can tell all of you from experience that not finishing school or not making the most of all your opportunities in school will be the biggest mistake of your life.

Stay focused on the job at hand, getting your degree, and everything else will fall in place. If you can't find a parking place, ride a bike to class. If you can't get into a class you need to graduate, set up your class schedule on the first day of registration, not the last. Study, pass your classes, graduate, and have a great career. The rest will fix itself. Crying will only waste your time and a lot of tissue paper.

Chris Shipwash
senior
broadcasting

P.S. Write Back

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