

Sports Opinion



Mitch Sherman

Ron Barr brings professionalism to his business

When Ron Barr speaks, people listen.

Five million people listen. Barr is the host of the nation's most popular radio sports talk show, Sports Byline USA.

He constantly rubs elbows with the bigwigs of the sporting world. He owns his own radio network and part of a new professional women's basketball league. He is heard nightly on 300 U.S. radio stations and in 120 nations on the Armed Forces Radio Network.

He covers the Olympics, the Super Bowl and the Final Four. His show is on the Internet and soon it will be broadcast in Spanish.

Tonight, Barr brings his act to Lincoln for the third straight year — to predict a third straight national title.

Barr is a guest of Gov. Ben Nelson, with whom Barr developed a friendship in 1994 after Nelson called Barr's show to bet the long-time host that the Cornhuskers would beat Florida State in the Orange Bowl.

Nebraska lost the game, but won Barr's respect.

For two years, Barr has watched NU roll over everything in its way. He has seen the domination on the field, and he has seen the heap of criticism follow Nebraska's legal problems.

"When you're on top," Barr said, "the spotlight is always going to be brighter."

But Barr, unlike much of the national news media, said he is not in a position to criticize NU Coach Tom Osborne, who will visit with Barr tonight along with Jason Peter, Grant Wistrom, Jared Tornich, Johnny Rodgers, Trev Alberts, Roger Craig, and of course, Nelson.

Barr — who will meet with a UNL broadcasting class this afternoon — has chosen not to re-hash Nebraska's troubles. Instead, he will talk with Osborne about his new book and Nebraska's chances of finishing on top Jan. 2.

"What you see is what you get with Tom Osborne," Barr said. "The man has been consistent with the way he views things, his value system and the way he applies it."

Barr won't talk much about probation hearings and DWI tickets tonight, but he knows Nebraska is not perfect.

"There is a naiveness here that you don't have a problem," he said. "It's not a Nebraska problem. It's a problem that exists with athletes in society, and Nebraska is reflective of the whole nation."

Ron Barr is not like every other host. Visit him tonight and find out why, along with five million other people.

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

Huskers sweep No. 5 MSU

Michigan St.	7	11	15	15	13
Nebraska	15	15	13	11	15

Michigan St.	11	8	7
Nebraska	15	15	15

NU USES a balanced offensive attack to topple Michigan State.

BY DAVID WILSON
Staff Reporter

The fourth-ranked Nebraska volleyball team improved to 5-1 after wins over No. 5 Michigan State Friday and Saturday.

The Spartans, ranked No. 2 in the preseason, fell to 1-4.

Nebraska defeated Michigan State 15-11, 15-8, 15-7 Saturday before a crowd of 4,474 — the seventh largest crowd ever to watch a match at the NU Coliseum.

"You can be really embarrassed if you're not sharp," Michigan State Coach Chuck Erbe said. "I feel that we really got embarrassed tonight. It's been a butt-kicking weekend for the Spartans."

After losing the first two games on Friday 15-7 and 15-11, Michigan State came back to win the third and fourth games 15-13 and 15-11. But the Cornhuskers won the match and the fifth game 15-13.

"(Friday's) match took it out of both

Please see SWEEP on 10

Nebraska	3
Duke	1

Soccer team survives Fran, defeats Duke

BY VINCE D'ADAMO
Staff Reporter

The 25th-ranked Nebraska women's soccer team scored 14 goals in its first two games this season.

Only a natural disaster could have slowed down the Cornhuskers. Friday, it was Hurricane Fran. The Huskers were scheduled to play No. 16 North Carolina State on Friday and sixth-ranked Duke on Sunday. Friday's game was postponed.

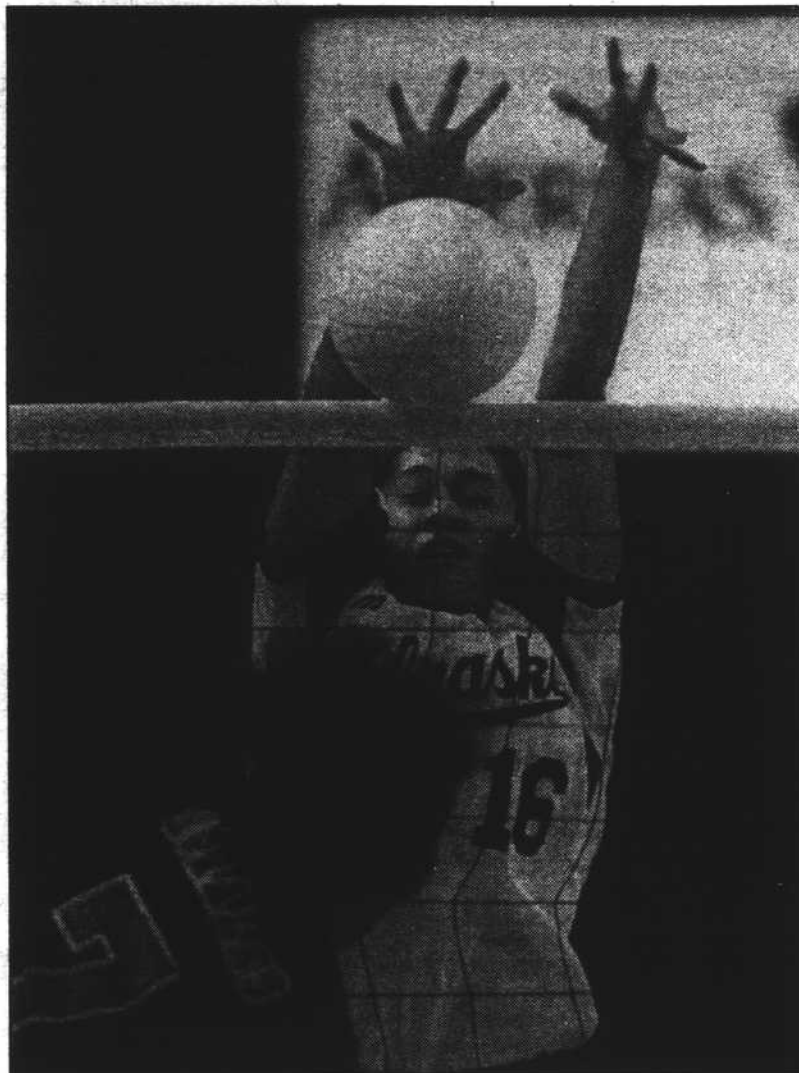
On Sunday, NU won 3-1 in what may have been the biggest victory in the three-year history of Nebraska soccer.

Hurricane Fran pushed inland into North Carolina, forcing the Huskers flight out of Lincoln to be delayed. It also caused the team to miss its connecting flight into Raleigh, N.C.

The team finally arrived in Raleigh on Saturday morning for its Sunday matchup with Duke.

Nebraska upped its record to 3-0 with the win. Husker Coach John Walker said despite the scary experience reaching the game site, winning made the weekend worthwhile.

Please see SOCCER on 11



SCOTT BRUNN/DN

FIONA NEPE, Nebraska's setter, blocks an attack by Veronica Morales Friday night in Nebraska's five-game win at the NU Coliseum. The Huskers swept fifth-ranked Michigan State on Saturday night.

OSU Coach Simmons vows to win once again

BY MIKE KLUCK
Senior Reporter

The Dec. 7 Big 12 Championship game in St. Louis isn't even mentioned in the Oklahoma State media guide.

Any reference to the postseason would go against Coach Bob Simmons's plan to bring the Cowboys back to respectability.

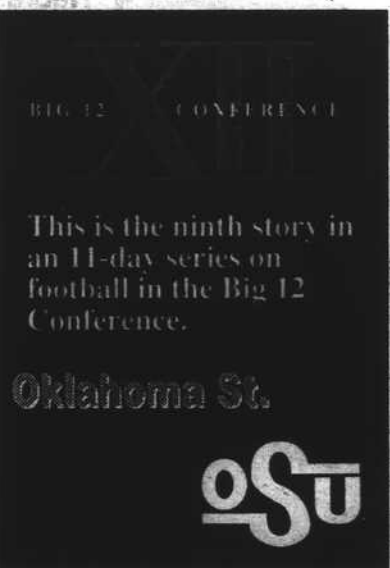
When Simmons, Colorado's former defensive coordinator, took over the Cowboys' program on Dec. 12, 1994, he vowed to return Oklahoma State back to the level it was at in the 1980s.

In the eight seasons between 1981 and 1988, the Cowboys went to six bowl games. In the Cowboys' 95-year history, they have played in only 12 bowls.

And although the Cowboys went 4-8 in their first season under Simmons, they did achieve some notable wins. Oklahoma State won three road games, the most it has won away from Stillwater, Okla., since 1988.

Most notably for the Cowboys was their 12-0 shutout of intrastate rival Oklahoma. It was the Cowboys' first win at Oklahoma since 1976 and the first time Oklahoma had been shut out at home since 1982.

"What that did, in my opinion, is really add a great attitude and a great place in our own football program and also with our alumni," Simmons said. "There is a new attitude about this football team, and kids are actually feeling good about themselves. So going into the



This is the ninth story in an 11-day series on football in the Big 12 Conference.

spring, we went in with a positive attitude."

But now as Simmons is entering his second season with the Cowboys, he wants to stick to the goal set last year of taking one game at a time.

"Fortunately for us, we played well toward the end of the season," Simmons said. "We really went into the season trying to learn how to win and realizing what it takes to win."

OSU opened its season on Aug. 31 with a 23-20 overtime victory over Southwest Missouri State. But on Saturday, the Cowboys lost to new Big 12 rival Texas Tech 31-3 at Texas Stadium in Irving, Texas.

Oklahoma State, which plays Tulsa this Saturday and Utah State the following week before resuming Big 12 action against Texas, does not face Nebraska this season for the first time since 1959.

MICHIGAN STATE hitters struggle to adjust to new setter, coach says.

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Staff Reporter

During the last nine days, the Michigan State volleyball team has lost to No. 2 Stanford, No. 3 Texas and twice to No. 4 Nebraska — all 1995 final four teams.

"Not to make excuses, but we've had a grueling two weeks," Michigan State Coach Chuck Erbe said.

MSU, ranked No. 2 in the preseason poll, boasts of five returning starters from last year's 34-3, Big Ten champion squad. Nebraska beat the No. 5 Spartans (1-4) in five games Friday and in three games Saturday at the NU Coliseum.

With senior middle blockers Val Sterk and Dana Cooke, both first-team All-Americans, many predicted that this would be the Spartans' year to win the NCAA championship. What Erbe's team has discovered, however, is that they are missing the most important piece of the championship puzzle.

Unfortunately for MSU, Courtney DeBolt, an honorable mention All-American setter last season, is not back this year. DeBolt was the emotional leader of a team that advanced to the NCAA Final Four in 1995.

"Courtney had a spirit that refused to lose," Erbe said. "Right now, we

Please see ERBE on 11

Cross country squads finish second at meet

BY GREGG MADSEN
Staff Reporter

A partial squad of runners for the Nebraska men's and women's cross country teams got a taste of action Saturday at the Bearcat Distance Classic in Maryville, Mo.

Both teams placed second, with the women scoring 58 points and the men scoring 42. Division-III Washington (Mo.) won the men's title and the host Northwest Missouri State women finished first.

"What I tried to do was take runners that weren't in the top five," Nebraska Coach Jay Dirksen said. "For the women, it was the top four, with the idea of getting the people into the meet, and getting their feet wet."

Freshman Jaime Pauli, who finished fifth, was the Cornhuskers' top women's finisher.

"For her first race in college," Dirksen said, "she did a really fine job."

Also placing in the top 10 for the Huskers were freshmen Melinda Mohr (seventh) and Arnie Finkner (10th).

Sophomore Aaron Scheer finished second in the men's race. Sophomore Lou Petricca was seventh, freshman Aaron Carrizales placed eighth and junior Alex Lamme finished 10th.

"Overall we had a good meet," Dirksen said. "We didn't take anyone over there that really ran poorly."

Dirksen said he was more concerned with individual improvement this weekend than the team's finish.

"With our sport, it really doesn't matter what we do now," he said. "This is just a necessary step along the way to get to where we want to be."