

## Sports Opinion



**Gregg Madsen**

### NU coach says distance runner is Husker secret

It's not easy to pronounce, but Balazs Tolgyesi's name may become one to remember over the next few months.

The senior cross country runner from Szekesfehervar, Hungary, should be a dominating force for the Cornhuskers this season, Nebraska Coach Jay Dirksen said.

"He's probably one of the best kept secrets as far as quality athletes here at Nebraska," Dirksen said.

Not bad for a runner who was recruited by Iowa State, not Nebraska.

After finishing seventh in the 1,500 meters at the 1991 European Junior Championships, the Cyclones offered Tolgyesi a scholarship.

Tolgyesi said the desire to run and go to school at the same time — an impossibility in Hungary — convinced him to come to the United States.

"At the beginning," he said, "I had doubts. But very soon, I found out that this was what I wanted to do — get an education and do track as well."

Iowa State couldn't give Tolgyesi that scholarship, and he spent his first year in the United States at Missouri Valley College in Marshall, Mo.

After winning the NAA indoor 800 meters as a freshman, Iowa State was still unable to give Tolgyesi a scholarship, so he contacted Nebraska coaches to see if he could run for the Huskers.

"That didn't sit too well with Iowa State," Dirksen said.

At Nebraska, Tolgyesi quickly established himself as a top performer in the middle distances, winning the 1,000 meters at the 1995 Big Eight Championships. Last season, Tolgyesi set a Big Eight indoor record in the 800 meters, and he finished fourth in the nation outdoors in the 1,500.

Tolgyesi returned home after the outdoor season and earned a spot on the Hungarian Olympic Team in the 1,500 meters.

In Atlanta, he made it to a semi-final heat, in which he finished 10th, setting a Hungarian and NU record time of 3 minutes, 35.57 seconds. Tolgyesi said his Olympic experience, as well as his entire career, has been a surprise.

"Just a few years ago, I didn't think I could get this far," he said. "I seriously think it has something to do with me coming to the U.S."

Dirksen said having a world-class runner like Tolgyesi has elevated the entire team's performance level.

Both Dirksen and Tolgyesi hope the next level will be a Big 12 championship.

"We have the potential to be a very good team this year," Tolgyesi said. "If everybody stays healthy, anything can happen."

Madsen is a junior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.

# Long wait ends for Brown

**NU WINGBACK struggled to find motivation while suspended.**

**BY TREVOR PARKS**  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska wingback Lance Brown can't wait to play in his season opener this weekend.

Brown has been waiting for this game since January, when he was suspended for an undisclosed disciplinary incident.

He sat out of the Red-White Game in April and did not play Sept. 7 in NU's season-opening 55-14 rout of Michigan State.

The 5-foot-11, 190-pound sopho-

more from Papillion said he struggled to find motivation while waiting for Saturday night, when the No. 1 Cornhuskers play No. 17 Arizona State in Tempe, Ariz.

"It was really difficult," he said, "especially during two-a-days. The other players all knew that a game was coming up. In the back of my mind, I knew I was going to have to sit out and wait until the next game."

So to stay positive, Brown — along with split end Ryan Held — created a group called the Positive Action Team.

It was designed to keep Brown's spirits up and to loosen up the other Husker receivers.

Throughout his suspension, Brown kept a positive attitude, Receivers Coach Ron Brown said, but that outlook took a hit the week before NU's game with Michigan State.

"I could see a couple days prior to

the game that his spirits were a little down," Ron Brown said. "The only thing I could tell him was that it wouldn't be long until he was back in the mix again."

Since redshirting in 1994, Brown has consistently shown the potential to become a big-play receiver. He holds the NU receivers' record in the pro-agility run with a time of 3.82 seconds and owns the team's seventh fastest time over 10 yards, 1.52 seconds.

Brown backs up Jon Vedral this season after being relegated to third-string duty behind Vedral and Clester Johnson last year. A year ago, Brown played in every game and caught two passes, one of which has been a hot topic of conversation recently.

In Nebraska's 77-28 disposal of Arizona State in Lincoln last season, Matt Turman threw a 39-yard touch-

down pass to Brown with 38 seconds to play in the game.

The play call upset Arizona State Coach Bruce Snyder, who opted not shake hands at midfield with Husker Coach Tom Osborne after the game. Osborne later apologized publicly and sent a letter to Snyder.

The play was designed as a short pass, Osborne said. ASU's defensive back broke in too fast, opening a seam for Brown, who ran alone into the end zone.

After scoring, Brown was caught by Memorial Stadium's HuskerVision screens performing a backflip on the sidelines.

If he scores Saturday, don't look for Brown to pull a repeat performance.

"The thought crossed my mind," he said, "but Coach Osborne put a damper on that. Plus I would probably get a penalty."

## 3 Huskers head home Saturday

**BY PATRICK WYMAN**  
Staff Reporter

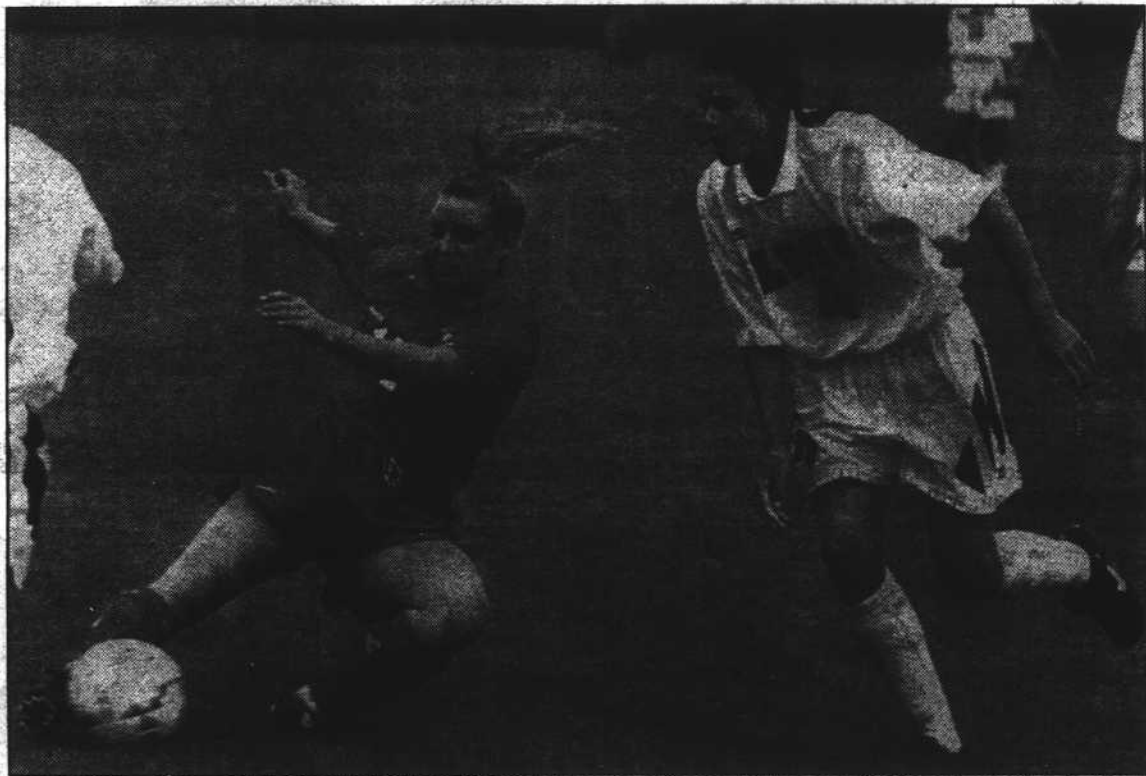
The Nebraska football team's Saturday meeting with 17th-ranked Arizona State is more than just another game for three Cornhuskers.

For sophomores Kenny Cheatham and Eric Johnson and true freshman Mike Brown, Saturday is a chance to display their talents to a hometown audience.

**Johnson**

Johnson, the No. 2 Will linebacker,

Please see ARIZONA on 12



SCOTT BRUHN/DN

**NEBRASKA SENIOR Kim Ratliff (left) beats Bree McCann of Loyola Marymount to the ball Sunday. NU won the game 9-1.**

## Ratliff leads in many ways

*Huskers' first-ever senior accepts reserve role*

**BY VINCE D'ADAMO**  
Staff Reporter

"I want to be able to look back and remember my senior year."

**KIM RATLIFF**  
NU defender

When Nebraska Soccer Coach John Walker raves about his team's depth, he's not just blowing smoke, he's telling the truth.

Every time senior co-captain Kim Ratliff comes off the bench, her action speaks volumes for the team's depth.

Walker said Ratliff's experience, intangibles and team-oriented approach have helped set the tone for the 5-0 Huskers.

"She never complains," Walker said. "Kim's work ethic in the weight room and in practice is ideal. So it's pretty clear that starting at Nebraska isn't the issue."

With her intense and physical style of play, the Millard South graduate often provides a spark off the bench. She is a strong player, which is evident by her second Husker Power Award last season.

"She's very powerful, aggressive, fast and intense," Walker said. "She's really worked to improve the skill level of her game."

Ratliff, a striker and a defender, scored her third goal of the season

in 13th-ranked Nebraska's 9-1 drubbing of Loyola Marymount Sunday.

As a freshman, she attended Marquette University in Milwaukee and is the first senior in the history of the three-year NU program.

"I try to provide some leadership to the younger players and lead by example on the field," Ratliff said.

Like any team leader, Ratliff said, the team's success is more meaningful than her own achievements.

"The team has always had a lot of togetherness, especially last spring and this fall," Ratliff said.

"We sat down in training camp and said, 'These are our goals we want to accomplish.' We talk about those goals every week."

This season carries added significance for Ratliff as a senior and a Nebraska native.

"I want to be able to look back and remember my senior year," Ratliff said. "It's a big pride thing. I grew up watching all kinds of Nebraska sports. I take a lot of heart into it for my home state."

Ratliff can take pride in helping build a strong foundation for a program that appears to be poised for the NCAA Tournament after just three years. However, Ratliff is not getting ahead of herself. She said it is important the team doesn't overlook any opponents.

It is not often that a co-captain does not start. Ratliff is an exception to that rule, but it seems to matter little — if any — to Ratliff.

"We're all focused on the same line, and nobody's really worried about individual honors," Ratliff said. "You have a job to do whether you start or come off the bench."

## ASU's QB says offense must produce

**BY PETER MARHOEFER**  
Staff Reporter

Arizona State quarterback Jake Plummer is approaching Saturday night's battle with the No. 1 Nebraska just like any other game.

"Some people think that this is the most important game we're playing," Plummer said during a press conference in Tempe, Ariz., this week. "But it's really not."

**Plummer**

Plummer leads a talented ASU offense that returns 10 starters and amassed 452 yards and 49 points per game this year in wins over Washington and North Texas.

The Sun Devils' fourth-year quarterback, an All-Pacific 10 selection in

Please see ASU on 12