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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1996

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Mitch Sherman

NU couple perseveres in rough times

Damon Benning stood among 300 people at a crowded party in the spring of 1994.

Still, he managed to spot Tanya Franck.

"I had seen her around," Benning said. "But I had never said a word to her. She always looked so different. She dressed weird, and she didn't really talk to anybody. She was kind of a loner."

Benning and Franck talked that Friday night for three hours, sitting on the couch as if they were the only two in the room.

Two days later, they went to a Husker baseball game — Benning's first — and the rest is history.

Franck, a junior co-captain on the sixth-ranked NU soccer team, and Benning, a senior co-captain on the seventh-ranked football team, have been together for 1½ years.

Together, they persevere.

In spite of road trips, team meetings and practice schedules, it has worked well.

"It's really hard to get quality time together," said Franck, who transferred to Nebraska in 1994 from Arkansas-Little Rock after growing up in Toronto.

When they met, Benning, a life-long Nebraskan, knew almost nothing about soccer. Franck knew even less about football.

"Every time I go out to a soccer game," Benning said, "I tell my buddies that I can't believe I'm actually doing this on a regular basis. Growing up, soccer wasn't anything I was real fond of."

Football isn't even played at Earl Haig High School in Toronto. When Franck arrived in Lincoln, she couldn't point out a quarterback on the field, let alone an I-back.

"Now," she said, "I know all these plays, and I love it."

What Benning and Franck don't have in common off the field, they make up for on the field. Unfortunately for both, injuries have been a major part of their NU careers.

Benning has been tormented by minor setbacks — hamstrings, ankles, and this week, he's missed two practices with a sore groin.

A few months after she met Benning, Franck tore the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee, causing her to miss the 1995 season. She's come back strong as a junior, but without Benning, she said, last season would have been nearly unbearable.

"Knowing that you have a person behind you helps a lot," Franck said, "someone who can relate to what you are going through."

"Damon may look all hard and tough on the outside. But inside, he's the sweetest person in the whole world."

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



MATT MILLER/DN

ISABELLE MORNEAU is one of five Nebraska freshmen to play a major role this fall in NU's 9-0 start.

Freshmen spark NU attack

By VINCE D'ADAMO
Staff Reporter

The time needed for a freshman to develop into an impact player is always unknown.

This season, the sixth-ranked Nebraska soccer team has enjoyed the luxury of having five freshmen blossom quickly.

By receiving extensive playing time, Lindsay Eddleman, Jenny Benson, Isabelle Morneau, Sharolta Nonen and Jill Nelsen have taken the pressure off the Nebraska veterans.

Three of the five have impressed Cornhusker Coach John Walker enough to earn starting positions.

"They've really done a great job," Walker said. "I never had any doubts about them."

"Anytime you get freshmen starters, you know they're good. But there are so many factors along with playing. It's a tough thing, but they've handled it well."

Eddleman, a 5-foot-10 striker from Lakewood, Colo., has scored seven goals, second on the team to Kari Uppinghouse.

Last summer, Eddleman, who has two game-winning goals, played college-level competition alongside Uppinghouse for the Denver Diamonds.

"I definitely feel more confident," Eddleman said. "Every game I want to do more."

Morneau, a 5-4 striker/midfielder from Quebec, played on the 1996 Canadian National Team with fellow Husker Heather Brown.

And although Morneau does not have a photo in Nebraska's 1996 media guide, she has made her share of contributions this fall, scoring five goals with two assists.

"I see it as another challenge,"



MATT MILLER/DN

SHAROLTANONEN (left) has scored one goal and has one assist this season.

Morneau said. "I always prepare myself, and every time I play, I feel more confidence."

Benson, a 5-5 midfielder/striker from Huntington Beach, Calif., is an explosive player, Walker said.

Another major contributor, Nonen, a 5-6 defender from Vancouver, British Columbia, comes off the bench. Her main at-

tribute is her speed, Walker said.

Nelsen, a 5-7 midfielder from Newport Beach, Calif., has appeared in each of NU's nine games, scoring one time.

"Our job is to play hard," said Benson, who has five goals and five assists. "We all look up to Kari. It enables us to go out and not put pressure on ourselves."

KSU says belief is the key

The Wildcats will again risk a perfect record against NU.

By DAVID WILSON
Staff Reporter

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Kansas State football coaches and players agreed Tuesday that there is only one way to defeat the Nebraska football team: You have to believe.

Since coming to Manhattan in 1989, Coach Bill Snyder has changed the mental focus of the team, quarterback Brian Kavanagh said.

"I know that before Coach Snyder got here," Kavanagh said, "K-State knew who was going to win before the game."

"If it was the other team, they both knew it. Coach Snyder came and changed everybody's attitude. We think we can compare with anybody."

KSU will play host to No. 7 Nebraska Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

The Cats' no-fear attitude has enabled them to start 4-0 and gain a No. 16 ranking. But in each of the last three seasons, Nebraska has stopped KSU's perfect starts.

Last season in Lincoln, the Cornhuskers defeated the Wildcats 49-25, NU's 27th consecutive win in the series.

"I hope it's better than it was a year ago," Snyder said. "I thought we were prepared, but I didn't think we handled the emotion of the game well."

A win over Nebraska would not necessarily be the biggest of Snyder's

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Wistrom: Trash talk provokes NU

By PATRICK WYMAN
Staff Reporter

In seasons past, the Kansas State football team has provided Nebraska with extra motivation by opening its mouth in the days prior to its annual matchup with the Cornhuskers.

"The last couple of years," NU's Grant Wistrom said, "they've been pretty confident that they had a good shot at beating us, and that fueled our fire, especially on defense. We'll take anything they say about us, and it's going to motivate us."

But if the Wildcats choose to stay quiet in the days leading up to Saturday's 2:30 p.m. clash at KSU Stadium in Manhattan, Kan., that's fine, too, Wistrom said.

Wistrom

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