

## Sports Opinion



### Gregg Madsen

## Freshman back shows potential to become star

Fans who left Memorial Stadium early on Saturday should feel free to kick themselves for missing the DeAngelo Evans Show.

The freshman from Collegiate High School in Wichita, Kan. put on a show, displaying the moves that made him a high school All-American.

With six minutes, 30 seconds left in the fourth quarter of Nebraska's win over Colorado State, Evans took a handoff from freshman quarterback Jeff Perino.

Thirty yards later, Cornhusker fans still sitting in Memorial Stadium were left drooling over Evans' quickness, power and break-away speed.

"It was a 48-counter," Evans said of the run. "I remember the tackle pulling, and I was supposed to set up his block and go outside. But I saw the crease open up underneath, so I went and took it. Then I just ran through until I got to the end zone."

Evans' cut to the inside of the block was a read that can't be coached, and Nebraska Running Backs Coach Frank Solich said that is what makes Evans so dangerous: Instinct.

"He doesn't mess around with which way to go with his cuts," Solich said. "He reacts instinctively, and that's when he's at his best, because his quickness can come through naturally."

His natural ability showed through unmistakably on Saturday. He had 72 yards on six attempts, in addition to his 72 yards on two kick-off returns.

On his first run from scrimmage against the Rams, Evans bolted for 18 yards, leaving two defenders standing still and dragging another for five yards.

At 5-foot-9 and 210 pounds, Evans is a back out of the same mold as Barry Sanders and Eric Bienemy. Evans squatted 570 pounds this summer, and while in high school, he ran the 40-yard dash in a blistering 4.35 seconds.

Evans has quickly become a fan favorite, and Monday he started practicing with the top offensive unit. But he said he's not letting all the attention go to his head.

"Coach Solich just tells me, 'Don't believe all the hype,'" Evans said. "I know that he's still going to get on me, and he's still going to keep pushing me. That's the reason I came here."

Solich said Evans could see action as early as the first half on Saturday against Kansas State.

"The first two games were hard with the limited carries," Evans said. "That wasn't what I wanted to do. I know Coach (Solich) had confidence in me. He just wanted to see me improve."

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

## Many changes pay off well for Williams

By SAM MCKEWON  
Staff Reporter

Jamel Williams has seen it all. He has watched Nebraska football as a Proposition 48 casualty, as a backup, as a safety, as a weakside line-backer and finally, as a starting Sam linebacker and NU's leading tackler.



Williams

"I've been all over the place," Williams said. "I could play almost any position on the defense if I had to."

Williams, a 6-foot-2, 205-pound senior, is one of the driving forces behind a Nebraska defense considered one of the best in the nation. He leads the team with 37 tackles, including a season-best 17 tackles against in a 19-0 loss to Arizona State.

Williams downplays his statistics and the fact that he is performing at an All-America level.

"I think I'm playing toward an All-America level, but I don't worry about it a lot," he said. "I leave that to the sports announcers and whoever votes for those awards."

Williams played high school football at Merrillville High School in Merrillville, Ind., where he was an all-state running and defensive back. After being recruited by Nebraska, Alabama, Miami and Michigan, Williams quickly chose the Cornhuskers.

"Nebraska had great tradition and great coaching staff. Their experience along with the academic program convinced me to come here," he said.

Williams had hopes of becoming the next great Husker running back until Coach Tom Osborne made the first of many changes.

"He told me I'd be better off on the defensive side, and I kind of freaked out," Williams said. "After I thought about it, though, I knew that defense would be the best role for me."

Williams was academically ineligible as a freshman, but he has no regrets about missing his initial season.

Williams was moved around from safety to Will linebacker last year and finally stuck at the Sam linebacker midway through his junior year. The position has transformed Williams into a star.

"I knew the position well," he said, "and I think it utilizes my speed better than the other places I've been. It lets me make big plays."

Williams has been making big plays since the second half of the 1995 season, when he had his first 10-tackle game in Nebraska's 44-21 win over Colorado.

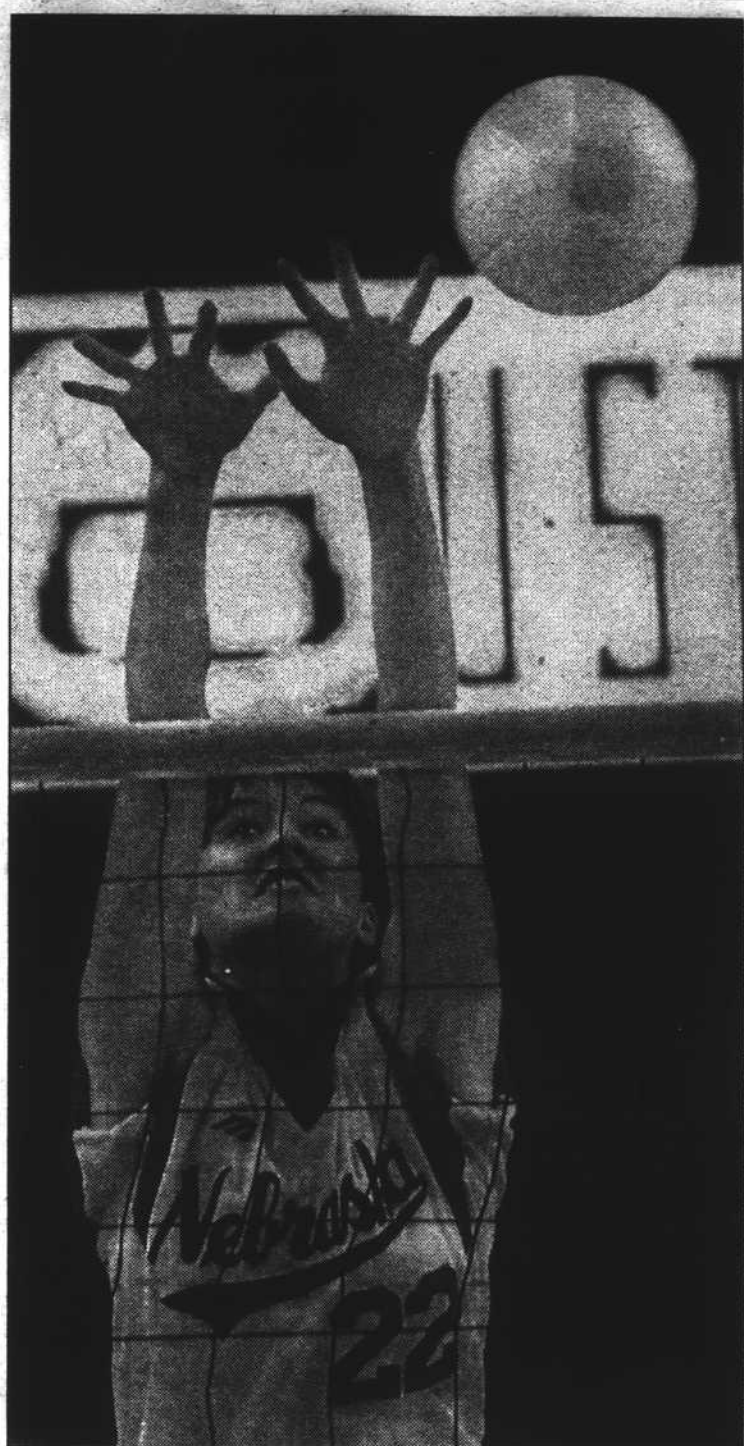
Williams said two plays stand out in his career: an interception return for a touchdown against Oklahoma last season and sack of Florida quarterback Danny Wuerffel for a safety in the Fiesta Bowl.

Williams credits NU's defensive scheme for helping the Huskers take advantage of his talents.

"The whole defense is fast," said Williams, who runs track in the spring and has posted a 10.52-second 100-yard dash time. "It plays to my ability and gives the green light to blitz."

Next year, Williams said, he would like to play professional football — but not at his current position.

"I've been projected a strong safety," he said. "It's another change, but I'll play whatever they want me to. I'm confident that I can adjust."



SCOTT BRUHN/DN

TONIA TAUKE has played in every match this season, contributing 13 solo blocks, the second best total on the team.

## Tauke triggers Husker defense

The freshman gives NU an emotional spark in a time of need.

By TREVOR PARKS  
Senior Reporter

In a year when the Nebraska volleyball team needed its spirits lifted, freshman Tonia Tauke acted up.

Tauke, who celebrates each point and sideout with an ear-to-ear grin, has been an emotional catalyst for a team that lost its most enthusiastic player — Jen McFadden — before the year even started.

"When I was younger, my coach told me, 'you're not playing volleyball, you acting more like a cheerleader,'" Tauke said. "To begin the year, I was so excited. I would be ecstatic at times. I'm still excited on the court, but I'm not crazy."

"If you can't have fun, why play the game of volleyball?" And play the game she has.

Tauke, a 6-foot-3 middle blocker from Council Bluffs, has been the Cornhuskers' most efficient hitter, with a hitting percentage of .372. In 113 total attacks this season, she has 53 kills and only 11 errors. Her 13 solo blocks are second on the team to Megan Korver's 14.

That's an improvement from when Tauke first put on a Husker uniform.

Coming into the fall, she was still recovering from a broken foot, which landed her in a cast for more than a month over the summer.

She believed she was going to redshirt before the season, until fellow freshman Katie Jahnke tore her anterior cruciate ligament and McFadden suffered a career-ending back injury.

With her broken foot, Tauke said she felt like she was starting over when she began fall practice in August. Instead of being excited, she was quiet and intimidated playing on a national championship team, she said.

"I thought I was just going to come in and learn how the system worked," Tauke said, "and see if I could fit in with their style of play. Two weeks into the season, I figured out I needed to train to play and not just train to get better."

In her last seven matches, Tauke has hit over .500 four times. Twice she hit .750, most recently in a three-game sweep of Kansas on Sept. 27.

Tauke said she has been so efficient lately because she and setter Fiona Nepo are starting to click.

"She is beginning to have confidence in me, and she knows I will

Please see TAUKE on 11

## Wildcat QB is ready

Kavanagh expects to 'take his licks' from the NU defense.

By DAVID WILSON  
Staff Reporter

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Kansas State quarterback Brian Kavanagh is treating the biggest game of his career just like any other.

"Obviously, this is the biggest start of my career," Kavanagh said. "But it's our next game also."

Kavanagh, who completed 12 of 21 passes for 136 yards in the second half against Nebraska last season, said he's not nervous about making his first start against a top 10 team. The Wildcats play host to Nebraska at 2:30 Saturday.



Kavanagh

"If I was able to keep my calm in front of 75,000 fans in Lincoln," Kavanagh said, "it's going to be a lot easier here."

In his first collegiate start against Texas Tech, Kavanagh completed 12 of 29 passes for 172 yards. But more importantly, Kavanagh said, he proved to himself that he could handle "big-game atmosphere."

Unfortunately, he said, the big-game pressure always falls on the quarterback's shoulders.

After Nebraska's loss to Arizona State, the majority of the blame fell on Cornhusker quarterback Scott Frost, Kavanagh said.

"I think the hardest thing for Scott Frost is just who he's following," Kavanagh said. "(Tommie) Frazier is probably the best guy to ever run that offense."

"Everyone has bad days. I'd be completely shocked if they had another bad game this season."

Kavanagh said he is not expecting an off-night from the Husker defense.

"I'll expect to see a lot of (Grant) Wistrom and (Jared) Tomich," Kavanagh said. "We can just hope to contain them the best we can. I know I'll take my licks. It'll be like any other game."

Kavanagh, who ranks second in the Big 12 — and 20th in the nation — with a pass efficiency rating of 147.4, said it was important for the Cats to develop a running game to complement his passing.

"This is going to be the toughest defense we've faced this year," he said.

Sophomore running back Marlon Charles has carried the ball 67 times for 367 yards this season — including a 195-yard performance against Indiana State. Charles also emphasized the importance of the KSU running attack against the Huskers.

"They're real fast and strong, and they play with a lot of intensity," Charles said.

Nebraska will be a major challenge for the Cats, Kavanagh said, but a win would be a much needed step for the team.

"Obviously, you have to beat Nebraska to get to (the Big 12 championship game in) St. Louis," Kavanagh said. "And Nebraska is next on our schedule."