

# Hoops and Hope

## Academic, athletic superstars challenge youth at jam

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It's not your fault at all."

After he asked for help, Tomich said school became much easier, more fun and a lot more fulfilling. He ended with a charge for the students.

"I challenge each and every one of you to go out and get good grades."

NU Football Coach Tom Osborne also spoke at the event.

He talked about the importance of persevering even when things don't always go perfectly, noting Brook Berringer, to whom the jam was dedicated, as an example of one who did this frequently.

Berringer, Osborne said, played through two serious injuries — one a collapsed lung — and came through even though he didn't always start for the team. Osborne also told students to assess their abilities and then develop them.

"In God's eyes, every one of you is important," Osborne said. "What the world rewards is finishers."

Kim Weir, Miss Nebraska 1997, also spoke



JAY CALDERON/DN  
SOME OF THE 11,000 CHILDREN in attendance cheer during the jam.

of perseverance. She said it took her five tries to win the Miss Nebraska pageant, but by writing down her dreams, they became goals she could reach methodically.

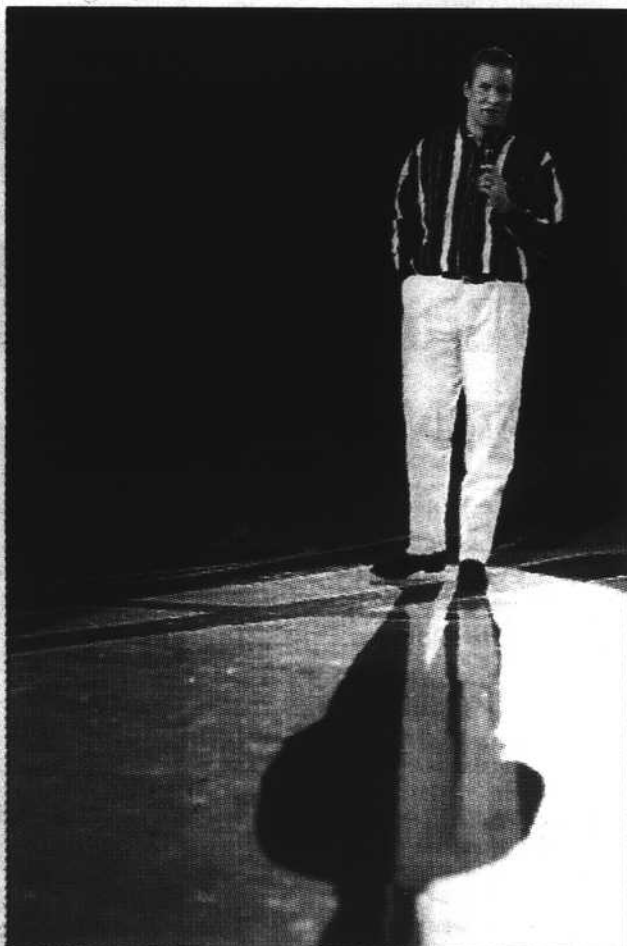
"I wasn't willing to give up that dream," Weir said.

Grant Wistrom emphasized the importance of finishing an education. Completing his time at UNL was more important to him than taking a multimillion dollar NFL contract, Wistrom said.

"I said no to that, and one thing I said 'yes' to was an education," Wistrom said.

Other speakers included Olympic swimmer Penny Heyns, NCAA Track All-American Angee Henry and former NU volleyball player and NCAA Woman of the Year Billie Winsett-Fletcher.

Just when children started to get fidgety, the jam kicked off the annual slam dunk contest, sending the children into a frenzied chaos of chanting for none other than legendary quarterback Tommie Frazier, who missed six of seven dunks.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: NU FORWARD ANDY MARKOWSKI dunks over Lii' Red in Monday's "School is Cool" Jam at the Devaney Center. Photo by Rick Townley/DN  
COACH TOM OSBORNE presents Ahman Green with an award recognizing Green as a member of the Brook Berringer Citizenship Team. Photo by Jay Calderon/DN  
FORMER HUSKER TREV ALBERTS speaks to more than 11,000 school children during the "School is Cool" Jam. The Trev Alberts Foundation was one of the event's sponsors. Photo by Jay Calderon/DN  
NU RUNNING BACK AHMAN GREEN signs autographs at the "School is Cool" Jam. Photo by Rick Townley/DN

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