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Valentino's

Byrne: No rush for replacement

MIKE KLUCK
Senior Reporter

Nebraska Athletic Director Bill Byrne said he has not set a timetable for hiring a new women's basketball coach to replace Angela Beck.



Byrne

"Right now, I don't know the answer on how long it will take to hire a new coach," Byrne said from Orlando, Fla. "I'm just getting started in the process."

Beck accepted a job as the head coach and assistant general manager of the San Jose Lasers of the American Basketball League and leaves NU as the Huskers' winningest coach in school history with a 191-128 record.

Since the Cornhuskers have filled their scholarships for next season, Byrne said there is no urgency in hiring a head coach quickly.

Byrne, who has been an athletic director for 13 years, said hiring coaches is part of the job. In his four years at NU, Byrne has hired only two coaches — Women's Gymnastics Coach Dan Kendig and Soccer Coach Jon Walker.

Byrne, who's working with an NCAA committee in Orlando this week on the certification of bowl games, said the first thing he plans to do when he returns to Lincoln is to talk with Chancellor James Moeser.

"I want to visit with the chancellor and let him know what my thoughts are," Byrne said. "We won't hire people from the newspaper. We will use the normal personnel route, where we evaluate and get input on people. We also want to take a look at the current staff and get input from them."

One of the first people Byrne said he wants to consider is Nebraska Assistant Head Coach Theresa Becker. Byrne said he is not bothered by Becker's 18-63 head coaching record in her three years at Iowa State.

"People can learn from those experiences," Byrne said. "If nobody in this world ever got a second chance it would be a pretty sad world."

Byrne said he also wants to meet with the members of the team before making a decision.

"I've always considered Nebraska a student-driven athletic program," he said. "This is an important decision and one that comes to the future of those young women. They certainly should have some input."

Alexander lifter of year

From Staff Reports

Nebraska redshirt freshman full-back Dan Alexander was voted 1997 lifter of the year by his Cornhusker teammates.

The 5-foot-11, 249-pounder from Wentzville, Mo., has gained 10 pounds of muscle this season.

NU Coach Tom Osborne said it is unusual for a freshman to win lifter-of-the-year honors.

"He's an amazing guy in terms of strength and speed," Osborne said. "He has some unusual abilities."

Alexander beat out seniors Jason Peter, Freddy Pollack, Grant Wistrom and Jon Zatechka, as well as junior Chad Kelsay for the lifter-of-the-year award.

NU takes two at UNI

From Staff Reports

The Nebraska softball team rallied from four runs down in the second game to beat Northern Iowa 6-4 and complete a sweep of a double-header at the UNI-Dome in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

NU (22-18) won the first game 6-5 before making its comeback in the second game. Freshman pitcher Jenny Voss earned the win in both games to improve to 19-13.

In the first game, the Cornhuskers jumped out to a 3-0 after the first two innings before the Panthers cut the NU lead to 3-2. NU added two runs in the top of the fifth when Alice Brewer singled home Rachel Dunham and Jamie Bleazard.

Northern Iowa forced extra innings in the bottom of the seventh with three runs.

In the eighth, Kelly Pinkepank knocked in Jennifer Lizama for the game winner.

Players happy for Beck

PLAYERS from page 9

waited until we sucked, then she wouldn't get offers like that. It is great timing for her in the world of basketball."

Beck joins the nine-team professional basketball league, which will begin its second season of competition in October. The ABL gives women's basketball players the opportunity to remain in the United States and continue their playing careers.

The loss of Beck has not stopped current NU players from looking ahead to next season. All said they plan to

stay at NU.

"Everybody is staying because we want to prove next year that just because our head coach leaves we're not going to fall apart," Kubik said.

The departure of Beck also leaves the speculation on whom the players want to lead them next season. All the players said they would like to see Assistant Head Coach Theresa Becker take over for Beck.

"I definitely think she would be very good for the position," DeForge said. "If we don't want to go through a big transition, she would be the best replacement."

London finally gets chance to play

LONDON from page 9

position coach, the once-heralded recruit from Lake Charles, La., chose to stay on board at Nebraska.

"I came to the reality that I had to stick it out," he said. "Everybody has to get out there and play, and they have to work for it. I had to put all the things in my mind that were negative aside."

London's negative thoughts centered around his lack of progress during his first two seasons as a Husker. Recruited by NU coaches as Tommie Frazier and Brook Berringer engineered the Huskers to the first of two straight national championships, London entered the Nebraska program with large shoes to fill. And he never got the chance to fit in.

After shoulder surgery in 1995, London dropped to 167 pounds and proved too fragile to direct the NU offense last spring, injuring his hamstring and falling to fifth on the depth chart.

"We knew he had some talent," Gill said, "but you can't do it physically at that weight. And mentally, he just didn't know our offense that well."

Playing behind Scott Frost, Matt Turman, Jeff Perino and Monte Christo as a redshirt freshman, London found little motivation last fall and participated in just four games, rushing the ball three times for six yards.

"I got down on myself for a while," he said. "All through the season at No. 5, I really didn't have that much to look forward to. I was using it as an excuse to sit back and not work. A good player would have stepped up and showed the coaches what he could do, which I didn't."

About the time the Huskers began

As far as quarterbacks go, he's as talented as anybody we've got on our team."

TURNER GILL
NU quarterbacks coach

preparing for the Dec. 31 Orange Bowl against Virginia Tech, London took his game to another level. In pre-bowl workouts in Lincoln and Miami, Gill said, London demonstrated the skills coaches saw on tape two years ago, when he ran for 800 yards and threw for 1,500 as a senior at LaGrange High School.

But still, London wasn't satisfied. "That was somewhat of a good thing," he said. "It was probably the best I've practiced since I've been here, but I didn't really have much of a chance to get out there and play."

So London seriously considered leaving Nebraska. And although he didn't contact any other schools, he immediately brought his concerns to Osborne and Gill.

"We explained to him what the situation was," Gill said, "and he's done the rest. He's a competitor, and any guy who's down on the depth chart is frustrated and disappointed. But they've got to take it upon themselves to make a change and do something."

London has added 15 pounds to his 6-foot-1 frame since January, and he's moved past Christo and Perino on the depth chart. Next fall, highly-touted

high school stars Eric Crouch and Bobby Newcombe join the crowded stable of signal callers. London said he doesn't plan to surrender his spot.

"When the coaches told me that I had a chance to really do something this year, work my way up to No. 2 and go from there, that's what sparked me," he said.

"Now I want to get to the point where Coach Osborne has the same feeling with me that he had with Tommie and Brook."

In Saturday's Red-White Game and entering fall workouts, Gill said, Frost owns an advantage over the rest of the quarterbacks because of his experience. But one bad step in Nebraska's run-oriented offense can shelve a quarterback for weeks, and Gill said he expects London to be prepared to take over at any moment.

"As far as quarterbacks go," Gill said, "he's as talented as anybody we've got on our team. The question is can you put it all together on the football field. I feel very confident that you'll be hearing of him pretty soon, whether it's this year or next year. He'll be somebody to be reckoned with in our program."

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- V-Eight: (Alternative)
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- Front of Truck (Power Pop)
- The Wonsers (Alternative)

- The Edge will be here at 3:00 to kick things off
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- Free Food
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