

Sports Opinion



Mike Kluck

Husker coach deserving of appreciation

One of the worst things about being a sportswriter is that you have to be unbiased at the events you cover.

I remember back in 1987, I was covering my first Husker football game on the road as an undergraduate for the Daily Nebraskan.

The Cowboys that year featured a fearsome threesome group of Hart Lee Dykes, Thurman Thomas and Mike Gundy. They even called themselves the Triplets, a name they had stolen from the Cornhuskers.

It was supposed to be a big game, and I was excited just to have the opportunity to attend the game — let alone cover it.

During an early play in the game, the Nebraska defense stopped Thomas for a loss, and I let my excitement get to me. I hit my fist on the table.

My editor at the time, Mike Reilly, leaned over to me and told me that I needed to try to contain my excitement. I hadn't yelled or even said anything, I just hit my fist against the table.

But I learned then that the role of a sports reporter is to be unbiased and not to show emotion about a play or a team, no matter how exciting the game or how much you care about the team and people you are covering.

I've tried to follow that example in my remaining years as an undergraduate reporter and since I returned to Nebraska as a graduate student and a reporter for the Daily Nebraskan.

However, a few times this year, that rule may take a back seat.

I've made a promise to myself to try to step back and appreciate what Husker football coach Tom Osborne has done for the university as well as the state of Nebraska.

This is Osborne's silver anniversary of coaching, and nearly every UNL student has never experienced a season without Osborne at the helm. I don't expect they will anytime soon.

But more than likely, this will be my last year covering him.

God willing, I will have my master's degree in May and I will get a full-time position, probably somewhere outside Nebraska.

When I was an undergraduate, I took Tom Osborne for granted.

I thought I would always see Husker football, but when I started teaching in Houston I had to listen on a little AM radio station — a religious station during the week — that covered Husker games.

People laughed at me when I stopped conversations to watch Nebraska highlights on the news.

That won't happen this year. I'm going to soak in everything I can about Nebraska football.

But when it comes to getting the story for the Daily Nebraskan readers, the unbiased objectivity will remain.

Kluck is a graduate student in journalism and the Daily Nebraskan sports editor.

Offense leaps forward

■ Nebraska's consistency pleases Frost as Saturday's opener approaches.

By ANTONE OSEKA
Senior Reporter

For the first time in fall camp, the Nebraska offense showed its capability.

In Friday's scrimmage, the last one before Saturday's 12:30 p.m. season opener against Akron, the offense scored 40 points while holding the NU defense at bay for most of the day.

"The offensive line did a tremendous job," No. 1 quarterback Scott Frost said. "Usually, we can't run the ball right at the No. 1 defense."

Junior I-back Ahman Green overcame back spasms to have a good day rushing, at one time breaking away for a 15-yard gain against the first-team defense. Frost added a 16-yard option keeper before a fumble by Shevin Wiggins was recovered by Jason Peter.

Peter later left the scrimmage with a mild concussion, but Coach Tom Osborne said he was happy there were no major injuries.

"After the spring game, I didn't think there were much (injuries), either," Osborne said. "Then we had Dan Alexander (with a torn knee ligament) two days later."

"Sometimes it takes a day or two to even know for sure what did happen."

However, the offense still suffers from injuries to the I-backs. While Green plays, backups DeAngelo Evans, Jay Sims and Alexander are sidelined with injuries.

In their absence, true freshmen Correll Buckhalter and Dan White have seen a lot of carries during fall camp.

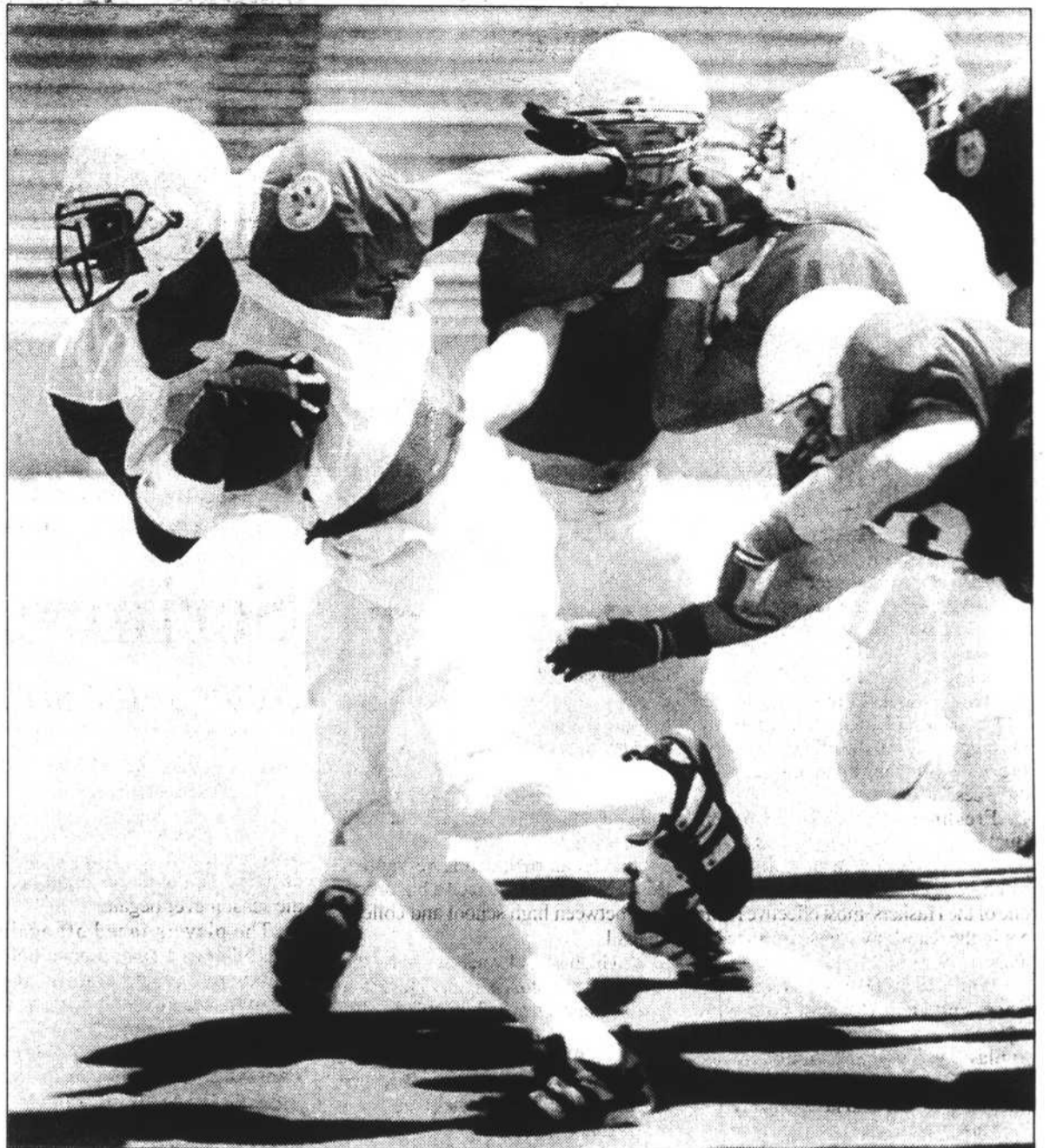
"Buckhalter has generally done some good things, and Danny White did a few good things today," Osborne said. "Of course, the I-backs have had a chance to do some good things."

On the defensive side, NU had an average day, causing three fumbles and two punts.

"I don't think I'm terribly alarmed about the defense," Osborne said. "They had a couple, three easy scores. We need to get those straightened out, too."

Frost was more impressed with the consistency on the offensive side and said he's ready to start playing games.

"I think we're ready to go, but we could always be better," Frost said. "The No. 1 thing we need to do is not be satisfied. We're playing pretty good right now, but it's going to take a pretty high level to get where we want to go. We have to keep it up."



WINGBACK SHEVIN Wiggins breaks through two tackles while returning a punt during Friday's scrimmage. Nebraska opens its season Saturday afternoon against Akron at Memorial Stadium. RYAN SODERLIN/DN

D-day nears for frosh

By DAVID WILSON
Senior Reporter

Three weeks is not much time to learn an offense.

But freshmen quarterbacks Eric Crouch and Bobby Newcombe said they will be comfortable playing if they don't redshirt.

The decision on who will redshirt is expected to be announced Monday, Crouch said Sunday.

Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said the freshmen are in control of their own destinies.

"We'll sit down and talk to them," Osborne said. "Nobody has to redshirt here. In other words, if we have 22 freshmen come in here, and 22 of them say, 'I don't want to redshirt,' then we have 22 guys that play. Now they might not play very much. It's kind of their decision. We don't ever force anybody to redshirt. So we'll just see how it all plays out."

Though both freshmen quarterbacks have taken snaps in practice, Newcombe has also established himself as a kick returner — which may earn him playing time this season.

"It may not make a lot of sense to

play both of them this year," Osborne said. "So we'll just kind of see how that shakes out. We'd consider redshirting the two freshmen, but Newcombe — he may be one of our top three punt return guys and he may be one of our top two kickoff return guys. So that may enter into it, too."

Newcombe, who returned kicks for Highland High School in Albuquerque, N.M., also was a three-year starter on the basketball team and ran track. At the New Mexico Track and Field Championships last spring, Newcombe won the 100 meters, 200 meters, 400

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Exhibition concerns Pettit

By ANDREW STRNAD
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska volleyball team geared up Saturday night for the opening of the season by defeating the NU alumni team 11-15, 15-2, 15-12, 15-3 in front of 1,836 fans at the NU Coliseum.

The Alumni was led by two-time U.S. Olympian Lori Endicott. In the first game the alumni ran out to a 10-2 lead, en route to a 15-11 win.

The Huskers never trailed in the

| Volleyball Score | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Alumni | 15 | 2 | 12 | 13 |
| Nebraska | 11 | 15 | 15 | 15 |

second game and were assisted by redshirt freshman Katie Jahnke, who had five service aces in the match.

Nebraska's highly touted freshman class lived up to its billing in the third game, as outside hitters Nancy Meendering, Kim Behrends and setter Jill McWilliams helped the Huskers to a 15-12 win.

Meendering and Behrends combined for eight kills, propelling NU

throughout the third game.

Setter Fiona Nepo was impressed with the freshmen's first appearance at the NU Coliseum.

"We all still have a lot to work on, but I'm comfortable with any of the freshmen on the floor," Nepo said.

Coach Terry Pettit also was encouraged by the play of the freshmen, but he had hoped to see a better overall performance.

"I thought it was an OK first outing," Pettit said. "I would like to have seen us play defense a little better."

Individually, outside hitter Jaime Kronidak led the Huskers with 13 kills. Jahnke and Lisa Reitsma had 12 each.

"Kronidak played pretty solid, and Katie Jahnke was pretty consistent for the most part," Pettit said.

The Huskers, traditionally known for their strong defensive play, had just 14 blocks for the match.

"We started off slow and had some unforced errors," Nepo said.

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