

**Sports Opinion**



## Jay Saunders NU's losses don't spell season doom

The scoreboard read Texas 1, Nebraska 0.

It was the first time the Cornhuskers had ever lost a conference game. It was the first regular-season loss since 1995.

The game against Texas wasn't even supposed to be the best game of the weekend. Nebraska was traveling to College Station, Texas, to play conference rival Texas A&M on Sunday. So what happened in Austin, Texas, on Friday?

Maybe Nebraska overlooked a struggling Longhorn team. Maybe the offense, which seemed to be absent at times in the first four games, couldn't get into its groove.

Is this a team that doesn't have the spark and the talent of last year's 23-1 team? Is this a team that was basking in the success of last year's surprise run into the national spotlight? Or, is this a team that needed a tough loss to focus on the task at hand?

Whatever the case, the Husker soccer team was in a situation it hadn't been in since losing 4-0 to USC on October 27, 1995.

After the '95 loss to the Women of Troy, NU had to play UCLA that same weekend. Nebraska fell to UCLA by the same score of 1-0.

This year, the Aggies beat Nebraska, 1-0.

This time, the Huskers are in completely unfamiliar territory. NU is now 1-2 in the Big 12 Conference. The soccer faithful have never seen anything like this since the 1995 season. With two conference losses, what are the Huskers going to do?

This isn't football. If the football team were to lose two conference games, any hope of a conference - let alone national - title would be gone as fast as an Ahman Green touchdown run. But the great thing about soccer is that a team can take some lumps and regroup.

The only real thing this weekend has taught us is that this year's Nebraska team is human.

That is a good thing. It would be a whole lot more upsetting if the team lost to A&M at the beginning of November in the Big 12 Championships. Now, the Huskers can take a look at themselves in the mirror and find out exactly who they are. Is this a team that can't live up to the lofty goals of a national championship?

Of course not. Remember, there are players still on this team that were here in the days of 10-8 seasons and no national attention. Those players are the ones who will need to pump up the morale of this team in an uncomfortable position, and that needs to start tonight against Iowa State.

Saunders is a sophomore broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan assignment reporter.

## Noisy UW crowds won't faze Huskers

By SAM MCKEOWN  
Staff Reporter

3 Days Until Seattle

The last time Nebraska played at Washington in 1992, the crowd noise level at the 72,500-seat Husky Stadium was measured at 135 decibels on the sideline, the loudest crowd ever in the 77-year history of the stadium.

Nebraska lost the game 29-14.

"It is loud," Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said about Husky Stadium. "I remember that."

Saturday, Nebraska returns to Husky Stadium, prepared to hear that noise again and figure out a way to ignore it.

"We want to overcome it so we can just play our game," junior full-back Joel Makovicka said. "We feel if we can control their crowd, then we can control the game."

Husky Stadium is located on the shores of Lake Washington in Seattle, making for one of the most picturesque, but also most intimidat-

ing settings in all of college football. More than 70 percent of the seats are between the end zones, which makes for more noise on the field.

Additionally, the structure is made of metal, a contrast to the brick and cement of old stadiums. The metal structure allows the stadium's noise to reverberate throughout the field, making it even more difficult to hear.

Nebraska players said it will be difficult to deal with the noise at first, but they have taken several measures to prepare. For weeks, NU has practiced with crowd noise blaring from the stadium speakers to help simulate the noise in Seattle.

In addition, NU has used silent counts, hand signals, and ear plugs to help counteract the crowd's effects.

Junior I-back Ahman Green said

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## Golden child leads UW

By ANTONE OSEKA  
Senior Reporter

3 Days Until Seattle

Players for the Washington Huskies see sophomore quarterback Brock Huard as golden.

"Around Washington, we call him the golden child," Husker tailback Rashaan Shehee said. "That's what he is to our team, the golden child."

Huard will lead the second-ranked Huskies (2-0) in their game with No. 7 Nebraska at 2:30 p.m. Saturday at Husky Stadium in Seattle.

Historically, Nebraska (2-0) has not fared well against Washington, losing three of its five games with the Huskies, including the last two. In fact, the last Husker loss in Memorial Stadium was 36-21 to Washington in 1991.

Huard remembers that game well.

His brother, Damon, was a freshman quarterback who made the trip to Lincoln. Huard said he watched the game on television. Then in 1992 the Huskies beat the Huskers 29-14 in Seattle.

The Huskies are hoping to repeat that same feat this year, but with the sophomore Brock Huard running the offense.

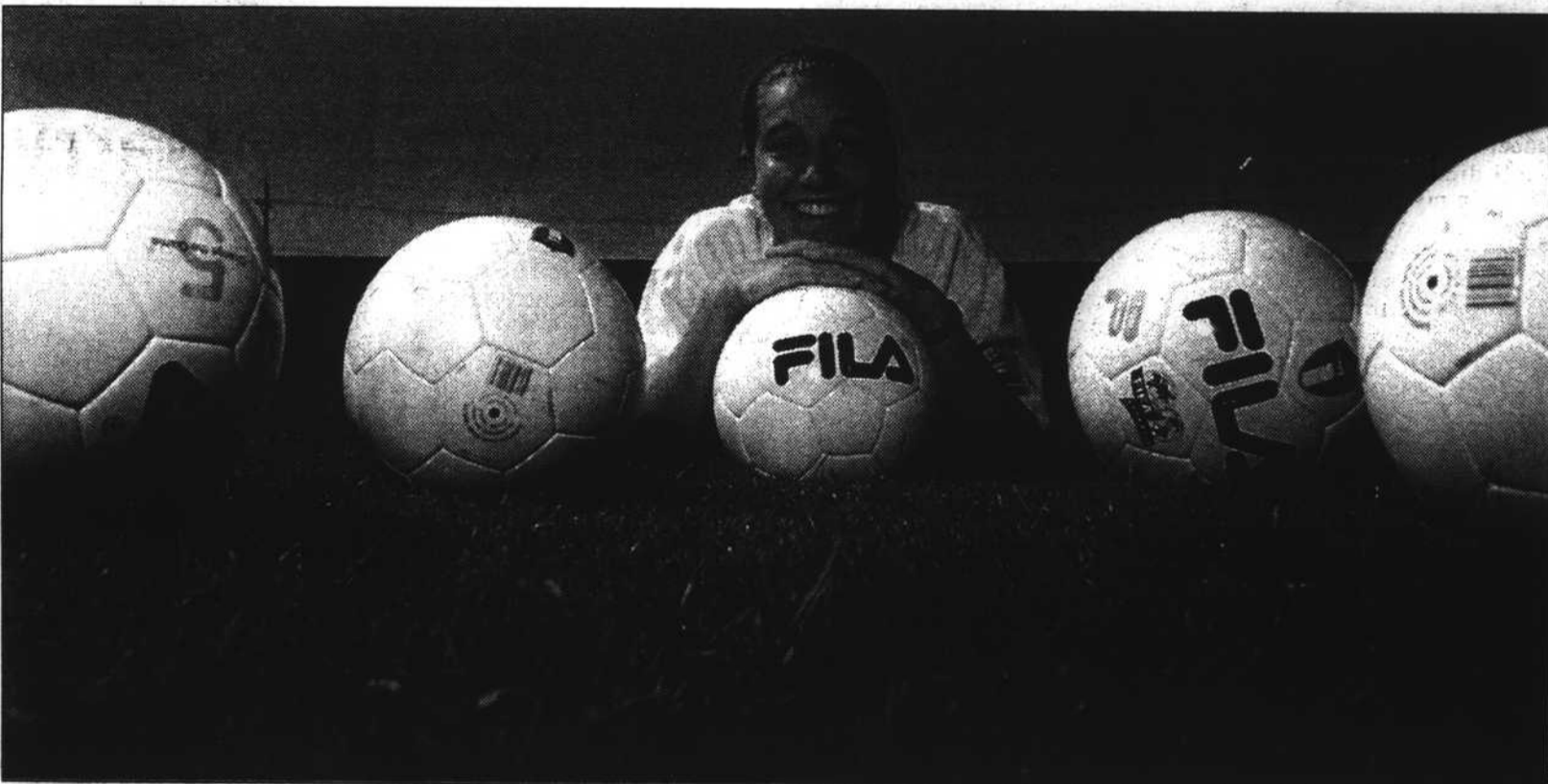
The younger Huard may be more of a poised quarterback than his age would indicate, Shehee said.

"Brock's like a pro quarterback, in my eyes," Shehee said.

He's playing like one, too. His performance in the first two Husky games this season has been stellar. He's averaging nearly 300 yards per game, passing, completing 34 of 49 passes for 598 yards. He currently leads the nation with a pass-efficiency rating of 219, while completing 69.4 percent of his passes.

In the first two games, he has thrown seven touchdowns and had his best passing day of his career last week in the Huskies 36-3 victory over San Diego State. In that game, Huard threw for 313 yards and four touchdowns.

Please see HUARD on 11



JUNIOR KIM ENGESSER TRANSFERRED to NU after playing two years at the University of Portland. Engesser has easily adjusted to Nebraska soccer, starting all six games, and scoring a team-high four goals.

## Energy, focus key to Husker success

### Engesser finds niche at NU

By JAY SAUNDERS  
Assignment Reporter

At this time last year, Kim Engesser was a pilot - a Portland Pilot.

Engesser, a midfielder/striker from Huntington Beach, Calif., played two years for the University of Portland.

As a freshman for the Pilots, Engesser started 21 of 22 games, scored nine goals, and chipped in five assists. Two of her goals came in her first collegiate game.

Engesser finished her first season as an All-West Coast

Conference honorable mention selection.

But in her sophomore year, Engesser was switched from the front lines to the defensive end of the field. She only started two games, one of which was Portland's 1-0 victory over Nebraska in the quarterfinals of the NCAA tournament, and was unhappy with her playing time.

So Engesser decided it was time for a change and transferred to No. 11 Nebraska (4-2 overall, 1-2 in the Big 12 Conference).

Please see ENGESSER on 11

By JAY SAUNDERS  
Assignment Reporter

Losing two games last weekend for the first time in two seasons isn't going to be the end of the world, Nebraska soccer coach John Walker said.

It is hopefully going to be a learned lesson.

How well the Huskers (4-2 overall, 1-2 in the Big 12) learned the lesson will be shown tonight when No. 11 Nebraska faces Iowa State (2-4, 0-3) at 7 p.m. at the Abbott Soccer Complex.

"The lesson we take into (today) is to avoid what we did against Texas," Walker said. "We don't ever want that to happen again. The players will take that lesson to heart."

Walker said he was not pleased with the Husker's 1-0 loss to Texas last Friday in which NU showed a

lack of intensity and effort. The loss to Texas was Nebraska's first-ever loss in the Big 12 Conference and ended NU's 23-game regular-season winning streak. On Sunday Nebraska lost to Texas A&M 1-0.

Junior midfielder/striker Kim Engesser said a lesson should be learned from the two losses. In her collegiate soccer career, which began at the University of Portland, Engesser has never lost two consecutive games.

"Obviously it was a disappointment," Engesser said. "It was a good wake up call. Hopefully, from here it will get better."

To get better, NU must focus against Iowa State. The Cyclones, like Texas, are another second-year team in the Big 12 conference.

Last season in Ames, Iowa, NU won 5-1, but Walker said the

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