

God save the queens

Backed by Nyree Roberts' 18 points and 15 rebounds, the second-ranked Lady Monarchs of Old Dominion eliminated Nebraska from the NCAA Tournament 75-60 in Norfolk, Va. **PAGE 7**



Art's craft

Everclear frontman Art Alexakis and his cohorts will make their Nebraska debut Wednesday night at Omaha's Sokol Hall. **PAGE 9**

MAYBE MELTING

Cloudy, windy, high 35. Cloudy tonight, low 30.

Daily Nebraskan

VOL. 97

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN SINCE 1901

NO. 123

UNL student killed by drunken driver

BY BRAD DAVIS AND
ERIN SCHULTE
Senior Staff

What was supposed to be a family weekend turned tragic for the mourning family of a 21-year-old UNL junior killed in a car accident Saturday.

Laura Cockson, a pre-occupational therapy major and member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority from Friend, died at the scene of the car accident at First Street and Cornhusker Highway at about 11:30 p.m. Saturday. Capt. Lee Wagner of

the Lincoln Police Department said.

Also in Cockson's car, which was hit by a man later arrested for drunken driving, were her sisters Sarah Cockson, 19, a UNL freshman, and Erin Cockson, 16. They are both in critical condition at Lincoln General Hospital.

Allien Dvorak, the Cockson sisters' uncle and an Omaha doctor, said Laura

had invited her parents to Lincoln for the weekend to celebrate her sorority's Mom's Day.

It was not until their daughters were late meeting them at their motel room that Robert and Eva Cockson realized the accident they passed just minutes earlier involved their daughters, Dvorak said.

Jeffrey E. Ireland, 25, of 2411 N.W. Second St., whose car collided with Cockson's, was arrested for drunken driving, felony motor vehicle homicide, driving with a suspended license, leaving the scene of the accident and running a red light, and for an outstanding arrest war-

rant for failing to appear in court, Wagner said.

Ireland was driving north on First Street when he ran a red light and hit Cockson's Pontiac Grand Am, which was headed west on Cornhusker.

Police said an officer attempted to pull over Ireland seconds before the accident because his car had no license plates. When the officer turned on his sirens and red lights, Ireland braked briefly then accelerated through the red light, police said.

After the accident, Ireland fled on foot. Police did not apprehend

him at the scene, Wagner said. Witnesses said Ireland was bleeding from the face. About three hours later, he went to Bryan Memorial Hospital seeking medical treatment, saying he had been in a car accident, Wagner said.

The hospital called Lincoln police and officers determined it was Ireland who had caused the accident, Wagner said. He was treated and released and is being held in the city-county jail.

Also in Ireland's car were Rodney Watts, 32, who is in critical

Please see **ACCIDENT** on 3

RHA backs chemistry instructor

BY IEVA AUGSTUMS
Assignment Reporter

A few thousand student signatures could dictate the future for one very popular UNL instructor.

At least, RHA hopes they will.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Residence Hall Association voted unanimously on Sunday to continue a student petition hoping to keep Bill McLaughlin at UNL.

McLaughlin, a temporary instructor for the department of chemistry, originally was hired as a one-semester instructor for fall 1997, but the university allowed him to stay for one more semester.

RHA President Ben Wallace said McLaughlin has been told by administration he wouldn't be rehired for next year, a decision that concerned students and RHA.

"I have never seen this amount of support for a teacher," Wallace said. "Students say good things about the man, and many don't want to see him go."

Wallace said petitioning efforts since Friday already have gathered 864 signatures.

Wallace said he hopes to see that number increase to about 1,500 to 2,000 signatures.

Students wanting to show their support for McLaughlin can sign the petition from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at a RHA-sponsored booth in the Nebraska Union.

Aside from the petition, Wallace said he is writing a letter on behalf of RHA to Chancellor James Moeser, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Richard Edwards, College of Arts and Sciences Dean Brian Foster and Chemistry Department Interim Chairman Lawrence Parkhurst.

The letter will outline reasons

Please see **RHA** on 2

Russell ready to lead ASUN

BY JESSICA FARGEN
Assignment Reporter

Mark Russell, a UNL freshman, stood outside for seven hours Wednesday with a red COMMIT T-shirt stretched over his coat encouraging people to vote.

Three years ago, his older sister, Sara, did the same thing when she stood outside to ask people to vote her into ASUN as a senator for the College of Arts and Sciences.

It worked three years ago when she did it, and it worked Wednesday when her brother did it.

Sara Russell and friend Kelly Hoffschneider were elected president and first vice president with 47.91 percent of the vote. Russell said her efforts to reach out to students, as she did on election day, showed the drive others have seen in her since she became involved in the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska three years ago.

"Because I ran as a freshman, people saw a level of ambition that could bring me to candidacy for president," she said.

But until last semester, the 21-year-old from Omaha said she wasn't even sure she wanted to run for student body president because she didn't feel she had the time.

Last semester she was majoring in math and biology and was taking pre-physical therapy classes. Since then, she has whittled her course work down, but remains a math major with her heart now set on becoming a marine biologist.

"I was going to be so involved in academics, and if I couldn't give 100 percent to (ASUN), I didn't want to do it," she said.

She's quick to say she'll have to give more than 100 percent to fill the shoes of ASUN President Curt Ruwe.

She said the perception of student government improved during Ruwe's

term because he was in tune with students and wasn't afraid to admit he was wrong.

He was approachable, too, she said. "He's still really playful; he's got games and toys in his office," she said. "It's a good ice breaker, instead of being dressed up all the time and sitting behind the desk all the time."

Russell said one thing she's learned from Ruwe is that contact with students really matters.

"It should not always be the responsibilities of the students to come to the government," she said. "It is better if the student government reaches out to the students."

But in reaching out to students, Russell said, she hasn't had time to reach out to people close to her.

"I've pretty much massacred any semblance of a personal life I had," she said.

She still sets aside a half-hour each week to meet with her brother and talk. She said it was important to step away from the craziness of the campaign in order to keep in touch with reality.

Another thing she does to sustain her mental health is work out.

"My mental health is a lot better because I take my aggressions out physically instead of verbally," she said.

But brother Mark said Russell wasn't always so disciplined.

"They probably don't know she sits in front of the TV and eats a whole half gallon of ice cream in one sitting," he said, "but she makes sure it's the fat-free ice cream."

And for the normally active Russell, the slow-moving nature of government can be aggravating. "I do realize the bureaucratic nature that this university often runs by," she said. "Just the fact that I haven't bowed out yet shows I tend to stick with it and give it my all."

Russell, Hoffschneider and second vice president Eddie Brown will meet this week to discuss possibly



MATT MILLER/DN

SARA RUSSELL, ASUN president-elect, stands in front of the columns near Memorial Stadium. The junior from Omaha said she hopes to start right away on implementing her ideas and working with the new ASUN senators.

incorporating ideas from the VISION platform to offer the best from both parties to the university.

She said she was not worried about working with a VISION candidate.

Russell said Brown has a lot of valuable qualities to bring to ASUN, such as his dedication to change, a new perspective and his approachability.

She said she would start planning right away for NU Week, a student involvement week similar to Homecoming. More community ser-

vice projects and getting more volunteers and longer hours for the campus escort service are also on the agenda, she said.

She will have plenty of good help to start those projects, she said. COMMIT won 17 seats in the senate, and VISION won seven. One independent senator was elected.

Returning senator Kara Slaughter will bring experience, and new senator

Please see **RUSSELL** on 2