

## TAXI CAB Confessions

### Student cab driver faring well at job

BY JASON HARDY  
Senior Reporter

"When you're driving 30 hours a week, it's bound to happen," Ken Paulman says, referring to a minor fender bender he was in.

He pulls a joker card from his pocket and sticks it on the dusty dash of cab 26.

"After my accident I figured I needed a good luck charm," he says.

He squeezes a small tape player in between the front seat and a metal bar that holds up the meter. The sounds of Parliament Funkadelic fill the musty inner space of the cab, and he sets a large flashlight next to him for protection.

"You always gotta be on your toes," he says as he pats the shiny, red metal light.

Paulman, a senior theatre major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, begins his day as a cab driver for Husker Cabs, Inc., 320 W. P St., at about 2:30 p.m. most days. Today is no different.

He gets a call over the radio and cruises out for a client.

Paulman has been driving cabs for about a year and plans to continue driving until he graduates. He said he liked



KEN PAULMAN, a senior theater major, drives Candy Brooks to her home. Paulman has been driving taxis for about a year.

the hours, and the pay was usually good, especially around peak times during the afternoon and evening.

"It's better than workin' for a living, and the hours are great," Paulman says.

He says he usually earns between \$6 and \$10 an hour, depending on tips and the time of day.

He arrives at an address and honks the horn. A middle-aged woman comes out, climbs into the back seat and gives

the directions to her destination. The ride there is silent, and she thanks Paulman as she leaves.

"I'm usually not very talkative and I think a lot of people appreciate it," Paulman says. "Usually the people that want someone to talk with will start up a conversation."

Paulman learned his way around Lincoln's streets when he was a pizza delivery driver before working at

Husker Cabs. However, he says sometimes he still has to resort to the map in the Lincoln phone book.

"Even after doing this for a year there are still some neighborhoods that I get completely lost in," Paulman says, thumbing to the back of the phone book.

The next stop was for an older couple who slowly made their way from the house to the cab. He offers them a hand but they decline and continue their

snail's pace to the cab's back door.

"You really appreciate the little things, like being able to walk and to see," Paulman says as he gets out to open the car door.

On the way to the couple's stop he encounters some heavy traffic, but having lived in Kansas City, Mo., Paulman says he's learned to cope with rush hour.

"Traffic doesn't really bother me," Paulman says. "I lived in Kansas City, and I've spent quality time on the freeway going nowhere."

After dropping the couple off, Paulman gets called to a familiar location.

"We have a lot of regulars," he says pulling up to the building. "Oh yeah, this guy's the man."

Paulman gets out to help put the man's wheelchair into the trunk.

"No problem," he says. "It's what they pay me big money for."

He heads out for the man's home without asking for directions. He says most people get in the car and expect him to know where to take them.

"I used to think that was ridiculous when I first started, but now I just know where everyone lives," Paulman says.

He drops the man off and unloads his wheelchair. In return the man gives him a handsome tip. Paulman thanks the man and says that every fare isn't as rewarding. The ones that aren't he takes with a grain of salt.

"One older guy gave me a nickel and told me to get myself an ice cream cone ... it was the middle of winter," Paulman says. "He meant well. I'm sure back in the day that could've got you a pretty good ice cream cone."

### Pianist brings 'voice' to UNL

BY BARB CHURCHILL  
Assignment Reporter

Another new voice is coming to town.

Jon Nakamatsu, winner of the 1997 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, will play a recital tonight in Kimball Recital Hall as part of the Lied Center for the Performing Arts "New Voices" series. Nakamatsu isn't your average piano player - before winning this competition, Nakamatsu taught high school German in Mountain View, Calif.

After winning the Van Cliburn competition, Nakamatsu quit his teaching position. He is now solely concentrating on performing, said Todd Holmberg, production manager for the Van Cliburn foundation.

One hundred fifty-six competitors performed at the screening auditions of the Van Cliburn competition, and 35 made it to the preliminary rounds, Nakamatsu said. The field was then narrowed down successively to 12 semifinalists, six finalists and three medal winners.

Nakamatsu was named the gold medal winner, which probably surprised everyone else more than it did him.

That's because Nakamatsu was relatively unknown before winning the Van Cliburn competition, although he did do well in other competitions, Holmberg said.

Nakamatsu said his most significant win before the Van Cliburn competition was the 1995 Chopin competition which earned him \$15,000 and concert engage-

#### Lied Center

ments. However, it was not an international competition.

Winning an international competition is important because of the recognition factor. Talent scouts don't pay as much attention to performers who win a U.S. competition, Nakamatsu said.

The Van Cliburn competition is not only an international competition, it is one of the most prestigious international competitions. Winning this competition was a "breakthrough" for Nakamatsu.

One of the biggest perks - besides winning \$20,000 - is receiving professional management from the Van Cliburn foundation. Other prizes include a stipend from American Airlines and being included on a compact disc release.

Nakamatsu won't just be thrown to the winds at the end of the two years, Holmberg said. When his two years are up, Nakamatsu will still be able to utilize the Van Cliburn foundation's professional services.

Nakamatsu is not a total stranger to the music world. He has taken lessons with piano teacher Marina Derryberry since he was 6. Derryberry continues to be a force in Nakamatsu's life and will accompany Nakamatsu during this recital.

"It's nice to have Marina with me during this tour," Nakamatsu said. "When no one knows you, and you're in a strange city, it's very comforting to have a friend around."

The irregular schedule can be

a pain sometimes, especially when trying to find time to practice, Nakamatsu said.

"Every day is different. You're at the mercy of whatever city you're in, and you try to make the best of it."

Tonight, Nakamatsu will perform Ludwig van Beethoven's "Sonata in E major, opus 109," Frederic Chopin's "Polonaise in C-Sharp Minor, opus 26 number one" and "Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs," William Bolcom's "Nine Bagatelles," Igor Stravinsky's "Four Etudes" and Franz Liszt's "Sonetto 104 del Petrarca" and "Tarantella."

The Beethoven "Sonata" is one of his later sonatas - the 30th composed out of 32.

"This is lyrical and more introspective than most of Beethoven's other sonatas," Nakamatsu said.

The two Chopin works aren't his most popular works, but Nakamatsu said "they're really great pieces for an audience."

The Bolcom piece was composed for the 1997 Van Cliburn competition, and Nakamatsu's performance of it won praise from the composer. Nakamatsu enjoys playing this piece, he said, because "it's full of ambiguity and jokes."

The Stravinsky is not often performed. That's a shame, Nakamatsu said, because as an early Stravinsky piece, it is full of romanticism and an almost Debussy-like sound.

The Liszt pieces "are exciting and romantic in the best sense, and a good close for the program," he said.

Nakamatsu's recital is tonight at 8 in Kimball Recital Hall. Tickets for the recital are \$18 and \$14, half-price for students.

#### Music



Various Artists  
"Nebraska Football Greatest Hits Vol. 1"  
Alphabet City Sports Records  
Grade: D

In the latest attempt to sell Cornhusker football fans something they don't need, we now have the Nebraska football compact disc.

Alphabet City Sports Records out of New York is the latest group to get in on the act with a 24-track compact disc featuring 12 songs to go with a dozen or so cuts of the most famous plays in Husker football history.

The cuts range from Nebraska's 25-21 upset of Oklahoma in 1959, ending the Sooners' 74-game conference unbeaten streak, to Cory Schlesinger's go-ahead touchdown against Miami in the 1995 Orange Bowl.

All the usual suspects are here: Lyle Bremser, Kent Pavelka and current NU play-by-play announcer Warren Swain, among others.

The first track has promise as the "opening montage" lumps together some of the most recognizable sounds from Husker history including Pavelka screaming "touchdown" over and over, and Swain's call of an Ahman Green touchdown with The Alan Parsons Project's "Sirius" in the background.

But the problems with this project lie at the end of each radio track.

Following each and every Husker cut, a

song follows that is supposedly related to the cut.

After listening to Johnny Rodgers' punt return against Oklahoma in the "Game of the Century," Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode" follows and really puts a damper on Bremser's "Man, woman and child!"

This discouraging practice plagues the entire project and stoops to the lowest lengths after Swain's call of college football's "immaculate reception."

The track relives the unbelievable finish of NU's win over Missouri last year, a win made possible by the footwork of Husker receiver Shevin Wiggins.

The song that pays tribute to this truly great moment is none other than "My Adidas" by Run DMC.

The reference of course is to Adidas, the official supplier of Nebraska football gear.

These sad stretches in referential humor really stick out when Gap Band's "You Dropped a Bomb on Me" follows NU quarterback Fred Duda's 95-yard pass to Freeman White in 1965.

It also should be noted that this is possibly the only disc offering songs by James Brown, Bachman Turner Overdrive, Kool & The Gang, Peaches & Herb and Terri Clark in the same collection.

This compilation really makes it difficult for any Husker fan to justify buying the disc.

A compact disc of pure Husker football cuts would seem to be a better product for those crazy enough to buy this one.

Sadly, the best thing about the disc is probably the liner notes, as they list a summary of Nebraska's top 10 greatest games.

The notes include the scores of all of the games from NU's five national championship teams, along with a file on former Head Coach Tom Osborne.

But this is something that any Husker fan can get in a media guide without buying a compact disc that has little overall value.

Unless you're a member of a Husker Booster Club, save your money.

- Andrew Strnad