

**Sports Opinion**



**Andrew Strnad**

## Bitter fans: Don't knock our pastime

Last weekend, while I was enjoying the Nebraska-Kansas State baseball game in Manhattan, Kan., I heard a grumbling fan lay into America's pastime.

His reckless banter was so irritating. I couldn't understand why he was at a baseball game if he didn't like it.

"It costs too much to go to a baseball game; the game takes forever; the food is expensive; blah, blah, blah."

It seems to me that this bitter man needs to learn the facts.

His first complaint was that tickets are too expensive.

Well, that's just not true, bitter man. The average Major League ticket price is \$13.60. A ticket to a Nebraska baseball game costs nothing for University of Nebraska-Lincoln students and very little for anyone else. That's pretty cheap in comparison to the average ticket to an NBA game, which is \$36, or a Husker football game, which runs about \$18 for students.

In addition, nearly every team in the majors offers cheap-seat tickets for \$5 or less.

Bitter man's second complaint was that the game takes too long. In 1997, the average Major League game took 2 hours and 58 minutes.

If that's still too long, just go watch the National League, where the games average just 2:54.

Compare that with the average NFL game, which takes 3:05, while a Husker game lasts about 3:21.

Bitter man's biggest complaint involved the expensive food at the ballpark.

I'll admit that prices are high. An 8-ounce bag of peanuts is \$3 at most stadiums, but then again, a tub of popcorn at the movies is just as costly.

Well, here's a suggestion bitter boy: Don't buy anything!

How hard is it to go three hours and not eat or drink anything? People do it everyday.

And by looking at half of the fans, it's probably in their best interest to stay away from the ballpark fare.

Plus, it's not like the vendors are putting guns to your heads and ordering you to buy a hot dog.

But if you're that hungry and you just can't take the sight of the guy next to you slamming down beer and brats there's something you can do: Bring your own food!

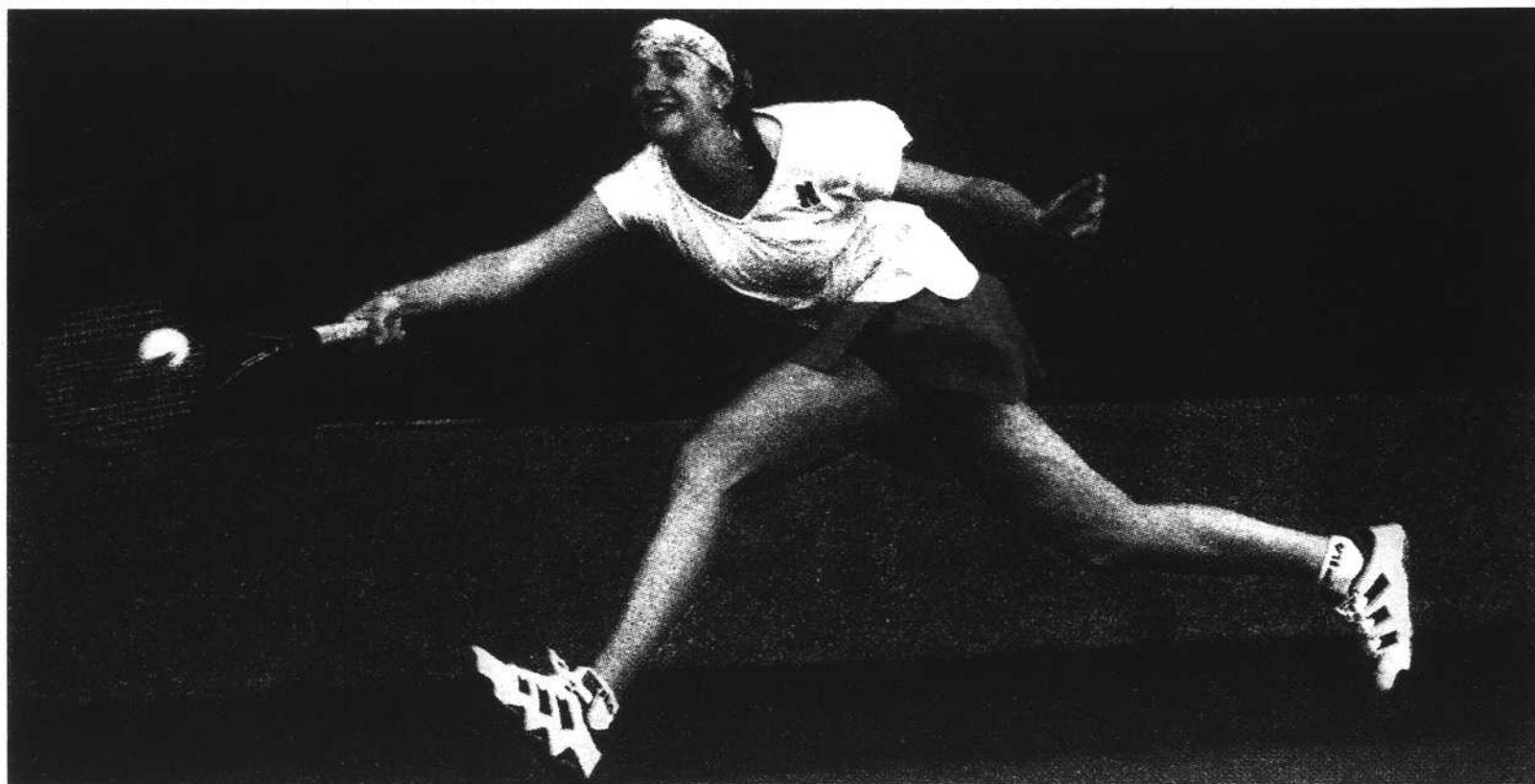
Last time I checked, all but three Major League ballparks allow fans to bring in anything from a bag of nuts to an 8-foot sub.

This is baseball. My baseball; George Will's baseball. It's not a game for the impatient or the hurried.

It's a timeless event in which the only bitter things about it are the sweet memories.

And no one likes a bitter man.

**Strnad is a senior broadcasting and political science major and Daily Nebraskan staff reporter.**



SCOTT McCLURG/DN

**HUSKER SOPHMORE Sandra Noetzel returns a shot against Kansas' Christie Sim during their second set Wednesday afternoon at Woods Tennis Center. Noetzel lost the match 5-7, 6-2, 4-6.**

## NU tennis team gets aced

**BY SARAH DOSE**  
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska women's tennis team didn't win a single match Wednesday afternoon, but NU Coach Scott Jacobson said the Cornhuskers played the best they had all season.

Nebraska lost 9-0 to No. 13 Kansas at the Woods Tennis Center.

"The score is not indicative of the level at which we played," Jacobson said. "We had our chances to win in singles and doubles, but nothing came through."

NU took both its No. 1 and No. 2 matches to three sets, but neither Sandra Noetzel nor Lisa Hart could pull out wins.

In No. 1 singles, Noetzel (13-6) lost to KU's Christie Sim 5-7, 6-2, 4-6. Hart (14-5) lost to Kris Sell 6-3, 5-7, 4-6 in No. 2 singles.

The three-set matches were close, but Jacobson said he was especially pleased with the No. 4 singles match, even though Gina Pelazini (10-8) lost to Julia Sidorova 4-6, 4-6.

"This was definitely the best match I've ever seen Gina play," Jacobson said.

Pelazini said she also was pleased with her performance.

"Today was the best I've played," she said. "Maybe it's because it's getting toward the end of the season, and I know where I need to be."

Pelazini said she played at No. 5

singles at the beginning of the season but had to step up to No. 4 to fill in for injured Ndali Ijomah.

This weekend, when NU takes on Iowa State and Colorado in Ames, Iowa, Ijomah will return, and Hart will sit out to recover from a bruised knee.

"It's fine with me because five is my spot," Pelazini said. "I felt awkward moving up. I think she deserves that spot anyway. I'm glad she's coming back."

Jacobson also was positive about Ijomah's return but said the team wouldn't be the same without Hart.

"Hopefully we'll get her healthy this weekend," Jacobson said. "It's a completely different program without her. But if (Ijomah) is healthy, she's a player."

Nebraska has just three duals and the Big 12 Championships before the NCAA Regional Tournament on May 15. Jacobson said he wasn't sure what kind of a chance NU would have to get there.

"We've got a great region," he said. "And we're right on the bubble. It could very well come down to a win in the conference tournament."

But if Nebraska continues to improve on what it has been doing, Jacobson said, the Huskers could have a chance.

"The thing is, every single person walked on the court like she looked like she thought she could win," he said.

"They played with fight, with heart, and that's all I can ask."

## Australians help out NU

**BY DARREN IVY**  
Assignment Reporter

They come from the land down under. And they are three men hard at work. But they play golf rather than musical instruments.

Sophomore Peter Smith and juniors Josh Madden and Jamie Rogers have helped the Nebraska men's golf team win three tournaments this spring.

"The combination of Nebraska players and Australians have created the competitive situation," NU Coach Larry Romjue said. "We've always had good Nebraska kids, but it's hard to find five at one time."

The return of Rogers this year and improvement of the other players have the Cornhuskers on pace for their best season ever.

Rogers leads the Huskers in stroke average with a 72, Madden is third with a 73.76 and Smith is fifth with a 75.87. Rogers also has won three individual titles this spring.

Romjue said he discovered his first Australian golfer with a tip from Athletic Director Bill Byrne.

When Byrne was the athletic director at Oregon, he had a good Australian golfer and knew there were a lot more. When Byrne came to NU, he gave Romjue the name of a golf contact in Australia.

Romjue contacted that person, went to Australia, and pretty soon he landed Trent Morrison, his first Australian recruit.

"Once you get the first one, recruiting others is easier because they have friends," Romjue said.

That is how it has worked with Rogers.

Morrison and Rogers played together in a 1993 Australian golf tournament. At the time, Morrison had already committed to Nebraska and told Rogers to be sure to send his credentials to the

University of Nebraska-Lincoln when he came over.

Rogers, a Maroochydore native, sent out letters to 26 schools, and Romjue was the first coach to contact him.

"I probably wouldn't have picked Lincoln if it weren't for Trent," Rogers said.

Rogers moved in with Morrison, and they lived together until Rogers went home for personal reasons after one semester.

After Rogers left, Romjue looked for another player and found Madden.

Madden, a Gold Coast native, said Morrison also influenced him.

"I only knew one Australian in the U.S.," Madden said, "and I knew if I knew somebody it would be easier."

Once Madden was here, he got Romjue to recruit Smith, his Queensland golf teammate.

Smith wasn't familiar with America but trusted what Madden had told him.

"I didn't even know where Nebraska was or that it had a good football program," said Smith, who has now been to 16 states because of golf.

Since arriving in Lincoln, the Australians have become good friends.

Smith and Madden now room together in the same apartment complex as Rogers and Morrison.

"It's very rare to catch us without one of the other two," Rogers said. "We can't pick up any American accents or we get grief back home."

Smith said he has friends back home who want to come to UNL, but Romjue doesn't have any scholarships right now.

It's no wonder more Australians want to come to the United States, Smith said.

"It's a perfect life for Australian golfers," Smith said. "You come here on a scholarship and play against the best collegiate golfers. If you want to become a great golfer, it's important to come here."

## Co-champions to be honored by president

**BY SAM MCKEWIN**  
Senior Reporter

Don't be surprised if a football game between Nebraska and Michigan breaks out on the White House lawn today.

The Cornhuskers and Wolverines, co-college football national champions last year, will be honored today in Washington, D.C., by President Clinton.

In a perfect world, NU fullback Joel Makovicka said, the 200-or-so yards in front of the White House would be a proving ground to find the best team in college football.

As it is, Nebraska will just have to settle for shaking hands with the president.

"I'd love to strap it up right there and go at it," Makovicka said. "I'm sure they would, too. But obviously that's not going to happen."

"There will probably just be some good-natured joking around out there."

Nebraska visited the White House after the 1994 national championship, but declined in 1995, since most of the players had been there the year before.

This year, Makovicka said, the 1997 national championship team consisted mostly of players who had never been to the awards ceremony before, and therefore the team decided to make the trip to the nation's capital.

"It will be a good experience to see the capital and see the president," Makovicka said.