



Texas two stepped

After upsetting 13th-ranked Texas A&M Friday, the Nebraska baseball team lost a doubleheader to the Aggies Saturday. PAGE 10



Doomed flight

"City of Angels" attempts to remake Wim Wender's classic film "Wings of Desire," but it isn't very successful. PAGE 9

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MOO-RE WARM WEATHER

Cloudy, breezy, high 68. Clear tonight, low 25.

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Car thief arrested in chase

A California teen driving a stolen law-enforcement vehicle was caught after police pursuit through campus sidewalks.

By JOSH FUNK Senior Reporter

Before his arrest Friday, a man driving a stolen vehicle led police on a car chase through UNL's sidewalks, totaled someone else's car and caused a man to be thrown from his wheelchair.

Henry Valencia Jr., 18, was driving a car stolen from the San Bernadino (Calif.) Sheriff's department. He fled from a state patrolman after he was stopped for speeding on Interstate 80, Nebraska State Patrol Lt. Mike Streeter said.

A trooper clocked Valencia at 93 mph near the 27th Street exit when he was stopped around 11 a.m.

While the state trooper was standing next to Valencia's car on the side of the road, Valencia drove away.

Police lost sight of the stolen 1995 Infiniti until one of the state patrol's carrier enforcement units picked up the pursuit near 13th Street and Cornhusker Highway.

Then Valencia led police south on 14th Street toward campus.

When Valencia made it to the heart of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus he took to the sidewalks, driving across campus to get to R Street and then 12th Street.

With the officer two blocks behind, Valencia drove the wrong way down 12th Street to O Street, where he hit another car, which then hit a man in a motorized wheelchair on the sidewalk.

The man in the wheelchair, William Crawford, was tossed from the chair onto the sidewalk. He was treated at the scene for cuts and bruises.

The three passengers in the Oldsmobile that Valencia hit, all from Boelus, were not injured, but the car was totaled.

After the accident, Valencia left his car near the intersection and fled into the NBC Building at 13th and O streets.

Lincoln Police and state patrol officers surrounded the building while officers gathered a description of Valencia from witnesses on the street.

Police were concerned that Valencia had escaped through one of the skyways downtown.

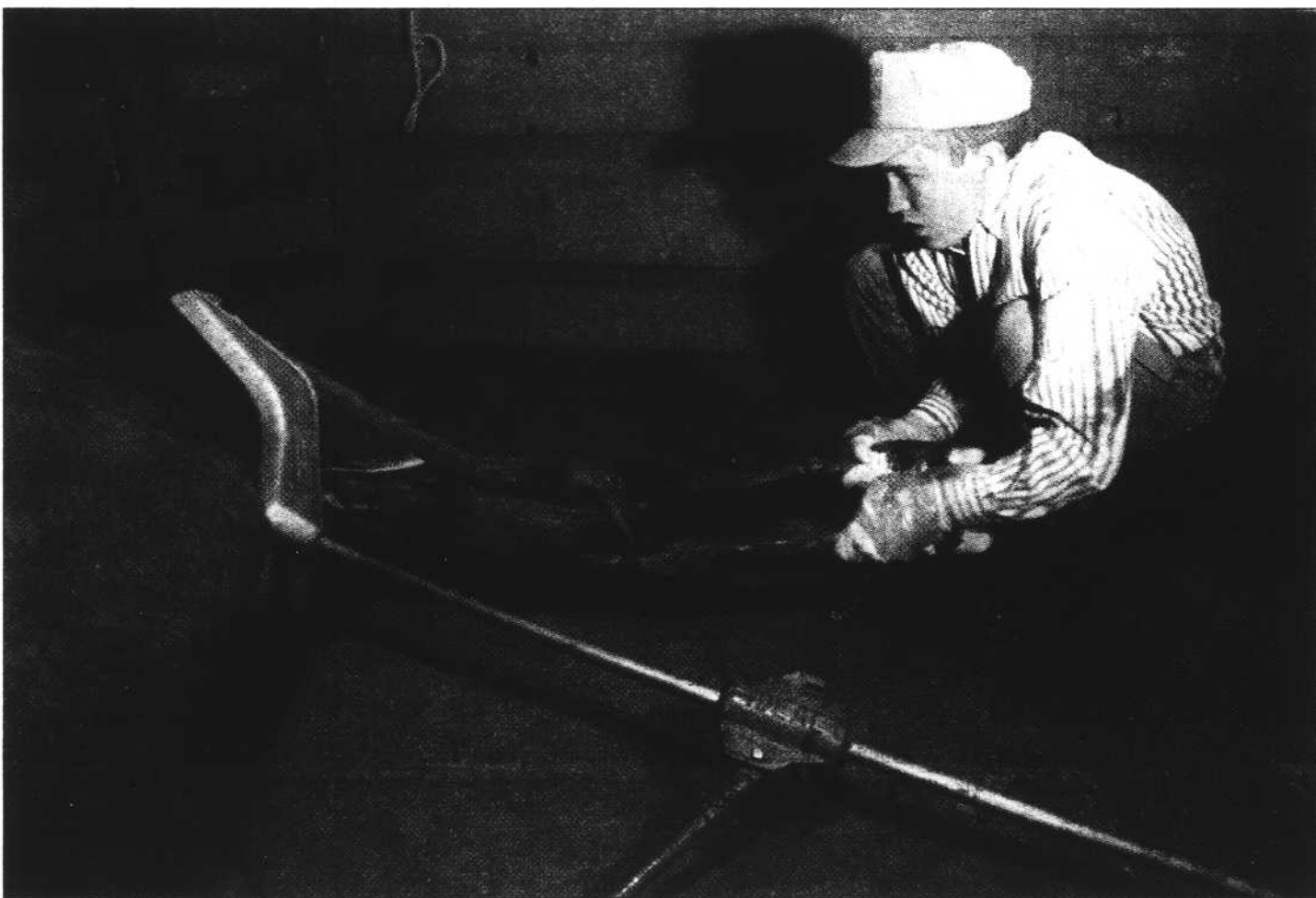
Plain clothes police officers spotted Valencia in a fourth-floor snack bar trying to look inconspicuous.

After a few questions, police determined they had found their man and arrested him.

The stolen car Valencia drove was one of the vehicles used to practice vehicle pursuits at the sheriff's office in San Bernadino, where both of his parents work.

Valencia was charged with fleeing to avoid arrest and reckless driving in connection with the chase. Additional charges could follow in connection with the stolen car.

The miracle of life



RYAN SODERLIN/DN

UNL ANIMAL SCIENCE MAJOR Jason Swanson helps a cow deliver a calf late March 28. Swanson was part of a group of seven students who worked at the UNL Cow-Calf Management Research Center during calving season to help with calf deliveries. Calving season at the center started at about the end of February and is beginning to taper off. Birthing calves is not a 9 to 5 job. SEE STORY PAGES 8 AND 9.

Charges changed in deadly drunken crash

By JOSH FUNK Senior Reporter

The man accused of killing a UNL freshman and injuring her two sisters in a drunken driving accident last month now faces charges of manslaughter and second-degree assault.

The Lancaster County Attorney's

office amended the charges against Jeffrey Ireland to include one count of manslaughter and three counts of second-degree assault.

Manslaughter carries a maximum penalty of up to 20 years in jail or a \$25,000 fine or a combination of both, and a minimum of one year in jail if convicted.

Ireland was originally charged with felony vehicular homicide in

connection with the death of Laura Cockson and injury of her two sisters, Sarah, 19, and Erin, 16.

Attorneys from the Lancaster County Attorney's office did not return phone calls Friday afternoon.

Police reports said Ireland's car ran a red light and broadsided the Cocksons' car.

Ireland, driving on a suspended license, was driving a friend home

from a bar in another friend's car.

After the wreck Ireland fled the scene, but he later turned up in the emergency room of Bryan Memorial Hospital for treatment of injuries from the wreck.

Ireland was arrested that night and remains in Lancaster County jail in lieu of bond.

Ireland's preliminary hearing is scheduled for Tuesday.

Family spurs love of rodeo

By AMANDA SCHINDLER Staff Reporter

In a sea of winding back roads and unending Nebraska sandhills lies a little house set far from any pavement or neon sign.

Despite the blustery wind of an evening blizzard, a single porch light offers warmth in the otherwise harsh surroundings.

From the outside, the house suggests nothing of one young man's life-long devotion to a career in rodeo.

But the front door swings open to a world of long-standing family traditions. They hint at the driving force behind UNL cowboy Kyle Whittaker, a 21-year-old junior agriculture economics major who has won more

than 10 all-around professional rodeo competitions in the 1997 season alone.

Amid the shrine of belt buckles and plaques, framed rodeo photos and baby cowboy boots, Whittaker's parents, Chip and Marilyn, wait with patience to tend their 170 head of cattle on this freezing night.

They said they can't imagine a time when their son wanted anything more than to rodeo.

"He's always wanted to be a cowboy," Chip said.

That desire has paid off, as Whittaker is now one of the best rodeo cowboys in the region and a three-year member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association.

But there's more to Kyle

Whittaker than just belt buckles and cowboy boots, his family says. His success stretches far from the saddle.

"He's really determined," his mother said. "He's one of the most honest, straight-arrow people - whether it was for his benefit or not, he would tell the truth."

Tough roots

For Whittaker, that truth includes a strong family tradition in rodeo, a tradition including both victory and tragedy.

Vern Whittaker, Kyle's grandfather and mentor, was killed while getting ready to steer wrestle - an event in which Kyle now competes. As he rode out, he was knocked off his horse and fell and hit his head.

Just one month prior, he had watched his grandson win his first all-around junior rodeo.

Whittaker said the award was especially profound since it marked the last time he ever saw his grandfather.

"I could tell it really made him happy to see that," he said. "It seemed like I was keeping up the family tradition."

He credits his grandfather with having a big influence on him as a child, proudly describing a picture taken of Vern riding a bronc at age 74.

"He was tougher than a boot," he said. "I watched movies about cowboys, and he was more of a cowboy than them."

Please see RODEO on 6