

**Sports Opinion**



## Sam McKewon Warfield goes in NFL a winner

Guess which Husker player got the best deal of the NFL Draft?

Grant Wistrom? No. Jason Peter? Nope. Scott Frost? Only if you like tuna. Try Eric Warfield.

Warfield was the last Husker signed in the draft, tucked away in the seventh round. He won't get a lot of coin to start out his career, but he's going to one of the best teams in the league: the Kansas City Chiefs.

I am not a Chiefs fan. In fact, as an Oakland Raiders fan, I am obligated to hate them. But Warfield got a sweet deal, going to a team that needs a couple more good safeties and is already looking at the Super Bowl again for next season.

K.C. has seasoned veterans at cornerback with Dale Carter (the best athlete in the NFL) and James Hasty. The safeties are young and can use a sizable athlete like Warfield.

Even Warfield, who said he had been on pins and needles waiting to see where he would go, knew he went to a good team.

"The Chiefs are right there," Warfield said. "They're always one of the best teams and have great coaches and players."

The big signing bonus is nice, but it's also good to be picked up by someone who can contend. Three years ago, Ki-Jana Carter was picked up by hapless Cincinnati, where he has floundered.

That same year, Curtis Martin scored big with New England. Terrell Davis went to Denver. One went to the Super Bowl, the other was its MVP.

Now shift that focus to first-round pick Grant Wistrom. Sure, he might be getting the big cash and post-draft interview, but he's going to that other team in Missouri - St. Louis.

Wistrom is joining a good defense, as the Rams defensive corps kept them from being the worst team in the NFL.

But it's destined to be a long season for the Rams and Wistrom. Grant will play well next year, but I'm afraid losing could be a habit for him.

Jason Peter's in a better situation with Carolina. He'll be playing beside Sean Gilbert, the NFL's highest-paid defender. Peter will get his knocks, but he'll perform and so will the Panthers.

The other three drafted: Ahman Green, Scott Frost and Aaron Taylor will all get shot to play with Seattle, the Jets and Indianapolis, respectively. Frost's situation is the best though: He gets to play for the Big Tuna (Bill Parcells).

For my money, though, Warfield fell in with a good team and solid track record. He may not be Rookie of the Year next season, but he could be wearing a big ring with jewels on it.

Of course, Kansas City has to get by the Raiders first. And they got Charles Woodson.

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**Spring Football '98**

## 3 battle for QB position

BY SAM MCKEWON  
Senior Reporter

When asked how bad he wanted the starting quarterback job, Nebraska sophomore Bobby Newcombe looked down and took a moment to measure his words.

His answer showed his want for the job and his commitment to the position.

"I wouldn't be competing for this job a second time if I didn't want it," Newcombe said. "I want to be the quarterback. That's it."

Frankie London got the same question. His answer was short, but just as focused.

"I want the job bad," London said. "Real bad."

Such is the race for the most visible position on the Nebraska football team.

Most recently, a third player has been added to the chase for the quarterback position. Redshirt freshman Eric Crouch, who started spring as the No. 5 quarterback, has taken snaps with the first-team offense and is battling Newcombe and London for the job.

Quarterbacks Coach Turner Gill said he had wanted to have a clear-cut starter by the end of spring practice.

But now, as spring practice comes to a close this week, Gill, without revealing who's ahead, said the race is close enough to hold over until fall.

"We've got three guys who are all very capable," Gill said. "We'll look back at every scrimmage, and hopefully we'll have a guy going into fall."

"That's not to say that it might not change then. You don't know who's going to get hurt or play well."

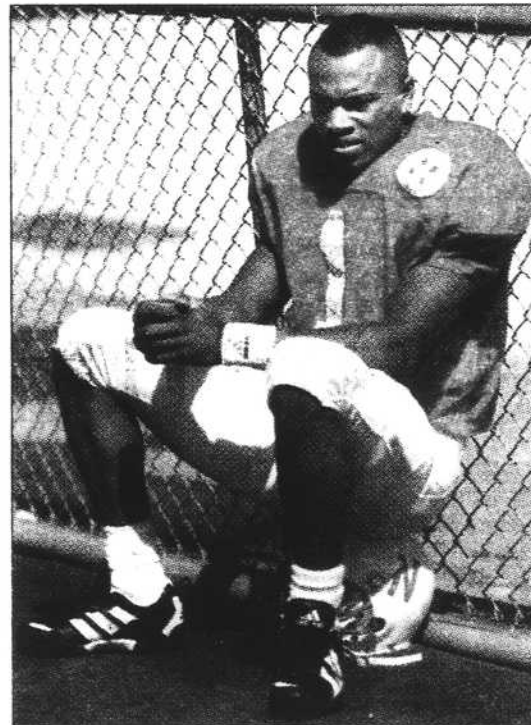
Gill said that London came into the spring as the leader because of experience but that all three players have "No. 1 quarterback ability."

It would seem Newcombe has taken the lead in the race. Monday, Head Coach Frank Solich said Newcombe graded out the best in last Saturday's scrimmage.

But there's more to the quarterback story than just who gets the job.



THE TOP THREE contenders for the starting quarterback position are freshman Eric Crouch, above, sophomore Bobby Newcombe, left, and junior Frankie London.



## The race

## is on

For one, whichever quarterback runs the team will be inexperienced, and more importantly, behind an inexperienced offensive line. Several times this spring, the quarterbacks have been swarmed under by the NU defense.

"That's part of the game," Crouch said. "Sometimes you have to throw the ball away or take a sack."

Switching positions is another wrinkle. Of the two players who are not named the starter, one of them will

likely move to another position.

Newcombe has already said he will move back to wingback, which he played last year, and London said he'd be open to playing a different role.

"We want to have two of these three guys on the field at the same time next year if we can," Gill said. "We're not going to make that choice now, but

Please see RACE on 10

## Ninth-inning rally helps NU avoid sweep

BY SAM MCKEWON  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska Baseball Coach Dave Van Horn said he couldn't have slept if Texas Tech had swept the Cornhuskers Tuesday.

Thanks to two timely bunts and a season-best performance by pitcher Peter Lythgoe, Van Horn got to rest easy, as NU won the second game of a two-night doubleheader 2-1 against the No. 25 Red Raiders in front of 456 fans at Buck Beltzer Field.

"I think we had to win the night game," Van Horn said. "We had played well enough to win them both."

In game one, NU (20-15 overall and 6-8 in the Big 12 Conference) lost in the top of the ninth when Matt Tomlin (0-1) threw a wild pitch, allowing a Red Raider to score and giving Tech (33-15

and 13-9) a 6-5 win. Shane Wright (10-1) got the victory.

But game two saw a reverse in the two teams' late-inning execution, which included two bunts in the bottom of the ninth.

With the score tied 1-1, the rally started with center fielder Scott Larsen's single to center field off of pitcher Cade Allison (1-2). Larsen was 4 for 4 in the game.

Then, Van Horn said, he "gambled" by allowing third baseman Danny Kimura to bunt. Kimura, not known for his bunting, bunted back to Allison, who was unable to throw out Larsen at second base.

"I almost thought about not doing it," Van Horn said. "But I figured that if he hits into a double play, I couldn't go to sleep knowing that."

Utility fielder Clifton Durham then pinch hit for left fielder Jeff Hedman and laid down the second straight bunt.

Miscommunication between Allison and third baseman Keith Ginter led to a third straight single.

Then right fielder Donny Starkins got his third game-winning hit in two weeks taking a fastball into center field.

"Clifton and Danny made it pretty easy for me," Starkins said. "I hadn't seen a fastball, and I knew it was coming so I just waited for it."

Tevis Arnold (1-1) got the win for the Huskers, but it was Lythgoe, pitching 7 2/3 innings of one-hit ball, who put NU in a position to win.

"Overall it's the best I've thrown all year, definitely," said Lythgoe, who came into the game with a 6.56 earned run average. "I had thrown well in spots, but this game, I just let them get themselves out."

Van Horn said Lythgoe, who had not been past the fifth inning this season, held up well against a Texas Tech

lineup that came in hitting .332 overall.

"We were afraid he'd lose it around the fourth or fifth," Van Horn said. "But he just kept going."

The third game of the series is scheduled for today at 1 p.m. Van Horn said the rubber match, which represents NU's last game against a ranked opponent, is critical to keep the Huskers in the race for the Big 12 Conference Tournament, which selects the top six teams.

"We'd like to have this one before we go on the road," Van Horn said. "We just want to find a way into the Big 12 Tournament."

One player who Van Horn said may not play today is first baseman Ken Harvey, who sat out the second game because of a back injury.

"It's really hurting him right now," Van Horn said. "It almost locked up on him running to first base. It hurts us not to have him."