

## Big 12 Notebook

Big 12 teams are abundant in preseason football and volleyball polls. The Nebraska football team is ranked No. 4 in the Associated Press poll and No. 3 by the USA Today/coaches poll. Kansas State is ranked sixth in both polls, the highest preseason ranking ever for the Wildcats.

Texas A&M is No. 14 in the coaches' poll and No. 15 in the AP. Oklahoma State, Texas, Colorado and Missouri all received points.

Nebraska also heads up the list of Big 12 teams in the USA Today/coaches volleyball poll. The coaches have NU at No. 5 to begin the year. Texas is at No. 9, followed by Colorado at No. 12. Texas A&M is ranked 19th. Texas Tech, Kansas State and Oklahoma all received points.

NU and A&M also are ranked eighth and 11th, respectively, in the NSCAA/Umbro top 25 soccer poll.

The recent heat wave around the Big 12 hasn't helped players during the fall two-a-day practices. Kansas State Coach Bill Snyder said the Wildcats' problems can't all be blamed on the 90-degree temperatures.

"Everybody and their brother has taken reps during two-a-days," Snyder said. "I am not overly impressed with the workouts. I am worried about our conditioning and continuity."

Missouri Coach Larry Smith has tried to keep the focus on football during fall practice, and not on the death of Defensive Line Coach Curtis Jones. Jones died of a heart attack in the end of July.

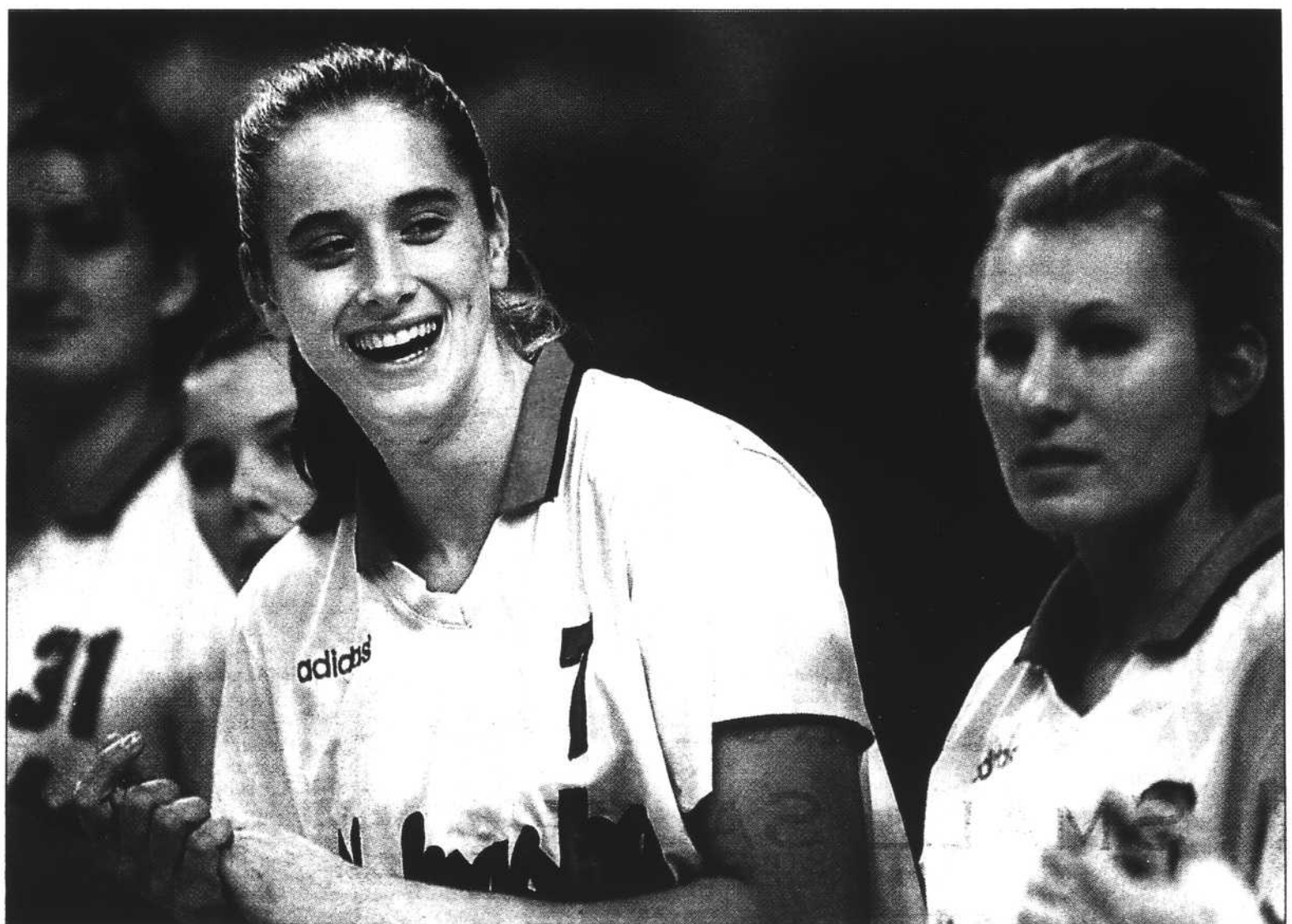
Jones was not only a coach at MU, but the father of Missouri quarterback Corby Jones. Smith said Corby Jones and the rest of the Tigers are doing well despite the loss.

"The fact that (Corby) is with his teammates is good," Smith said. "I think football has been a good therapy for him."

Baylor and Iowa State both dipped into junior colleges to recruit players for this year. ISU Coach Dan McCarney brought in 18 junior college players to Ames this season. Four of them are going to start for the Cyclones this fall, and another seven are in the two-deep depth chart. Baylor Coach Dave Roberts said recruiting those players can make a team a success.

"They can help you by getting in and playing right away," Roberts said. "Some of the guys we have this year are doing really well."

Big 12 notebook is compiled by staff writer Jay Saunders.



MATT MILLER/DN

NEBRASKA SOPHOMORE outside hitter Nancy Meendering looks to fill the shoes of three-time All American Lisa Reitsma for the NU volleyball team this season. Meendering and Reitsma both hail from the same town in Iowa.

## Meendering arrives as hitter

By SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Senior staff writer

### Looming Lefties

Right-side hitter Nancy Meendering draws comparisons to former NU All-American Lisa Reitsma, who played the position for the past four seasons. The following is a run-down of both Reitsma and Meendering's freshman season.

	Yr	Games	Kills	K/GM	Err.	Att.	Hit pct.	Aces	Blocks	Digs	Assists
Reitsma	1994	30	29	0.97	5	49	.490	0	8	2	2
Meendering	1997	44	46	1.05	24	106	.208	2	17	17	2

The Cornhuskers are counting on Meendering, along with sophomore Katie Jahnke, to fill the void left by Reitsma on the right side of the court.

"I feel like I want to play a bigger role, and with Lisa (Reitsma) gone, I hope I can," Meendering said. "That's not only in my play. I want to take on a more vocal role, too. She left some big shoes to fill, and I hope I can fill them."

Meendering showed her potential to do so as a freshman in 1997. Although she saw limited action playing behind Reitsma last season, Meendering did play in 14 of 16 conference matches and posted 46 kills and 16 block assists.

Meendering emerged from Reitsma's shadow Oct. 24 against Baylor in Waco, Texas, pounding a career high 10 kills with a .615 hitting percentage.

"She's just a stud. She hits the ball harder than anybody I've ever seen."

FIONA NEPO

NU setter on Nancy Meendering

Several fans didn't recognize Meendering's name until her performance at Baylor. But NU setter Fiona Nepo said Meendering

Please see VOLLEYBALL on 10

## Buckhalter gets starting nod at I-back

By DAVID WILSON  
Senior staff writer



Solich

Nebraska Head Coach Frank Solich and Running Backs Coach Dave Gillespie made the decision after learning Friday that sophomore DeAngelo Evans likely will miss the first three games of the season with

a knee injury. Evans had arthroscopic knee surgery Saturday.

The decision brought an end to a three-way race for the starting I-back spot that began last spring when former Husker Ahman Green opted to forgo his senior season and was drafted by the NFL's Seattle Seahawks.

Dan Alexander, who also was contending for the position, will be the No. 2 I-back when NU takes the field Saturday at 3:08 p.m. against Louisiana Tech, Solich said.

"I was aware of the situation that when DeAngelo Evans went down, the coaches might look to me to step up," said Buckhalter, also a sophomore. "I've been trying to stay focused and have a positive attitude."

As a true freshman last season, the 6-foot, 225-pound Buckhalter ran for

311 yards on 54 carries behind Green. The effort, which was granted partially because of injuries to Evans and Jay Sims, proved to be the ninth-best rushing season by a freshman in NU history.

"I think Correll has all the skills we look for in terms of a running back," Gillespie said. "He has excellent speed. He can run people over, but can also make people miss."

Alexander, who tore his anterior cruciate ligament in the 1997 Spring Game, was limited to 74 yards on 16 carries in six games. The 6-0, 250-pounder did not play in the Huskers' first three games last season, still recovering from his injury.

Both Solich and Gillespie said ball control and experience played a factor in the decision to start Buckhalter.

"I think Correll has been a little

more consistent in taking care of the ball," Solich said.

"We feel comfortable with Dan, and Dan will play. We'll just see how it goes."

Buckhalter said he has concentrated on ball control all through fall camp.

"That's one of my main focuses," Buckhalter said, "because if you put a ball on the ground, you can't get too much done."

Evans, who Gillespie said moved to the front of the I-back pack after the first major scrimmage of the fall, said Friday he hoped to return before the Washington game Sept. 26.

Though Evans wasn't available for comment Monday, Solich said he was

Please see I-BACK on 11