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# Players await 'homecoming'

■ **Four Cornhuskers** originally from California say Saturday's game will hold extra emotion.

BY BRANDON SCHULTE  
Staff writer

The opportunity to play California this weekend in Berkeley isn't just a challenging game against a respected opponent. It holds more significance for a few Cornhuskers.

Four Huskers from the state of California will have a homecoming of sorts when the two teams square off this Saturday.

Sheldon Jackson, Ralph Brown, James Sherman, and Dion Booker will have a rare opportunity to play in front of their friends and family in their home state.

Junior cornerback Brown, a three year starter and 1997 First-Team All-Big 12 honoree from Hacienda Heights, Calif., is excited about the opportunity to play in his home state.

"I'm real happy about going home to play in front of my home crowd," Brown said.

Perhaps he was referring to playing in front of his friends and family, but he could just as easily have been speaking of the 35,000 Nebraska fans expected to be in attendance.

Senior tight end Sheldon Jackson, captain and three-time letter winner from Diamond Bar, Calif., expects 15 to 20 friends and immediate family members to attend the game.

It will be the first time since the 1996 Fiesta Bowl that Jackson's mother, Frances, will have seen him play.

Jackson said he has tried not to look forward to this game too much, but may feel more pressure playing in front of friends and family members he hasn't seen since January, and some for even longer.

"I can't put extra pressure on myself or else I'll play badly," Jackson said. "After the game it will be nice to see people I haven't seen in four years."

A junior offensive lineman from LaVerne, Calif., James Sherman will have his parents, sister and extended family attending the game.

He will also have the opportunity to play against former high school all-star game teammate Derrick Gardner, who is a Golden Bear defen-

# Forgettable performance fires Cal up for Huskers

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER  
Senior staff writer

California Football Coach Tom Holmoe can't wait for the Golden Bears' game against Nebraska at Memorial Stadium in Berkeley Saturday.

Both he and his team would rather take their chances against the defending national champion than dwell

on the outcome of Cal's season opener against unranked Houston Sept. 5.

Holmoe said the Bears were lackluster in a 14-10 come-from-behind victory over the Cougars.

Cal needed a 34-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Justin Vedder to Dameane Douglas with two minutes and seven seconds remaining in the contest to avoid a loss.

But the stakes are higher for California this week. And Holmoe knows the Bears need to forget about their performance against Houston.

"The bottom line is that whenever a team like Nebraska comes in, to beat them you have to out-execute them," Holmoe said. "They have to make mistakes, you have to force mistakes, and you can't make mistakes. That is what we are looking for."

It is also what the Bears need after their mistake-filled game last Saturday.

California struggled offensively against unranked Houston. Cal racked up 5 rushing yards on 28 carries behind an inexperienced line that allowed five sacks.

"That is something we need to address immediately, and there will be some personnel changes,"

sive back.

With a large California contingent rooting for Nebraska, Sherman believes it would be intimidating to play in front of a neutral crowd in one's home stadium.

"We get a big boost from people who come out that far to root for us," Sherman said.

"We were grateful to get out of there with a win last week."

**TOM HOLMOE**  
California head coach

Holmoe said.

"We were grateful to get out of there with a win last week. Obviously on offense there were a number of things that need to be corrected and corrected soon, same with special teams."

California returned one kickoff for five yards and four punts for 40 yards. The Bears averaged 31 yards per punt.

Despite his misgivings about the first game, Holmoe did acknowledge several bright spots. Vedder completed 23 of 44 passes for 267 yards and two touchdowns.

Defensively, the Bears held Houston to 221 total yards. Junior linebacker Sekou Sanyika grabbed two interceptions for Cal, which ranks fourth nationally in pass efficiency defense after one week.

"The defense played well, but they know that playing a team like Nebraska the effort has to be as good, if not better," Holmoe said. "They need to be able to come up with more plays and more turnovers to have a chance to beat a team as powerful as Nebraska."

Holmoe expects nothing less than California's best effort against the Huskers.

"When you see a team who is that successful over time, you have a tremendous amount of respect for them," Holmoe said. "We are going to play the game and fight hard. You have to try to find areas you can take advantage of."

**Injury notes:**

Sophomore quarterback Bobby Newcombe practiced less on Wednesday than he did on Tuesday as Coach Frank Solich said Newcombe didn't move as well as he had previously.

Solich said Newcombe was more questionable than probable for Saturday's game against California.

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