

# Schwartz's style helps keep Cornhuskers loose

■ Free-wheeling attitude helps, hurts Nebraska during season play.

BY CHRISTOPHER HEINE  
Staff writer

Brooke Schwartz is such a character that her soul must look like a dressing room.



Schwartz

This unusual, Germanic nickname characterizes the junior from Gering's love of basketball and life.

She plays guard, small forward, center, cheerleader and team clown for the Nebraska women's basketball team. Ladies and gentlemen, behold the power of "The Schwartz."

Schwartz's teammates called her "athletic," "supportive," "energetic," "a joker" and "a smart aleck." "The power of The Schwartz is happiness," said Husker forward Naciska Gilmore.

Schwartz has had the opportunity this season to find good times at almost every position. The 5-9 starting guard also jumps at center on opening tips and plays small forward when the Huskers have a shorter lineup on the floor.

Gilmore enjoys watching her smaller teammate jump center against taller players. Schwartz has a team-leading 24-inch vertical leap.

"The other team is usually like 'Who's this short, red-headed chick?'" Gilmore said. "Then she goes up and gets the ball for us. It's like we're telling the other team to watch out because we have some great athletes."

Coach Paul Sanderford has called Schwartz "the best pure athlete" on the team.

Travis Schwartz, Brooke's twin brother, said his sister has always embraced athletics.

"Brooke would always be out

there playing football at recess and beating up on the guys," he said. "She has always been kind of a tomboy and that helps."

Schwartz gives her twin brother a lot of credit for her game. More so, she said she wouldn't want to live without him.

"Travis is my oxygen," she said. "We've known each other for all 21 years and nine months. He probably knows when something is wrong with my jump shot before I do."

Twin brother, who also is a manager for the Husker squad, wasn't the only person to take notice of Schwartz's abilities during her childhood.

Indiana Hoosier legend Keith Smart liked what he saw while watching Schwartz play at a basketball camp as a first-grader.

"All of the sudden this big guy came up to me and said, 'Hey, you're going to be good,'" Schwartz said. "My dad asked me later if I knew who that was, and I had no idea."

One way or another, people seem to notice the talented, fun-loving junior guard.

The power of "The Schwartz"

"The other team is usually like 'Who's this short, red-headed chick?' Then she goes up and gets the ball for us."

NACISKA GILMORE  
NU forward

seems to be at its fullest glow when rallying the home crowd by throwing her fist in the air after making a fancy, reverse lay-up with her off hand.

"I think of myself as an emotional leader on this team," Schwartz said. "When we do something good I like to go crazy and feed off our crowd."

Gilmore said the guard's spirited play serves the team well.

"She performs well under pressure," said Gilmore. "I think she plays her best ball when she's out there having fun."

"She really keeps our entire team loose."

Most of the time, Schwartz's loose-as-a-geese style has helped her on the basketball court. She has averaged 13 points and seven rebounds per game this season.

However, one wonders how a top-notch athlete like Schwartz would perform if she put on a game face like her idol, Larry Bird.

Sanderford sounds like he sometimes wonders the same thing.

"I don't think Brooke has played nearly as well as she was earlier this season," he said. "Defensively she's stopped making things happen."

"We need her to score 16 to 20 points a game. She's the type of athlete who can play at the top level."

NU guard Nicole Kubik agrees that her backcourt mate hasn't shown her full ability.

"I think sometimes she's in like an ozone," Kubik said. "She's just out there and not really concentrating. At the same time, all of these things we've been talking about make Brooke who she is."

"She's such a great person and I wouldn't really want her to change into this really intense person."

Gilmore also likes what Schwartz brings to the team.

"She's always playing around - not letting anyone get down or anything," Gilmore said.

"She's a great personality for the team because she brings so much to the table."

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## Nebraska's Van Hamburg sees life after swimming

BY BRANDON SCHULTE  
Staff writer

Sasha Van Hamburg and Adam Pine may forever be linked together as Nebraska swimmers. In July they will be linked together in marriage.

Anyone who follows the NU swimming program has heard of Pine, a two-time All-American. But few have heard of his fiancée, Van Hamburg, who has stepped out of his shadow this year.

The junior from New South Wales, Australia, has already qualified for the NCAA championships. After placing second at the Big 12 championships last year in 400-yard individual medley, she should be a force to be reckoned with this year in the event.

In fact, without Van Hamburg's talent Pine probably wouldn't have come to Nebraska. Van Hamburg and Pine came to NU as a package deal.

"A lot of times when you have two swimmers at this level, one overshadows the other," Pine said. "Sasha finds enjoyment in other things in her life. We don't live and die in swimming."

NU Coach Rick Paine first saw Van Hamburg swim at the Australian Olympic trials in 1996.

While she didn't make the squad, she was able to final in five different events.

Interestingly enough, she isn't the only swimmer in her family. Both of her parents, Roger and Diana Van Hamburg, competed in the Olympic Games as swimmers. They also swam in the 400-yard intermediate medley.

What impressed Paine on that day and continues to be a staple of Van Hamburg's swimming are her versatility and toughness.

"Look at her," Paine said. "She's not very big, she's not intimidating, you can watch her time sprints and she'll put you to sleep. But she is just an outstanding competitor. I watched her at her trials and she never gave up and finished each race as hard as she could."

Her versatility comes into play in her strongest events, the 200- and 400-yard individual medley. This race combines all four strokes, the

"Sasha finds enjoyment in other things in her life. We don't live and die in swimming."

ADAM PINE  
NU swimmer

backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle.

"She's excellent in all four strokes, but not outstanding," Paine said. "Put all of them together though and she's the best all-around swimmer at each and every meet."

Paine likens Van Hamburg to former NU swimmer and Olympian Jan Bidrman, noting their similar toughness and understanding of preparation.

Van Hamburg came to NU because it offered her a chance to swim while getting an education, something she couldn't have done in Australia.

"I saw (coming to Nebraska) as a new experience," Van Hamburg said. "It was exciting getting the chance to come here."

Van Hamburg has a positive outlook on life. Pine describes her personality as "bubbly" and "energetic," while Van Hamburg just hopes she is seen as a happy person and someone who can make others laugh. Her positive thinking also carries over to her swimming.

"Every racing experience is like a new experience," Van Hamburg said. "I love swimming. I get so much enjoyment out of the competition. I try to do better every time I get into the water to race."

After her swimming career is finished, Van Hamburg, an advertising major, wants to return to Australia and eventually run her own agency. But that doesn't rule out a return stateside.

"Here in Nebraska everyone is so friendly," Van Hamburg said. "I consider Lincoln a second home."