



SPORTS

Freshman leader

It sounds like an oxymoron, but freshman Bryan Snyder keyed Nebraska's 19-18 win over No. 4 Iowa State in wrestling. **PAGE 7**



A & E

Writing in legal ease

Attorney and Omaha resident Richard Dooling is changing Nebraska's literary landscape with his sharp and popular novels. **PAGE 9**

MONDAY

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BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

Cloudy, light rain, high 40. Windy tonight, low 25.

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"It used to smell like money ..."

DARRYL HEGEMANN
hog farmer

Bills to tackle small farmers' pig problems

BY SHANE ANTHONY
Staff writer

On Tuesday, packers, producers and senators will fire what could be the first volleys in a legislative battle over pork, beef and economics.

The Agriculture Committee will hear testimony on four bills the committee — led by Ewing Sen. Cap Dierks — is bringing to the Legislature. At the heart of the bills, Dierks said, lies the difficulty faced by small farmers. But the bills pull few punches when it comes to meat packers, proposing new regulations for the industry.

"We're flying in the face of corporate Nebraska — corporate America, really," Dierks said. "We hope they'll develop a conscience."

From the other side of the fence,

Dick Gady, vice president of public affairs and chief economist for ConAgra, casts a wary eye.

"I would say that there's a perception that meat companies are profiting at the expense of the farmer," he said. "I can tell you that's not been the case at our company."

Each of the four bills would affect meat packers in some way.

■ LB832 prohibits packers from purchasing contract slaughter livestock without specifying a date of delivery. Also, prices paid, numbers and the animals' destinations would have to be reported to the Department of Agriculture.

■ LB833 is intended to prevent packers from custom feeding the livestock they slaughter. Dierks said the Packers and Stockyards Administration doesn't consider



ABOVE: THE LAST of hog farmer Darryl Hegemann's breeding sows fill only the last few stalls in his barn. With the lowest pork prices in years, Hegemann has kept only the sows with the best genetic qualities.

TOP: DARRYL HEGEMANN, left, and his nephew Craig Hegemann look over empty hog pens on Darryl Hegemann's farm near Howells. Darryl Hegemann said he cut his production in half because of the falling market prices. "I thought I could stay in this business 'til my kids got out of school," he said. "But prices are going to have to double again before we can break even."

relationships between packers and custom feedlots, by themselves, to violate federal law. LB833 would characterize that practice — except on family farm corporations — as anti-competitive and prohibit packers from owning, feeding or keeping livestock intended for slaughter.

■ LB834 would require labeling of any meat product imported into the United States or produced from animals shipped into the country.

■ LB835 would prohibit price discrimination based on quantity.

Packers could offer different prices based on quality or acquisition costs such as transportation.

Steve Cady, executive director of Nebraska Pork Producers, said his organization supports leveling the playing field. Conglomerates are buying independent producers, he said. Farmers with smaller operations provide good meat, he said, but they can't get good prices.

"We want to be paid for the qual-

Please see **FARMS** on 6

Ireland sentence: 15-20 years

■ In an emotional statement, the defendant apologizes to the family of Laura Cockson for her death in March.

BY JOSH FUNK
Senior staff writer

Laura Cockson's friends and family can finally focus on her memory now that the man responsible for her death is on his way to prison, her best friend said.

Ten months ago, the Cockson family was thrown into turmoil when the car Jeffrey Ireland was driving slammed into the Pontiac Grand Am Laura Cockson and her two sisters were riding in, killing Laura and critically injuring her sisters Sarah and Erin.

At the sentencing hearing Friday afternoon, Bob Cockson told the court of the trauma the family went through the night of the accident. He asked the judge to give Ireland the maximum of 20 years for taking his daughter's life.

Lancaster County District Court Judge Karen Flowers sentenced Ireland to 15 to 20 years in jail. With credit for almost a year of time served, Ireland will be eligible for parole in 6½ years.

Flowers said the sentence should not be a measure of Laura Cockson's life; it should be based on the offense.

One of the most shocking things in

Please **IRELAND** on 2

RHA



RHA votes to let non-honors students stay

BY BERNARD VOGELSANG
Staff writer

The Residence Hall Association voted Sunday to recommend to University Housing that the 25 non-honors students now living in Neihardt Residence Center be allowed to stay there until they graduate.

The vote was in response to part of a new housing policy that would deny further residency to non-honors students now living in Neihardt.

The new housing policy will make all non-honors students now living in Neihardt move out before the fall of 2000.

Patrice Berger, director of UNL's Honors Program, said he would be involved in addressing the recommendation.

But the new housing policy is neces-

Please see **RHA** on 2