

Sports Opinion



Sam McKewon

Recruiting tapes sheer fun to watch

So we shuffle into the film room. David Wilson, Adam Klinker, I and all the other reporters, to behold one of the perks of being a sportswriter.

It's after the Frank Solich press conference concerning the 22 recruits the Nebraska football team signed on Wednesday. (It's the regular old song and dance: NU got plenty of good players, lots of linemen, they're very big).

But the film room, that's the perk. We get to see tape of these 22 players, sort of a sneak peek of the future starters at Nebraska. And these tapes are a little bit of everything. And, when you get right down to it, damn funny.

There was Solich, laser pointer in one hand, remote in the other, guiding us reporters through the good and the bad of each player. Mostly good.

And the tapes were mostly bad. A couple of them, you couldn't discern who was who. A white arrow was needed, especially with linemen.

"See, some of these things are from ground level," Solich said. "So you can't see a whole lot."

The worst tape was the one of Patrick Kobongo of Montreal. It looked like a video game, all fuzzy and done with a digital camera. Another bad tape was the one of Tim Green, which made the field at Westside High School in Omaha look pink.

Beyond that, the tapes show a cross-section of every type of football field in America. The recruits from Hawaii play at the Aloha Bowl in Honolulu. And then there's quarterback recruit Jammal Lord's field in Bayonne, N.J.

It was two separate fields, actually. One had a wall directly - I mean inches - behind the end zone. Hence, the end zone went uphill. Not a couple of inches. About 4 or 5 feet. It was surrounded by apartment buildings.

The other was Bayonne's home field, or so I think. As Lord galloped into the end zone, there were road barricades just off the field of play. About 10 of them. You know, like the kind you'd see on the highway.

"I don't know why there's barricades there," Solich said as he rewound the tape to see them again.

John Dawson's tape had a super-slow-motion feel to it, as though I was watching a John Woo movie or something. Solich informed us his father made it. It came along with music and "a whole lot of other stuff."

But, seriously, there was some good playing on those tapes, too. Josh Davis and Robin Miller? Amazing. Solich compared Miller to Mike Rozier and one could see a little of that. Davis is about as fast as they come.

And the best perk of all is seeing those players in action. If anything, your knowledge, and your sense of humor, goes up a little bit for one day.

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NU holds off Buffs in close win

Hamilton dominates inside game

By **BRANDON SCHULTE**
Staff writer

BOULDER, Colo. - With three minutes and 44 seconds left to go, the Colorado mascot, Chip, made a choking gesture toward the NU men's basketball team's bench. And choke the Huskers nearly did.

But NU held off a late-surging CU 57-52 in front of 5,075 fans at the Coors Events Conference Center.

Nebraska improved its record to 14-8 overall and 6-3 in the Big 12 Conference, while Colorado dipped to

11-11 and 2-7.

"Road wins are road wins," NU Coach Danny Nee said. "It was ugly, rough and a hard-played game. Colorado really fought back in the second half."

Colorado Coach Ricardo Patton tipped his hat to the Huskers, saying they executed both offensively

and defensively.

"I do believe the better basketball team won tonight," Patton said. "We were playing catch-up all night long."

Nebraska, led by senior center Venson Hamilton's 14 points on 7-7 shooting and NU's 56.5 percent overall shooting for the half, jumped out to a 29-18 lead at halftime. Colorado hit 6 of 33 shots in the first half, good -

Nebraska	57
Colorado	52

well, actually bad - for 18 percent.

In the second half, NU went up by 15 at 43-28 with 14:08 left to play on a Cary Cochran 3-pointer. CU answered with a 12-1 run to cut the lead to 44-40, sparked by CU's Kenny Price, who had 16 points overall.

Aided by NU's poor shooting in the second half, CU held the Huskers to three baskets in the first 12:29 of the second half. In the end, however, free throws sealed the victory.

Nee said at one point he thought that missed free throws might haunt the team. NU was 16-24 in the second half at the line, but only 18-30 overall.

"We were really concerned about missed free throws," Nee said. "But down the stretch we made the ones we had to make."

The Buffs got the lead down to three at 55-52 with 1:43 to play, but got no closer as Chad Johnson and Andy Markowski hit free throws to ice the Husker win.

Hamilton led all scorers with 22 points and 11 rebounds. It was his 11th double-double this season and eighth in nine games. He had three blocked shots. Hamilton controlled CU's shorter inside players.

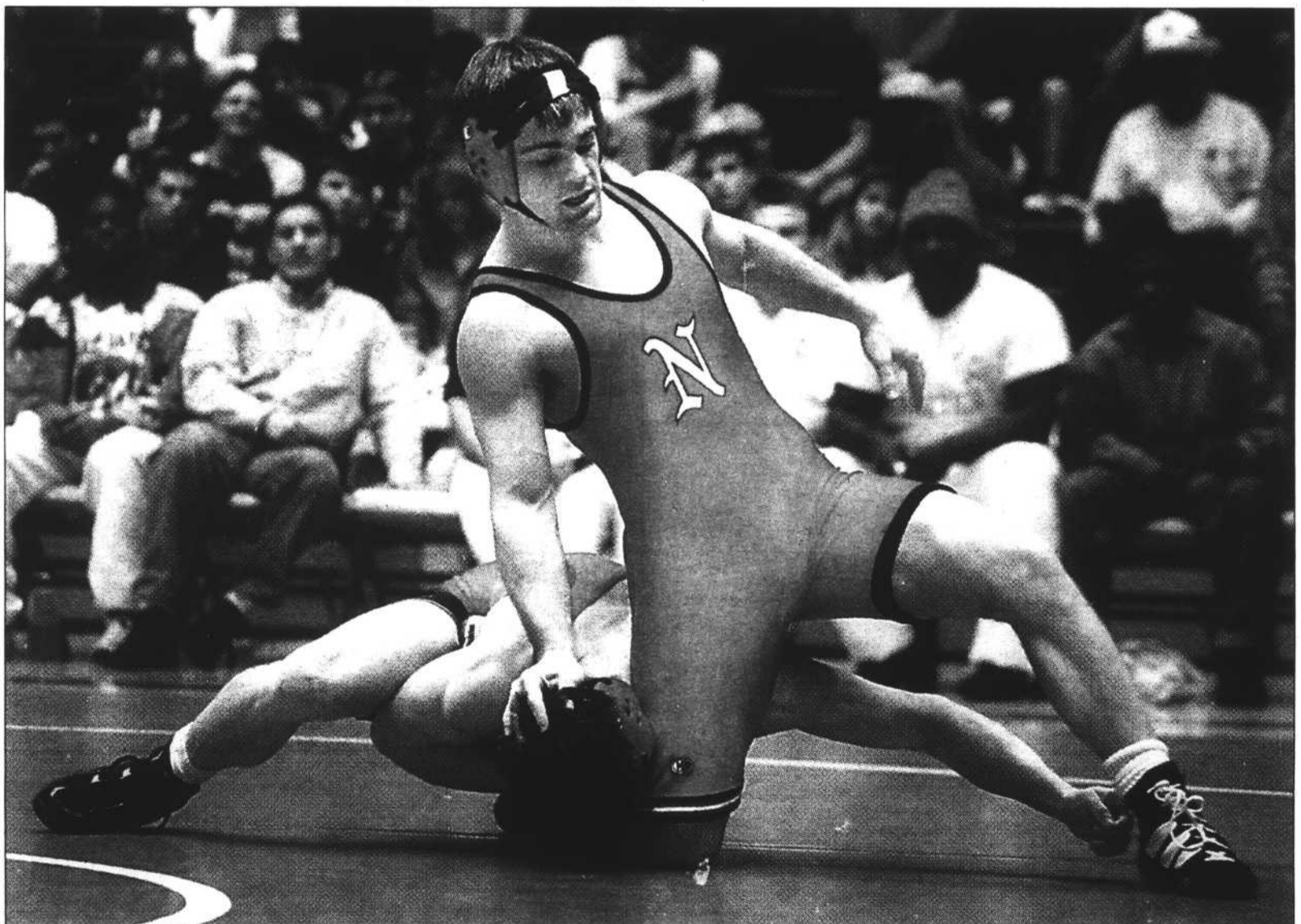
"I got the ball in the low post and was able to turn and shoot over them," Hamilton said.

Nee said Hamilton intimidated Colorado with his defensive play.

"Because of his height and his long arms, he was able to change a lot of shots," Nee said. "He was a very positive contributor on the defensive end tonight."

The Huskers now move on to play Missouri at 3 p.m. Saturday at the Devaney Sports Center.

Gomez, NU gear up for Oklahoma dual



RYAN SODERLIN/DN

UNL FRESHMAN JOE HENSON, a 149-pounder, tries to escape from a takedown attempt by an ISU wrestler last Sunday. He and the other UNL wrestlers will be putting it on the mat when they grapple with Oklahoma today.

By **LISA VONNAHME**
Staff writer

Paul Gomez considers the No. 6 Nebraska wrestling team to be a secret.

"Nobody really knows about us," said Gomez, the sixth-ranked, 125-pounder for the NU grapplers. "Teams don't know who we are until they wrestle us."

While Gomez believes the Cornhuskers are unknown to the wrestling world this season, he might also say the same about himself.

Gomez, a junior from Castroville, Calif., has found himself without competition during the last three weeks as he has wrestled just once since the National Duals on Jan. 16.

Since then, the Huskers have competed in five duals, four of which Gomez won by forfeit.

"I really want to get on the mat," Gomez said. "It's been so long since I've wrestled against someone who's pretty good."

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PAUL GOMEZ
NU wrestler

Today, Gomez will get his chance to wrestle someone who is "pretty good" when Nebraska (14-5 overall and 1-3 in the Big 12 Conference) takes on conference rival No. 4 Oklahoma (12-3-1 and 0-1-1) in Norman, Okla., at 7:30 p.m.

In a key match of the dual, Gomez (15-2 overall and 12-2 in dual competition) will return to competition against OU's fourth-ranked Shane Valdez for a match that Gomez has been waiting for.

"It doesn't matter that I haven't wrestled for a few weeks, and now I have the No. 4 guy," Gomez said.

"I've been training hard, and I just want to get out there and wrestle."

Gomez admitted that rankings and records aren't something he thinks about too often. He used his match earlier this season with No. 3 Jeremy Hunter of Penn State as an example of why he doesn't focus on rankings.

"I got off to a 4-1 lead, and all of the sudden it just hit me," Gomez said. "I started thinking, 'This is the

Please see **GOMEZ** on 10