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NU soccer team has championship hopes

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ing six teams ranked in the preseason top 25. That list includes No. 2 Santa Clara, No. 3 Portland and No. 4 All of those games will be played

in the first month of the season. "I don't want anyone to come up at the end of the regular season saying, 'Your schedule wasn't tough

enough," Walker said. "We'll see if that can help us come NCAA tourna-

This season the Huskers, ranked eighth in the NSCAA poll, are not short on talent. NU returns eight starters from last year's 17-4-1 team. Three All-Americans dot the Husker

Senior Lindsay Eddleman, the leading returning scorer from last season, may be expected to provide the offensive spark furnished last year by Kim Engesser, who scored a team-record 27 goals.

But Walker said he is not necessarily looking for a player to fill in where Engesser left off.

"A more likely scenario is you'll see more balance in an attacking standpoint," Walker said. "I don't expect any drop-off in offensive pro-

The defensive side of the field has All-Americans as well. Seniors Isabelle Morneau and Sharolta Nonen spent the summer playing for the Canadian national team in the Women's World Cup. Joining them in the World Cup was junior Karina LeBlanc, who is back for her second

Also returning is junior Jenny Benson. The Huntington Beach, Calif., native spent all of last year on the bench with a knee injury.

Now, the former All-Big 12 player will be back on the field.



Top 25 College Rankings Rank/Team 1998 Record 1. North Carolina 2. Santa Clara 25-1-0 22-1-1 3. Portland 4t. Connecticut 19-3-2 21-2-2 4t. Florida 6. Penn State 26-1-0 21-4-1 7. Notre Dame 8. Nebraska 21-3-1 16-4-1 16-2-2 9. Dartmout 10. William & Mary 16-3-2 11. Hartford 17-5-0 12. Clemson 16-7-0 13. San Diego S 19-3-1 14. BYU 20-5-0 15. Michigar 16. UCLA 14-7-1 17-4-17. Baylor 18. Virginia 19. Vanderbilt 15-5-13-7-2 17-6-0 16-5-1 20. Northwestern 21. Stanford 22. Georgia 23. Wake Fore 11-7-2 13-6-2 13-7-1 24. Southern Cal 25. Harvard 14-7-12-5-1

MATT HANEY/DN

"Personally," Benson said, "I'm way pumped to be here. It's fun to be back playing and (my knee) doesn't hurt at all."

Walker is certainly not used to seeing healthy players early in the season. Walker said this year there were no major injuries to report upon entering training camp.

And with games against three top-5 teams, Walker said his team's health could be a huge advantage.

"For the first time in four years, our returners are healthy, and I feel good about the experience they bring back," Walker said.

"Athletically, this is probably the best group we've had at Nebraska."

Personally, I'm way pumped to be here. It's fun to be back playing and (my knee) doesn't hurt at all."

> JENNY BENSON NU junior

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5	chedule 🔐
Aug. 20	Nebraska-Omaha (exhibition)
Aug. 22	Intersquad Scrimmage
Aug. 27	Texas Tech
Aug. 29	Baylor
Sept. 3	Oral Roberts
Sept. 5	at Kentucky
	Husker File Initational
Sept. 10	vs. Connecticut
Sept. 12	vs. Portland
Sept. 17 Sept. 19	at Stanford
Sept. 19 Sept. 24	vs. Santa Clara Tulsa
Sept. 24	at Clemson
Oct. 1	at Texas A&M
Oct. 3	at Texas
Oct. 8	Denver
Oct. 10	at Colorado
Oct. 15	Kansas
Oct. 17	Missouri
Oct. 22	at Okalhoma
Oct. 24	atDSt.
Oct. 29	Iowa State
Nov. 3-8	Big 12 Tournament
Nov. 10	NCAA Tournament 1st Round
	NCAA Tournament 2nd Round
Nov. 20-21 Dec. 3-5	NCAA Tournament Quarterfinals 1999 Women's College Cup

MATT HANEY/DN



