

**Sports Opinion****Iowa worse off than Huskers****Brandon Shulte**

Two teams, two states and two directions. The only two things the Nebraska and Iowa football teams have in common are suspended receivers and a matchup on Sept. 4.

When Nebraska takes the field against Iowa on that date, the Cornhuskers won't be the only team with a key loss at the receiver position.

NU wingback Shevin Wiggins will not participate in that game or possibly any other this year: He faces a criminal charge of sexual assault of a child.

With the loss of Wiggins, Nebraska loses the experience of a

five-year player — but more importantly, NU loses the 22 receptions for 326 yards, which both ranked second on the team last year. He also ranked No. 2 on the team in both punt and kick returns.

What on earth will Nebraska do?

Plug someone else in, just as they have every year. In the spring, NU coaches thought Wiggins was gone for good until he received a last-minute sixth year of eligibility.

The three players listed at No. 2 on the depth chart — seniors Sean Applegate and Frankie London and junior John Gibson — will be more than enough to fill Wiggins' shoes.

And no one can tell me that there aren't more than enough athletes to return kicks until Joe Walker returns later in the year. The combination of Keyuo Craver, Mike Demps, DeJuan Groce and Larry Henderson will get the job done.

Iowa faces a very similar suspension situation but not such a rosy outlook.

Not only does first-year Coach

Kirk Ferentz take over for a ball club that was 3-8 last year, he does so without his top receiver/return man, Kahli Hill.

Hill, son of former NFL receiver J.D. Hill, was suspended for the entire 1999 season for violating unspecified team rules.

He shined for the Hawkeyes last year during his redshirt campaign at both positions.

Widely considered to be Iowa's most exciting returning player, Hill caught 35 passes for 432 yards and two scores — all ranking first on the team.

But he may be missed more on special teams, where he scored three touchdowns last fall. Hill ranked No. 18 nationally in kickoff returns with a 25.8-yard average while leading the Hawkeyes in punt returns with a 17.7-yard average.

What will the Hawkeyes do? Probably lose and lose big, but not just to Nebraska. Iowa's rushing game, which ranked fourth from last nationally last year, probably won't pick up the slack.

And with the likes of Bashir Yamini, Kevin Kasper, Ryan Barton, Chris Oliver and Tim Dodge waiting in the wings, strong receiver play probably isn't going to turn the Hawks' dismal record around, either.

So Nebraska shouldn't worry about losing Wiggins. Instead, NU should be thankful it isn't in the same situation as Iowa.

**Brandon Shulte** is a sophomore news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan staff writer.

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Big 12

**Steele brings hope, new attitude to BU**

**BY JAY SAUNDERS**  
Staff reporter

*Editor's note: This is the first story of an 11-part series exploring Nebraska's opposing football teams in the Big 12 Conference.*

There is a new coach and a new atmosphere this summer in Waco, Texas.

The big question is: Will it be the same old Baylor?

Former Nebraska and Carolina Panthers Assistant Coach Kevin Steele is the new head man at Baylor, following the firing of Dave Roberts.

Steele inherits a team that is used to finishing in the bottom of the Big 12 Conference. In fact, over the last three years, Baylor has compiled a 3-21 conference record.

But if Steele has his way, things will be changing — and soon.

"The thought that we don't have good enough talent to win at Baylor is wrong," Steele said. "We have to create an environment and teach them first and foremost not to beat themselves."

In 1998, Baylor ranked last in both total offense and total defense in the Big 12.

If Steele and the Bears have something going for them this season, it may be the return of 17 starters (seven on offense and 10 on defense).

Headlining that pack is a pair of defensive backs. Junior Gary Baxter was a second-team All-Big 12 selection last year. Joining Baxter in the secondary will be senior Rodney Smith, who led the team in tackles last season.

But Smith will be making the move from strong safety to the defensive line. Smith said the move doesn't bother him, but losing does.

"Losing can make anybody frustrated," Smith said. "Hopefully, we can come out and make some changes right away."

On the offensive side of the ball, the Bears have two quarterbacks with starting experience. Senior Jermaine Alfred and junior Odell James will be competing for playing time.

With no one returning from last year's wide receiver corps, however, Baylor may look to attack on the ground.

The Bears' running game ranked

**"Everyone has faith in Coach Steele. It is amazing to see the difference."**

**JOE JACKSON**  
Baylor sophomore

last in the conference last season, averaging 110 yards per game.

"We have a philosophy," Steele said. "That is to physically run the football."

In the backfield, fullback Derek Lagway returns. Lagway was second on the team in rushing and tied for first in receptions. Behind Lagway is last year's leading rusher, Daryl Bush.

Though Steele is a first-time head coach, he is no stranger to running and winning.

He has also surrounded himself with proven winners on the coaching staff, including former Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier.

Often, players will say they don't prefer one coach over another. That is not the case at Baylor, where players have been seemingly open about their feelings for Steele compared to Roberts.

"We didn't necessarily have confidence in the coach (last year)," sophomore Joe Jackson said. "Everyone has faith in Coach Steele."

"It is amazing to see the difference from last year."

The jury is still out on the changes at Baylor, so it may be no surprise that the media have chosen the Bears to finish last in the south division.

The season opener at Boston College highlights Baylor's non-conference schedule, but the meat of its schedule will come against the Big 12. Since coming in from the Southwest Conference, Baylor has not won more than one Big 12 game in a season.

Steele is trying to provide a winning attitude in Waco, but road trips to Texas A&M and Kansas State may make it difficult for the Bears this season.

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