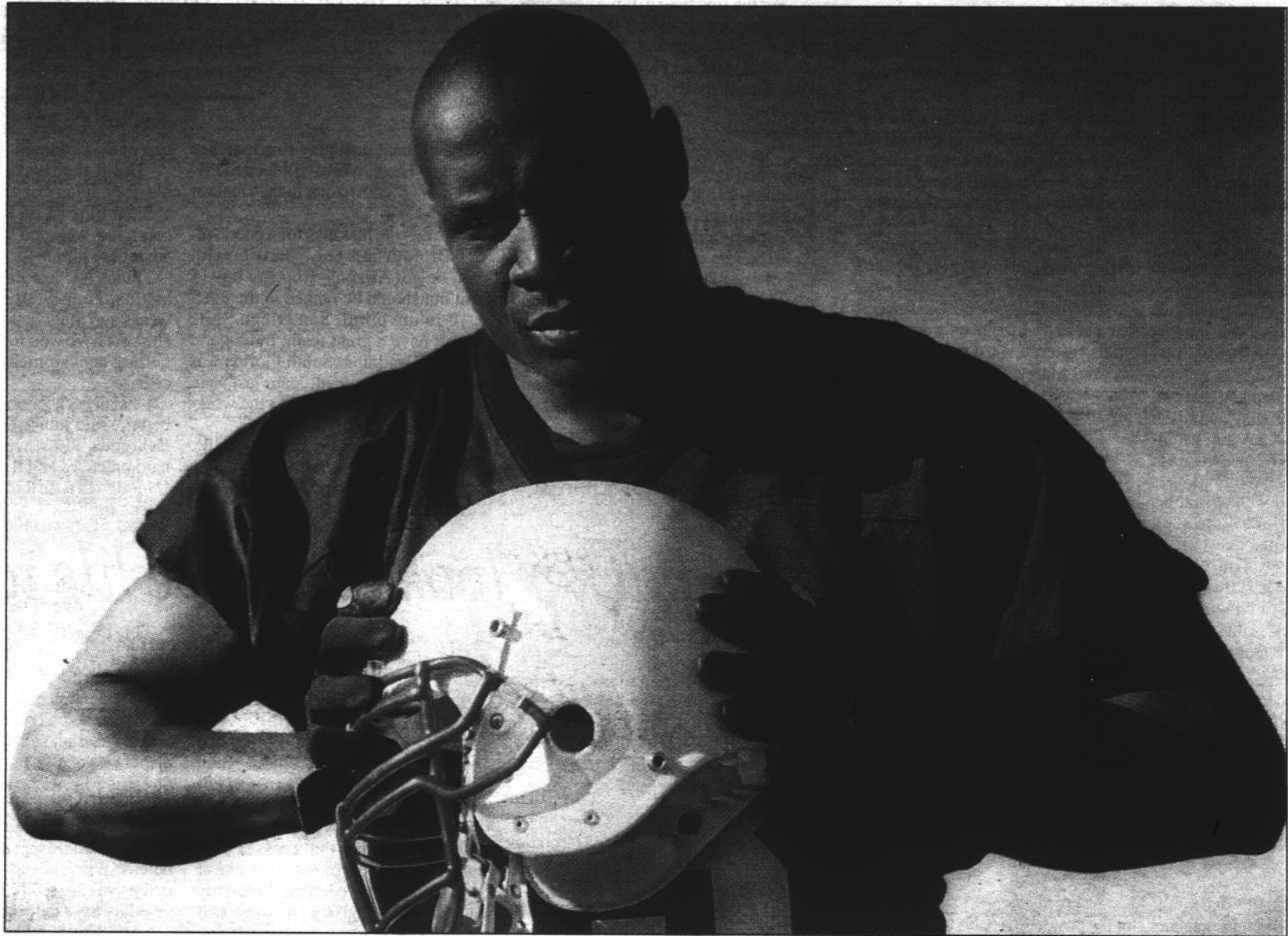


SPORTS

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CARLOS POLK, a 6-foot-2, 250-pound linebacker, said he is hoping for a break-out season.

MIKE WARREN/DN

Linebacker looks to prove his talent

By SAMUEL MCKEWON
Senior staff writer

Every so often, Nebraska middle linebacker Carlos Polk allows himself a peek at guys like Penn State's LaVar Arrington and Ohio State's Na'il Diggs.

Both preseason All-Americans at linebacker and likely top 15 picks in next year's NFL Draft, Arrington and Diggs don't differ much from Polk in terms of size, speed and agility. Polk knows it, too.

What they do have is what Polk may finally

get in his junior season with the Cornhuskers: exposure.

Waiting for it to come hasn't always been easy, but after sitting behind NU mainstay Jay Foreman for two seasons, Polk takes over at a position akin to the quarterback on offense. He knows his talent runs deep. His teammates and coaches agree.

Now all he needs, the consensus seems to be, is time.

"I have some big shoes to fill," Polk said. "But I'm ready to step up to the plate. Jay used to make all the calls in the past. I am the guy that has to make the calls now."

The 6-foot-2, 250 pounder from Rockford,

Ill., has started only one game in his career, last week's 42-7 win over Iowa. He had five tackles and one sack in about three quarters of play.

But it was the Hawkeyes' third offensive play of the game that got NU Linebackers Coach Craig Bohl's attention and a glimpse at what Polk can do as a full-time player.

On a draw play on third and nine, Polk initially blitzed the quarterback. But then he spotted Hawkeye running back Ladell Betts slipping into the open. Polk stopped, turned 90 degrees and then chased down Betts from behind for no gain.

"He had enough speed and he had the instinct to take the right angle to be able to make the play,"

Bohl said. "Those things are skills that are uniquely possessed by only a few linebackers."

Polk laughed as he recalled the play. "Linebacker chasing down a running back, that's always impressive," Polk said. "You look at it on film and you're like, 'Hey, I'm step faster than I thought I was.'"

Polk has been showing ability like that since his freshman year, when he had 32 tackles, including six tackles for loss and a sack. Last season, he had only 22 tackles but still had big plays, like his sack of Kansas State's Michael Bishop, which caused a fumble and set up an NU touchdown.

Please see POLK on 10

NU not looking past Cal

By SAMUEL MCKEWON
Senior staff writer

Blame class tests for Nebraska quarterback Bobby Newcombe's nonchalant treatment of the California defense at Tuesday's press conference.

Some West Coast reporter, via speakerphone, asked the junior starter if he remembered any Golden Bears defenders from last season.

Newcombe admitted he hadn't seen much, with two tests in his classes this week.

"Well, they've got two very highly touted linebackers," the reporter said.

"OK," Newcombe replied, and said no more as the room burst into laughter.

But make no mistake, neither Newcombe nor the rest of the Cornhusker offense is taking Cal's defense lightly. In what could be one of the best units No. 5 Nebraska faces all season, precautions and preparations have been underway all week for Saturday's 2:30 p.m., ABC-televise

Please see CAL on 10

Football Starters

Saturday, 2:30 p.m.
on ABC TV
Lincoln, Neb.
Memorial Stadium



Nebraska starters

Offense				Defense			
Pos.	No.	Name	Ht. Wt.	Pos.	No.	Name	Ht. Wt.
QB	12	Bobby Newcombe	6-3 185	DE	81	Scott Wells	6-2 250
IB	4	DeAngelo Evans	5-9 215	NT	96	Steve Warren	6-2 305
FB	15	Will Miller	6-7 245	DT	95	Corey Smith	6-3 290
WB	82	Sean Applegate	5-9 185	DE	83	Kyle Vanden Bosch	6-4 270
SE	9	Matt Davison	6-1 185	OLE	98	Steve Smith	6-7 220
TE	85	T.J. DeBates	6-3 250	ILB	13	Carlos Polk	6-2 250
LT	69	Adam Jolch	6-5 320	OLE	27	Eric Johnson	6-1 215
LG	63	James Sherman	6-4 295	LC	3	Keyuo Craver	5-10 190
C	54	Dominic Nalota	6-2 295	FS	19	Corey Cray	6-0 190
RG	55	Russ Hochstein	6-4 290	ROV	21	Mike Brown	5-10 205
RT	59	Dave York	6-5 300	RC	22	Paul Brown	5-10 190
PK	26	Josh Brown	6-2 185	P	17	Dan Hadenfeldt	5-11 195

California starters

Offense				Defense			
Pos.	No.	Name	Ht. Wt.	Pos.	No.	Name	Ht. Wt.
QB	3	Michael Anderson	6-1 180	DE	58	M. Tughrugh	6-1 250
LT	60	Reed Diehl	6-4 300	NT	94	Jacob Waasdorp	6-2 270
LG	65	Brandon Lanning	6-4 295	DT	93	Jerry DeLoach	6-3 270
C	73	John Romero	6-3 320	DE	97	Andre Carter	6-4 250
RG	75	John Young	6-5 295	OLE	13	Corey Smith	6-3 290
RT	66	Langston Walker	6-8 330	ILB	99	Matt Beck	6-4 235
PK	27	Ignacio Brache	6-0 210	LC	8	Delthe O'Neal	5-11 195
WB	8	Sam Young	6-2 185	FS	20	Corey Cray	6-0 190
QB	5	Samuel Clemons	6-2 215	SS	2	Damian Marzett	6-0 210
FB	1	Will Miller	6-7 245	RC	22	Paul Brown	5-10 190
TB	4	Marcus Fields	6-2 215	P	89	Nick Harris	6-3 215

Buckhalter returns to Husker practice

By DARREN IVY
Senior staff writer

Amid rumors that he was transferring and after missing practice for three days, junior I-back Correll Buckhalter returned to the Nebraska football team Thursday.

Buckhalter, who declined to talk to reporters after practice, met with Coach Frank Solich Thursday morning and worked through any problems he had, Solich said.

However, because Buckhalter missed team meetings and practice, he won't play against California Saturday. He will return the next week against Southern Mississippi, his brother's alma mater.

"I feel good about him being back," Solich said. "He's a good person. He's a good football player, and it makes sense for him to be a part of this program."

Picks from the hicks

The Daily Nebraskan sports staff members pick the winners (in bold) of 10 college football games this weekend.

Georgia Tech	at Florida St.
Iowa	at Iowa St.
Washington St.	at Stanford
South Carolina	at Georgia
Southern Methodist	at Tulane
Alabama	at Purdue
Tulsa	at Oklahoma St.
Miami of Ohio	at West Virginia
Central Florida	at Florida
California 10	at Nebraska 35

"He's meant a lot for us. He carried a big load last year. We are glad to have him back. I think everybody is."

Buckhalter, who led NU with 799 yards last year, will remain the No. 3 I-back. He had three carries for 22 yards in NU's opener vs. Iowa.