

# SPORTS

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PAGE 9

## Overtime again, but NU falters

By MATTHEW HANSEN  
Staff writer

For the second-straight game, point guard Danny Walker found himself with the ball in his hands and the game on the line.

And, for the second-straight game, he made the most of it, banking in a 3-pointer to tie the game 86-86 with just seconds left in regulation.

The similarities between the Huskers' first exhibition game and their second ended there, though. Nebraska succumbed to Ural Great-Russia 102-98 in overtime to finish the exhibition season with a 1-1 record.

Head Coach Danny Nee said that despite the loss, there were positives for his team.

"Exhibition games are for us to be able to get in real-life situations," Nee said. "The turnovers,

the things we made mistakes on, we can build on, teach and try to get better. From that standpoint, I'm happy to have exhibition games like this because it's better than anything I can do in practice."

After trailing for most of the contest, the Huskers rallied in the closing minutes. The Russian team led by 10 points with only one minute and 27 seconds remaining, but a Cary Cochran 3-pointer, two Steffon Bradford layups and Walker's banked-in three with seven seconds remaining knotted the score at 86 at the end of regulation.

Nebraska built a small lead in overtime, then watched it evaporate as Sergei Chikalina picked up where he had left off in regulation.

Chikalina erupted for 40 points on the night. Unofficially, it was the second-highest scoring performance in a Husker men's game at the

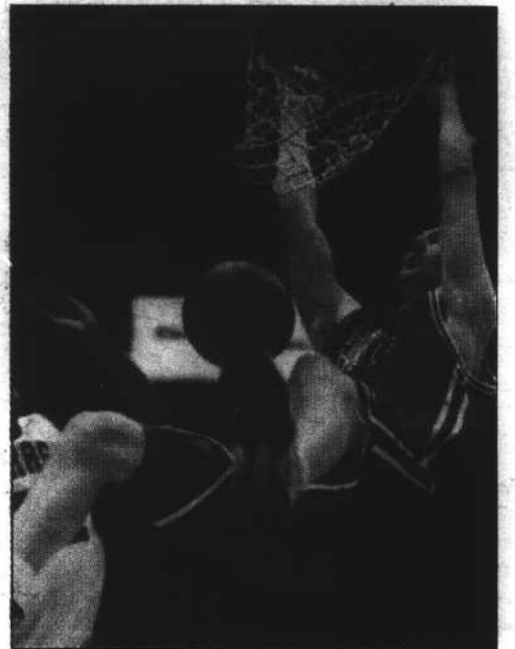
Ural Russia	102
Nebraska	98

Devaney Center. Southern California's Harold Miner scored 43 points against the Huskers in 1991.

Steffon Bradford led NU in both scoring in rebounding, as he scored 25 points and pulled

Please see NU on 11

HEATHER GLENBOSKI/DN  
**SERGEI CHIKALIN of Ural Great-Russia dunks over the Nebraska defense in the first half at the Devaney Center Wednesday night. Nebraska was upset by the Ural Great-Russia team 102-98 in overtime. Chikalina had 40 points in the game.**



## Latham strong in season's 2nd half

By BRANDON SCHULTE  
Staff writer

It was etched in stone before Christine Latham even played a minute of soccer for the fourth-ranked Nebraska soccer team: She was going to be the next Lindsay Eddleman.

"They compared me to her coming in here as a freshman. They said I was sort of Lindsay's shadow," Latham said. "But I wouldn't say I base my play on her. I would say the physical aspects of our play (are similar)."

Since Coach John Walker said Latham, a 5-9 freshman from Calgary, Alberta, was like 5-10 senior All-American Lindsay Eddleman, the leading scorer in Nebraska history, comparisons have been inevitable.

On the field, their play is indistinguishable. Both are powerful on and off of the ball, physically dominating opponents, and both have had similar success.

But during the second half of this season, 21-1-1 for the Cornhuskers, Latham has made a name for herself. She has been a productive weapon coming off of the bench, and when Eddleman was slowed by a knee injury, Latham stepped in, and NU didn't miss a beat.

She has been the hottest player on the team since the beginning of October. Latham has scored at least one point in the last 10 games. And until she was shut out against Minnesota in the second round of the NCAA tournament last Sunday, she had scored a goal in seven-straight contests.

It's not a coincidence that her scoring binge has come during the same time Nebraska has reeled off 13 consecutive wins, which include the Big 12 Conference regular season

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JOHN WALKER  
NU coach

and tournament titles.

Walker said the quality in Latham's play has improved since the Colorado game Oct. 10 when she scored two goals.

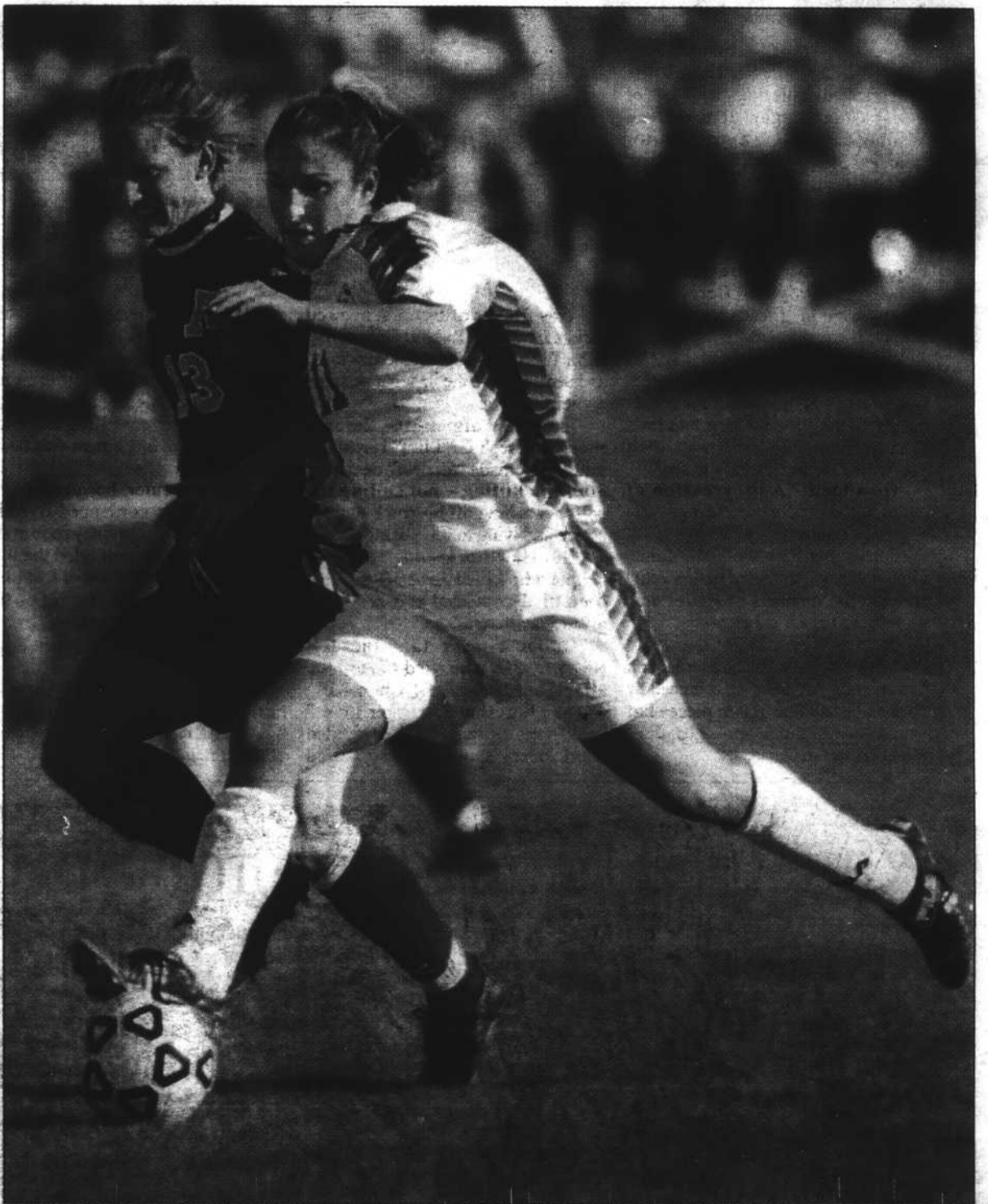
"(She is now) climatized to everything we ask her to do," Walker said. "The higher training level has helped her improve. As she has improved, her playing time has increased. And with her playing more, her production has been higher, which leads to more playing time."

Her play this year was enough to earn Second-Team All-Big 12 Conference honors. Latham said the reason for her improved play since October has been the result of rising confidence.

"The first part of the year, up to the Colorado game, I was playing a little more timid than I could have," Latham said. "I think it was because of the new surroundings and new players around me."

"But John took me aside a couple of times and said, 'Even though you are a freshman, we don't look at you like a freshman anymore. We expect you to do the things the senior players do. When you have a chance to go to a goal and make things happen, do it, and don't worry about getting stopped.' Since then I've kept trying and trying and haven't worried about mistakes."

Please see LATHAM on 11



MIKE WARREN/DN  
**NEBRASKA MIDFIELDER Christine Latham outmuscles Minnesota defender Sarah Fitzgerald to gain possession of the ball on the Minnesota half of the field during the second round of the NCAA tournament. Latham and Nebraska have been having success this season with aggressive styles of play.**

## Groce grows in reserve role, reminds NU of Ralph Brown

By DARREN IVY  
Senior staff writer

When Ralph Brown looks at freshman cornerback DeJuan Groce, he sees a younger image of himself.

Groce is the same size, has comparable speed, wants to learn and is going through the same growing pains Brown did in 1996.

With the help of Brown and Keyuo Craver, Groce has emerged as a solid contributor this season for No. 4 Nebraska with 20 tackles, two pass

break-ups and a forced fumble. He likely will see a lot of playing time against pass-happy Colorado on Nov. 26.

"My season has gone well," Groce said. "I have learned a lot. This year is just a learning experience for me—to get my feet wet a little bit. Any playing time I get is a bonus. I get nervous because I still can't believe I am out there."

Groce had hoped to come in as a true freshman and play last fall, but during the second week of two-a-days, he strained his Achilles' tendon. By the time he recovered, coaches decided a redshirt season would be best.

Ironically, it was injuries to Erwin Swiney and Joe Walker that allowed Groce to see immediate action this year. He started at nickel back against Southern Mississippi.

His play against the Golden Eagles' receiving corps impressed Brown.

"When he comes into the games, the level doesn't drop off," Brown said. "He's just as athletic and talented as the rest of us. He just needs to learn more on technique and stuff."

But in the Southern Miss game, the 5-foot-10, 190-pound Groce sprained the medial collateral ligament in his

knee. Other than the coaches and a few teammates, no one knew of the injury.

"I was wearing a brace, but I covered it up so other teams wouldn't know," Groce said. "I couldn't cut as well and I didn't have my speed."

Then Walker returned from his injury, and Groce's playing time decreased. However, in the past weeks, he has "come on again." Defensive Backs Coach George Darlington said.

The erratic playing time is one of the ups and downs of being a freshman. So, too, is learning how to pull oneself up after getting beat.

Groce said Brown had taken him under his wing since he arrived on campus from Garfield Heights, Ohio, and helped him deal with these things.

"He has been a good mentor," Groce said. "He tells me how to read different things and teaches me his secrets."

During the rest of the season, Darlington hopes to get Groce valuable experience against good teams.

"His experience as a freshman really helps us as a team as far as next year is concerned," Darlington said. "That experience of playing in front of a big crowd is really important."