

Leiter moves in NCAAs; team season over

Nebraska's Marshall Nelson finishes career on the floor, not on the sidelines

■ **Senior Derek Leiter** looking to be second NU champ in as many years.

By John Gaskins

Staff writer

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Nebraska senior gymnast Derek Leiter took some advice from the most credible

source Thursday in his pursuit for qualifying for tonight's all-around NCAA title: NU teammate and defending champ Jason Hardabura.

"Jay told me to remember I didn't have to break any records tonight," Leiter said. "Just do good enough to qualify for Friday and then see what you can do."

There were no records from Leiter, just solid enough scores that will allow him to chase destiny tonight to become

the school's 10th all-around champion.

Leiter won his division's all-around competition with a score of 57.9 in the qualifying round of this weekend's NCAA Championships at Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

The stage is now set for Leiter to follow Hardabura and keep the trophy in Nebraska's case.

"It was above average, nothing special, a little shaky," Leiter said. "I hope I can do a lot better Friday night.

It would be a dream come true to go out there and make everything happen. There will be a lot of pressure involved."

Leiter said he was hoping his teammates would join him as competitors in the team championships. But the Cornhuskers fell nearly three points short of capturing one of the three qualifying spots, finishing fifth in their six-team division with a score of 226.4. NU needed to finish in the

top three to gain entrance in the finals.

After shocking Stanford and Brigham Young at the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation championships two weeks ago, NU couldn't beat Michigan (231.925), Ohio State (229.375), Penn State (229.125) and Illinois (227.9).

The Wolverines will look to defend their national championship

Please see **LEITER** on 13

—SPORTS OPINION—

Heckler isn't just angry



Matthew Hansen

The referee blows his whistle, and the crowd groans its disapproval. A glance around the stadium reveals some are in the classic disbelief posture, hands on top of head. Others are crestfallen, dejected, saddened.

And then, from directly behind press row, a voice slams through the background noise.

"What the hell? Are you serious? ARE YOU SERIOUS! Open the eyes, you stupid son of a bitch!"

I wheel around to get a visual. The man, who looks like a Lonnie, let's call him Lon, is visibly angry. His face is contorted, red, puffy — a case study in blood flowing to where it is needed most.

And his mouth needs all the help it can get.

"Come on, Jesus Christ!" Lon screams as the teams travel to the other end of the court.

He delivers these lines with the grace and precision of an 18-wheeler barreling down I-80 at a breakneck speed.

And those within earshot react accordingly. Non-hecklers close to him lean as far away as possible. Some stare. Writers on press row mutter to themselves.

Meanwhile, one wonders about Lon, about others like him around the gym, country, world. As the game turns into a rout, and as Lon continues his assault, this curiosity helps the brain to block out Lon and begins to wander ...

... Lon's alarm clock goes off, signifying the start to a new day. The sunlight streams in under the curtain. The birds chirp, basking in

Never mind that it's just a game played on a court between 10 college kids.

the cloudless weather.

"GODDAMNIT!" Lon shrieks as he bolts upright in bed. "Why the hell do you have to wake me up, you shitty clock! Every single time! EVERY TIME!"

He hurls the clock across the room. It dents the wall near all the other dents, just to the right of Lon's NU flag and just left of his CD player. The Limp Bizkit and Rage Against the Machine CD cases fall to the floor.

Several hours later, after an incident involving an empty box of Cheerios that failed to yield any cereal, problems with a van transporting senior citizens and an incident with a calculus teacher who insisted on the use of a No. 2 pencil, Lon walks toward the union.

Or rather, he pinballs. Student after student shoot Lon angry glances as he bumps into them when he hurries past them.

Cussing a throng of high school seniors taking a campus tour, Lon swings wide to avoid them toward the Broyhill Fountain.

But the fountain is on. A typical Nebraska spring wind is blowing. And disaster is about to strike.

"You have got to be goddamn KIDDING me!" Lon screams. The right sleeve of his Coors Light T-shirt has at least four drops of water on it. Maybe five.

"You are absolutely the worst damn fountain I have ever seen! The goddamn WORST!"

Lon begins to kick the fountain's exterior repeatedly. The granite base doesn't seem to mind.

Meanwhile, more gusts of wind come up. More water splashes out-

side of the fountain.

Lon gets drenched. He doesn't seem to mind.

A sorority girl wonders: "What the hell is wrong with that guy?"

A German shepherd wonders: "What in the name of Lassie is wrong with that guy?"

A homeless man wonders: "Wonder if he just lost an inordinately large amount of aluminum cans?"

Lon doesn't notice. He just keeps cursing, yelling and kicking and kicking and kicking ...

"Hey, HEY!"

It's not Lon, it's Josh, seated to my right.

"We got a game going on here, you know," he says, pulling me back from Lon's netherworld.

The whistle blows. Traveling on the good guys. I glance back at the heckler. Nothing has changed. His jowls still shake, his finger still points menacingly and four-letter words continue to spew out of his mouth.

He lashes out, just like he did at the alarm clock, the Cheerios and the No. 2 pencil.

Never mind that it's just a game played on a court between 10 college kids.

It is the most important thing in this world at this moment to Lon. Just like the fountain was this afternoon. Just like the senior-citizen van was this morning.

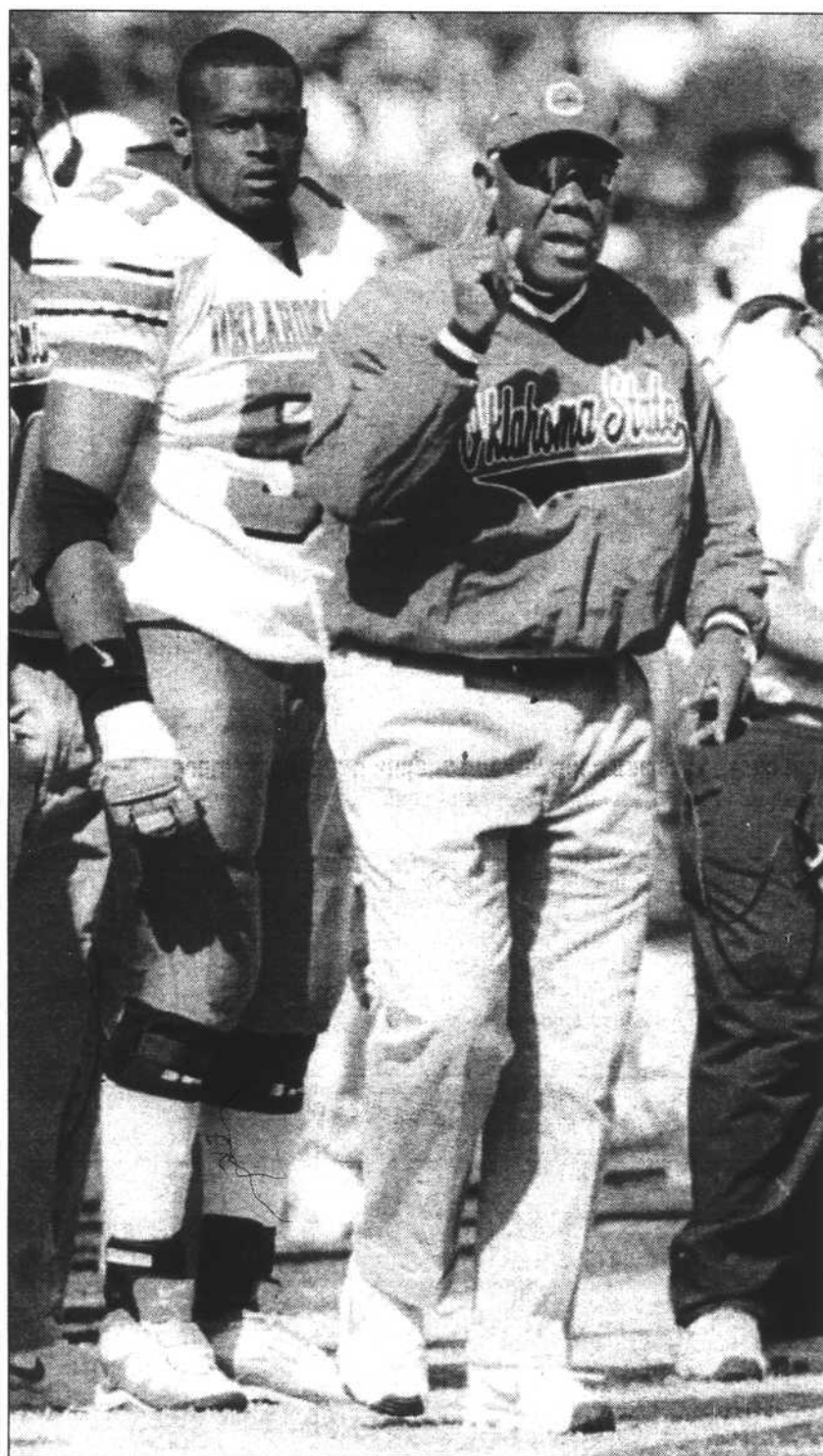
And then, suddenly, things are clear. I knew why Lon and other hecklers were hecklers.

They lacked something so important to survive besides compassion, anger management, social skills, dignity, intelligence, perspective and hearing.

They just needed someone, something, to despise with their every last skin pore. Something for which to reserve true scorn. To truly hate.

Like hecklers.

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IDN File Photo

OKLAHOMA STATE Coach Bob Simmons will lead the Cowboys into his fifth season and hopes to improve on their 5-6 record last season. OSU must replace 12 starters from last years squad, though five All-Big 12 players will return.

Cowboys welcome back healthy Lindsay, depth

By Brandon Schulte

Staff writer

Oklahoma State Football Coach Bob Simmons isn't one to take hand-outs.

It took the Cowboys' coach 20 years to receive his first coaching job after he was passed over by other schools such as Colorado, where he was the second in command to Bill McCartney.

So don't blame the fifth-year coach for asking for just a few favors as he tries to ready his program for a jump into the upper echelon of the Big 12

Conference.

As OSU attempts to replace 12 starters (six on offense, six on defense) lost to graduation this spring, Simmons joked that he wouldn't mind if Nebraska Football Coach Frank Solich directed a few players his way.

"Tell Frank to send me about four or five players on offense and defense," Simmons said.

Even though OSU and NU won't meet this season unless it is in the Big 12 title game, it's doubtful that Solich will comply.

Please see **COWBOYS** on 13

Husker bats go wild; Walker, Cope shut down Wichita State

By David Diehl

Staff writer

The Nebraska softball team got its dose of batting practice Thursday night, and it has the Wichita State pitchers to thank.

In the Cornhuskers' 11-0 and 8-0 drubbings, NU pounded out a combined 22 hits, including four home runs and five extra-base knocks.

"I feel like our team is seeing

the ball well," Coach Rhonda Revelle said. "They're all relaxed up there. When you start to score runs, it loosens them up some more. Then the hitting becomes contagious."

That being said, the Husker bats must have resembled the Black Plague.

Freshman Kim Ogee, who is filling in at the lead-off spot for the injured Jennifer Lizama, lit up the Shocker pitching for five hits in six at-bats and scored after

each plate appearance.

Ogee said she wasn't doing anything different that might have caused her explosive evening.

"It's like every other time I go up there," the Millard West graduate said. "I just stayed focused. It wasn't easier tonight, I'm just doing the same thing every time."

Though it wouldn't have appeared to fans, Revelle said,

Please see **SOFTBALL** on 13