

Ex-Huskers await Draft

■ Seven former players have chance of getting picked for the NFL Draft.

By Joshua Camenzind
Staff writer

Several former Nebraska football players will be on the hot seat this weekend as they await their fate in the NFL Draft.

The Cornhuskers have seven prospects likely to be drafted this weekend, with the foundation of the NU defense last season available.

Steve Warren, Mike Brown and Ralph Brown are all expected to be selected before the fifth round and are rated high at their prospective positions.

ESPN.com rated Warren, at 6-foot-2, 315 pounds, the sixth best defensive lineman and Mike Brown, at 5-foot-10, 205 pounds, the ninth best defensive back.

Pro Football Weekly rated Warren and Mike Brown as the 31st and 73rd best overall prospects, respectively.

Mike Brown is rated in the teens by many publications at defensive back. But he has no idea where that puts him in the draft.

"It's so wide-range," he said. "I

"I know it is going to be tough on those guys."

Frank Solich
NU football coach

am just waiting to see. I was nervous, but I am not anymore. I have talked to some other players who have calmed my nerves."



Warren

Mike Brown's mother, Susie Freedman, said he is relaxed and not apprehensive.

"I don't think it matters to him where he gets selected," Freedman said. "He just wants to get drafted and get a chance to show what he can do."

Warren is expected to be picked before both Browns but he doesn't know by whom and when.

"People have told me anywhere from No. 20 to 60," said Warren, who will watch the draft with his family in Springfield, Mo.

While Warren's stock has risen since the Fiesta Bowl, the Browns have both see-sawed on scouts lists.

George Darlington, the NU secondary coach, said scouts are human and can make mistakes.

"It is not an exact science, just like recruiting is not an exact science on our level," he said. "They both have the whole package, and whichever team is smart enough to pick one of the two will have a great player."

NU's four other prospects include Julius Jackson, Eric Johnson, Adam Julch and James Sherman. It is not clear where these players may go in the draft, but the odds are stacked against them all being taken.

"I know it is going to be tough on those guys," NU Coach Frank Solich said. "I hope those guys understand that sometimes it goes like you hope, and sometimes it doesn't."

Huskers rebound after loss to Baylor

■ Women's tennis team beats Kansas 9-0 after 8-1 loss to Baylor.

By Mike Callahan Jr.
Staff writer

When you lose 8-1, your confidence is usually down. When you bounce back with a 9-0 annihilation of your own, it's a surprise.

The Nebraska women's tennis team (17-3) kicked off this spring with a gaudy 15-1 record. But prior to Wednesday afternoon's match in Lincoln against Kansas, NU had dropped two of the last three. One of those two losses was the 8-1 shellacking by Baylor in Waco, Texas.

Senior Sandra Noetzel said the team was handled with ease but mentioned other factors.

"We did get our asses kicked," Noetzel said. "But the wind in Waco was horrible and not something we adjusted to very well."

You might say the Huskers needed to bounce back strong against Kansas (11-9). And NU did just that, pounding the shell-shocked Jayhawks 9-0 in the

team's best performance to date. Coach Scott Jacobson said he was happy with his team's resilience. "It was the most complete match we've played all year," Jacobson said, "and I don't think we've beaten Kansas in more than 10 years."

The victory was not only a key Big 12 Conference win for the team, but it was also a milestone for Noetzel. She defeated Brooke Chiller, 6-1, 6-1, to win her 100th career match.

Noetzel said she was modestly satisfied with her accomplishment.

"I'm kind of happy that it's happened for me," Noetzel said. "Someone mentioned that it might happen for me last semester, and I thought 'Oh, why not a hundred?'"

This season, Noetzel has been forced to take on the roll of leader. She is described by her teammates as a "by-example" leader.

Jacobson said her success does not surprise him.

"When she puts her mind to something, more often than not she'll accomplish it," Jacobson said.

On Saturday, NU will take its recent up and down act on the road to battle Oklahoma in Norman, Okla.

New Husker coaches work to shore up defense

By Brandon Schulte
Staff writer

In Nebraska, a state known for its conservative leanings, change isn't always a good thing.

The NU football program is a perfect example. Since 1962, three men — Bob Devaney, Tom Osborne and Frank Solich — have been the coach. And, in general, the coaching staff has had a lower rate of turnover than almost every program in the country.

But when change does occur in the Cornhusker coaching ranks, NU fans take notice.

So it makes sense that new Defensive Coordinator Craig Bohl and new Defensive Line Coach Jeff Jamrog will be scrutinized heavily Saturday when NU hits the field for the annual Red-White Spring Game.

Coach Frank Solich has been pleased with the way the defense has come together in the latter part of spring drills after working out the kinks in the early part of spring practice.

"The staff is organized on the defensive side of it," Solich said. "Craig has done a good job of leading them. They all have input, and so it's a situation where they all feel comfortable with the transition."

"And I think the players feel comfortable with it, too. It's going as well as possible."

It may be tough for both players and coaches to get comfy with the idea that McBride, former defensive coordinator

and defensive line coach, won't be strolling the NU sidelines next fall for the first time in 23 years.

"Certainly you miss a guy like Charlie that has knowledge to get the most out of players," Solich said. "I think Craig is the same way, and the staff in general will be the same way, and all of them will really gather together to get this whole thing done."

Solich wasted little time in promoting Bohl, the Huskers' linebacker coach since 1995, to defensive coordinator. And it's no wonder — Bohl had excellent qualifications. Along with being a Cornhusker player from 1977-79, he also was the defensive coordinator at both Rice and Duke prior to his returning to Nebraska.

Jamrog also played for Nebraska as a defensive end from 1983-87. Prior to his returning to his home state, he was the defensive coordinator at New Mexico State the past three seasons, after serving in a similar position at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

The ability of the new coaches to get connected with the players could play a large role in the success of next year's unit, which lost six starters to graduation.

"I think as a defensive coaching staff we feel that we have a big challenge this next fall," Bohl said. "And so we have to keep encouraging the players."

"I don't want to say we're satisfied, but we're encouraged with what we've seen so far."

Brink wins national title

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"When I found out (referring to Brink's title), all of the emotions, I could have cried," NU Coach Dan Kendig said.

Because of the setup of the Championships, the high score on the first day of the competition earns the all-around crown.

In dramatic fashion, the fifth-ranked Nebraska women's gymnastics team will live to see another day. The Cornhuskers will advance to the NCAA Super Six after placing second behind UCLA in the evening session.

The NU gymnasts found themselves down early in the competition. After a few costly falls in the first two rotations, the season seemed over.

"It was a roller coaster ride," Kendig said. "After the half-way point, we were at the bottom of the barrel."

The Cornhuskers then used a spirited performance in the balance beam, scoring a 49.1.

"Our beam team put us back in the meet," Kendig said.

The Bruins edged the Huskers by a 197.250 to 196.0 margin. With an impressive final rotation score of 49.425 in the floor exercise, the best score out of all 12 teams in the Championships, NU placed ahead of Michigan, which recorded a 195.925.

Nebraska will compete for the team National Championship crown tomorrow night, when it will face Michigan, UCLA, Georgia, Utah and Alabama in the Super Six at 8:00 p.m.

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