

## The Husker Side of the Track



Local bar is place to be on football Saturdays

*Editor's note: Today is the 12th in a series of 13 stories exploring the history of the O Street bars. The strip - which begins at 14th and O streets and runs down to Ninth and O streets - has served as a major gathering place for University of Nebraska-Lincoln students for the past 70 years.*

By Josh Nichols

Staff writer

Everyone knows Lincoln changes a little on football weekends.

The town goes crazy. And there are certain things that go hand in hand with Husker football.

This includes the Husker fight song, tailgating, football parties and the colors red and white.

All businesses in town, including bars, stores and restaurants, thrive on the craziness.

But there is one place in particular that really goes crazy and goes hand in hand with Husker football.

It is a place where people will stand in line for hours on a cold Friday night in November.

They'll also line up out front at 5 the next morning waiting for the doors to open at 8.

Then, as soon as the game is over, they'll be standing in line again.

If you haven't figured it out yet, the establishment being described is The Sidetrack tavern, the Studio 54 of Lincoln on football weekends.

Once you get inside, you won't see famous stars dancing to blaring disco music, but you will see a group of people, young and old, dressed in red and white.

They'll be slamming back beers and singing along to the tunes of the group Husker fans can't help but love, The Sidetrack Band.

"There is No Place Like Nebraska" is the song you're almost sure to hear at some point in the bar.

But that is by no means the group's limit.

Songs praising current players, such as Eric Crouch and Dominic Raiola, can be heard along with songs about former players Tommy Frazier and Ahman Green.

The group has come up with music poking fun at everyone from ESPN announcer Lee Corso to the Colorado Buffaloes and Texas Longhorns.

For 16 years, the group has been doing its thing in the Sidetrack Tavern, 935 O St. For eight years before that, the bar was located in the Haymarket where Jabrisco restaurant now stands.

"I'm getting ready for my 25<sup>th</sup> season in this

"I know some people might think 'Why be so happy over a football game?' but I think it's symbolic."

Joyce Durand

owner of The Sidetrack

bar," said owner Joyce Durand, who is also the lead singer of The Sidetrack Band.

Durand, a former liberal arts major who went to law school for a year, has been a bureaucrat and a director of budget and research at the public affairs commission, worked for the Legislature and taught school.

She decided to try her hand at running a bar 25 years ago when she opened The Sidetrack. She said she gave it its name because of its original location close to the railroad tracks.

Despite her other experiences and qualifications, she said she decided to open a bar because she thought it would be an enjoyable experience.

"I thought I'd try doing this bar thing for a while until I found something I liked to do better," she said. "I never did find anything I like better."

At least Durand said she thinks that's the reason.

"Either that or I'm lazy," she said. "I'm not sure what the real story is."

When someone owns a bar for 25 years, one might think they'd be able to identify some specific changes they have seen since the beginning, but not Durand.

The only changes she's seen are in the legal drinking age from the time she started and the fact that people today are more responsible drinkers than they were 25 years ago.

"One thing that has not changed is the kids," she said. "The kids are pretty much the same."

"I think when you spend all of those decades behind a piano taking requests, then you get a bird's eye view of society that is different from anyone else."

"I've gone through short hair and long hair and tight clothes and baggy clothes, but that's just superficial stuff. I don't think the people have changed."

Durand said the bar has had many notable



Delan Lonowski/DN

people in it.

She recalled numerous Husker football players, a former boxing champion whose name she did not remember, the governor of Kansas and possibly the most memorable for her, former Nebraska Football Coach Bob Devaney, who was in the bar numerous times throughout the years.

One particular time stuck out in Durand's mind.

"He was in here just before he became bed-fast," she said.

"We had just defeated Kansas. I saw him come in, and I got down off the piano. He was feeble."

"I asked him if he would like to come on the stage. He did, so we helped him on stage and put

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## World-renowned musician comes to Lincoln

By Jason Hardy

Staff writer

When it comes to rhythm, people either have it or they don't.

Hearing people who don't have rhythm play the drums is one of the most painful experiences ears can be put through. But hearing people who were born with rhythm perform can be something very magical.

Today, Lincoln residents have the opportunity to hear one of the world's most renowned and respected percussionists.

Raag, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln organization for the promotion of Indian classical music and culture, is presenting a performance by Zakir Hussain, one of India's top musicians of the last century.

This definitely falls under the category of "something very magical."

"This is a very big deal," said Piyush Srivastav, an officer with the Raag organization. "Lincoln is very, very fortunate to have an event like this here. We're really glad to bring such a big event."

Tonight's performance, "Masters of Percussion 2000," represents a lifetime of rhythmic studying and training on the part of Hussain, who specializes in the 500-year-old instrument,

### PREVIEW Masters of Percussion 2000 with Zakir Hussain

**WHERE:** Lied Center for Performing Arts, 12th and P streets

**WHEN:** tonight 7:30 p.m.

**COST:** \$15, \$25

**THE SKINNY:** World renowned, acclaimed percussionist to perform in Lincoln.

the tabla.

It is said that Hussain's father played the tabla for Hussain when he was only two days old.

Hussain lived a life of rigorous musical training throughout much of his childhood. His daily routine started at 2 a.m. to practice before school. Practice continued after school, then homework and then sleep.

By the age of 12, Hussain was already touring. By age 17, he had toured the world extensively.

Srivastav said tonight's performance was a dream come true for him and the other members of Raag.



ZAKIR HUSSAIN performs tonight at the Lied Center for Performing Arts as part of the "Masters of Percussion 2000" performance. The show is sponsored by Raag, a UML group promoting Indian classical music and culture.

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