

# Everyone chips in on NU's defense

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If opponents do happen to cross midfield, that's where Benson and fellow defenders Christine Gluck and Breanna Boyd come into play.

"We're the last resort," Gluck said.

In Nebraska's pressure-style of play, Walker said a common theme rings true for all of his defenders—speed.

"It allows for our players to make up for mistakes," Walker said.

Each player brought her own strengths to the table, Walker said. Boyd, a returning starter, is consistent and a good ball winner. Gluck is the defensive team leader and Benson brings an offensive mentality.

Benson is playing her first season as a defender after playing three years as a midfielder. The senior said she had to completely change her style of play.

"It's not beating someone," Benson said. "It's not getting

beat."

And the Husker defenders haven't been getting beat very often. LeBlanc and Leah Lemale, NU's backup goalkeeper, have seen a total of only 42 shots on goal for the season.

"It's huge as defenders," Gluck said. "We don't want to give up any shots on goal or corner kicks. It's our job."

LeBlanc's job is to be the conductor of this three-piece orchestra. The senior is well-suited for the job. She's an All-American and a Hermann Trophy finalist, soccer's version of the Heisman Trophy.

LeBlanc has a goals-against average of 0.29 on the year and has been a part of 10 shutouts.

LeBlanc, the starting goalkeeper for the Canadian National Team, is the team's eyes on the field, Gluck said.

"I see things out there that no one else can see," LeBlanc said. "There's so much trust out there."

Since she doesn't face many shots, LeBlanc also determines

*"Communication is a big part of the game. If I leave the game with no shots, I'm not saying I didn't do anything. Through my good communication, they didn't get those shots off."*

Karina LeBlanc  
NU goalkeeper

the defensive matchups.

"Communication is a big part of the game," LeBlanc said. "If I leave the game with no shots, I'm not saying I didn't do anything. Through my good communication, they didn't get those shots off."

In many games, LeBlanc, who has an assist on the year, can be found near midfield handling the ball and directing the offense.

"A lot of that is experience," Walker said. "There's some risk that we might get scored on, but we're prepared to deal with that."

LeBlanc didn't allow a goal until Nebraska's 7-2 victory over Florida in the fifth game of the

season.

In their next game of the season, the Huskers beat Purdue 4-1, but that lone goal left a bitter taste in Benson's mouth.

"Yeah, the Purdue penalty kick," Benson said, "that was my fault."

The senior committed a foul in the goal box which led to a penalty kick.

While Benson blamed herself for that goal, she said the entire team takes responsibility for shutting down the opponent.

"No one likes to be scored on," Benson said. "It's not just us defenders, but as team, it's a slap in the face."

## NU gives Cyclones respect

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yards against Nebraska. Rosenfels, a 6-foot-4-inch, 221-pound senior who averages 218 yards passing per game, is a good field general and an "excellent offensive weapon" according to Defensive Coordinator Craig Bohl.

While Rosenfels isn't as mobile as Farmer, Bohl said NU isn't taking him lightly as a running threat.

"By no means are we looking at this quarterback as a traditional drop-back, not-going-to-run-at-all quarterback," Bohl said.

It will be Haywood, however, who will do the bulk of ISU's running. Averaging just over 153 yards per game, the junior is the Big 12's top rusher and has earned his respect from NU's coaching staff.

Solich said it's Haywood's vision and awareness that make him dangerous.

"Regardless of where the crease develops on the line," Solich said, "he finds it."

"He gets into the linebackers area four, five yards down the field very often."

With Iowa State riding the emotions of its so-far undefeated season, Solich said the game will be a measuring stick for NU to see where it stands.

"We're anxious to get to Ames to see how good we are," Solich said. "It will be a test for us."

# Texas a scoring threat for Huskers

■ The Nebraska defense will be tested by a potent Texas offense and a talented A&M squad.

BY GABRIEL STOVALL

The Nebraska Cornhuskers' soccer team might experience something new this weekend.

An offensive challenge from an opponent.

If indeed that is what Coach John Walker's team is looking for, Walker says they need not look any further than tonight when the Texas Longhorns come to town.

"Texas is an extremely talented team, especially offensively," Walker said. "In that regard, they will be one of the better teams we've played this year."

Texas (7-4, 3-0) comes into tonight's contest at the Abbott Sports Complex boasting its best-ever record through 11 games. But the Longhorns are just 1-5 all-time against the Huskers.

The Longhorns, ranked 15th in the nation in goals scored, seem poised; however, to give the Husker defense one of its stiffest tests of the season.

But scoring on Nebraska has proven to be an almost impossible feat.

NU's 2-0 win at Missouri gave it a school-record sixth consecutive shutout. The Huskers have recorded more shutouts than any other team in the country.

Possibly overshadowed by Nebraska's stellar defensive play is its offense. NU's average of 4.67 goals per game is second best in the nation.

Nebraska forward Christine Latham suggests it might take all of that and more to beat the Longhorns.

"In every game we play, (Walker) tells us of our opponents strengths and weaknesses," said the sophomore from Calgary, Alberta, who was last week's Big 12 Conference player of the week.

"We know they're a very physical team and a good offensive team. They won't be pushed around easily."

Also invading Lincoln this weekend will be the ninth-ranked Texas A&M Aggies, who will be hungry for a win after being upset 2-1 at Baylor last Sunday.

Walker knows the loss may give A&M some extra incentive to play well against his Huskers.

"A&M is always a Top 10 team," Walker said. "They're good, balanced and play hard, and probably even more so after the loss to Baylor."

Though the Aggies aren't cracking into anyone's 10 best scoring lists, their offense still can be expected to produce.

A&M has scored four or more goals in three games this season and is averaging close to three goals per game.

While the Aggies and Longhorns look good enough on paper to give NU's defense a run for its money, Latham says the Huskers are ready and have only one team in mind.

"We don't pay too much attention to what our opponents are doing," Latham said. "We tend to focus more on how we play, and we're going to play good this weekend."

# Cross country goes all the way to Maine

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Members of the Nebraska Cross Country team will face a competition this weekend unlike anything else they've faced this year.

Rather than being packed in a tight course with hundreds of runners, Nebraska's team will take on only a handful of competitors in Saturday's race.

The team will travel to Orono, Maine, for the Murray Keatinge Invitational, hosted by the University of Maine.

Six women's teams and seven men's teams are scheduled to compete, including Central Connecticut State, Holy Cross, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and the Michigan men's team.

Cross Country Coach Jay Dirksen will send eight men and

six women to run the course.

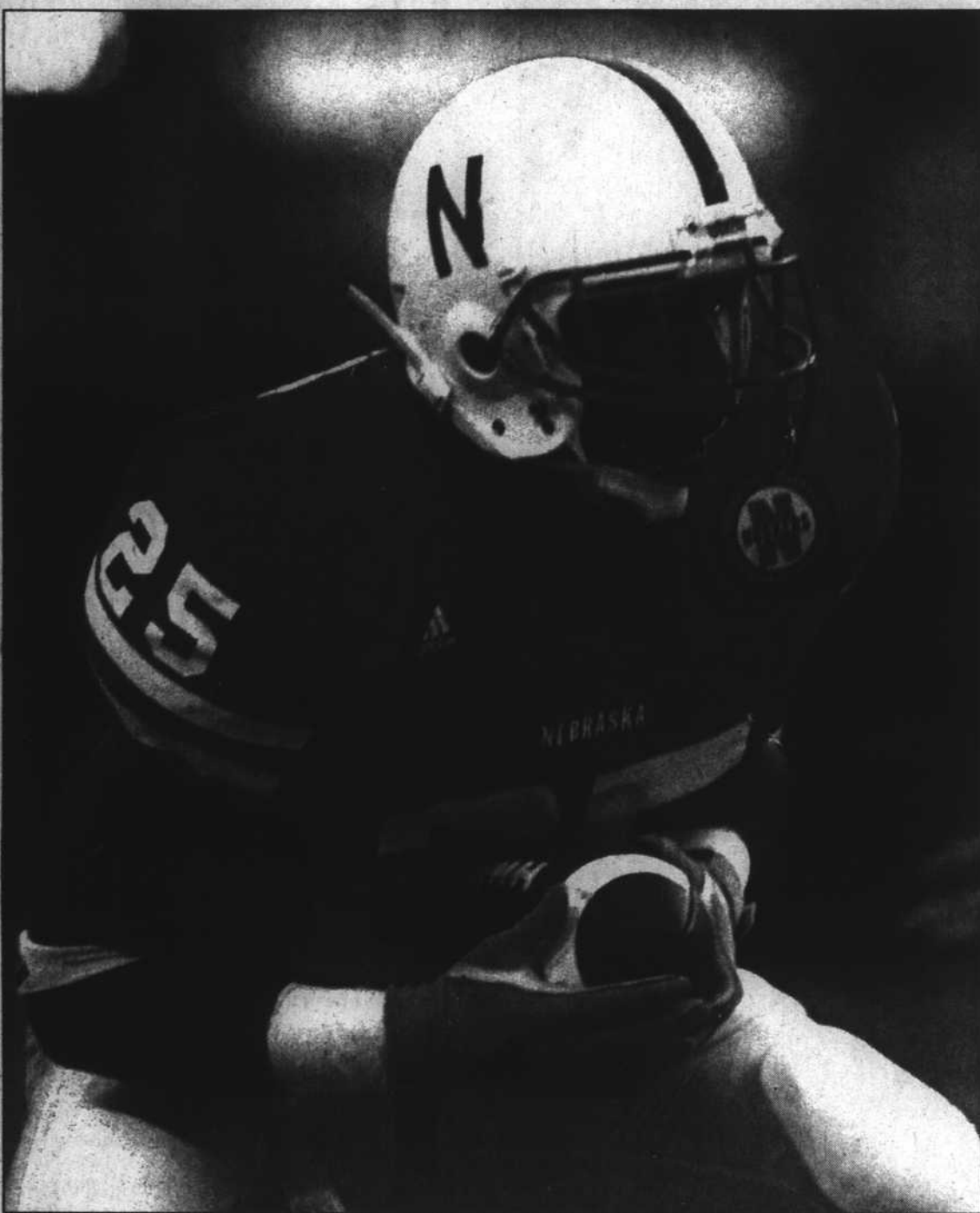
Running for the women will be seniors Amie Jorgensen and Jaimie Kruger, junior Jenna Lucas, sophomore Kathryn Handrup and freshmen Ann Gaffigan and Hillary Laird.

The men's team will be represented by seniors Marcus Witter and Aaron Carrizales, sophomores Ian Gray, Jed Barta, James De Bruhl and Mike Kamm and freshmen Kyle Wyatt and Eric Rasmussen.

"It's a totally different kind of meet—a different level of competition," Dirksen said.

Members of the team continue to increase their training to be in top condition by late October, he said.

"The training is going well," Dirksen said. "Hopefully, we'll see it in the meets."



Mike Warren/DN

Rover Joe Walker and the Nebraska defense are looking for a breakout game against Iowa State this weekend. The task may be made more difficult by an ISU team that is undefeated and playing in front of a rowdy home crowd.

# Tough competition gives NU tennis test

■ Coach McDermott hopes several Huskers will advance to individual finals in Wichita.

BY VINCE KUPPIG

The Nebraska men's tennis team is set to face its toughest competition of the 2000 fall season in the prequalifying ITA All-American Championships beginning today and ending Oct. 9.

Coach Kerry McDermott views this tournament as "a chance to see where our program stands next to the other teams in the country."

The Cornhuskers are looking to improve on last year's 7-12 record, including 0-8 in the Big 12 Conference.

"Overall, I know we are much stronger than last year," McDermott said.

The Huskers looked strong in their first action of the season at the Harvard Tournament held Sept. 22-24. Senior Adnan Hadzialic and junior Fungai Tongoona both finished runner-up in the Flight "A" and "B" brackets respectively.

This weekend's tournament will consist of nearly every school in the country and about 250 individual athletes, McDermott said.

Sixty-four of those 250 will advance to the main draw Oct. 12-15 in Wichita, Kan., and McDermott said the players who make it will probably receive a national ranking.

Nebraska's chances of advancing a few players look pretty good based on previous years, McDermott said.

"We've been fortunate to have some of our players make it into the main draw the last two years," he said.

Last year, junior Lance Mills advanced. Mills, who would have played No. 1 singles, did not participate in the spring season because of an injury. McDermott thinks Mills has a good chance of advancing this year.

Two years ago, Jorge Abos Sanchez, a freshman at the time, also made it to the main draw.

This year's tournament will provide a chance for the players to prove themselves.

"(The tournament) is another assessment of being able to see where my new kids are, along with some of the kids from last year's team," McDermott said. "It's a good way to see how our new kids can react to the competition."

McDermott said he has already pretty much determined who the top four players are from practice. However, the rest of the 10-member team is pretty close, he said.

"The different competition outside of the team really helps them give me a good idea of how our kids handle the pressure," McDermott said.

The whole team will be back in action Oct. 19-23 at the ITA Mid-American Championships in Tulsa, Okla.

# Cepero next in line of great Husker setters

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ter, though she's only in her second season.

"Great Nebraska setters have always been great athletes and Greichaly is obviously a great athlete," Cook said. "They need character on and off the court and they need to know how to win."

Winning hasn't been a problem for this Nebraska team, which stands 14-0 on the season.

A good amount of that success is because of Cepero.

"Greichaly is a great competitor. The bigger the match, the better she's going to play," Cook said.

Cepero said she is always looking for the weak link in the other team's defense.

"I look for the weakest blockers. Before the game, we scout them and decide who has the weak block and who would be a

good match-up against that block," Cepero said.

Cook said Nebraska works on setting the ball in three fashions: quick and low, mid-range and a higher, loftier set.

"Quick sets are your first choice all the time. If your middles are there already by the time I am going to set, its going to be pretty much 100 percent that I am going to set them. It's hard to block," Cepero said running through the options that face in her every point.

Ask Texas A&M about the quick set. Middle blockers Jenny Kropp and Amber Holmquist led the team with 12 and 15 kills respectively due to the fact that the Aggies were heavily guarding Nebraska's outside hitters. Cepero simply went to the middle.

There are just too many weapons for most teams to stop,

Cepero said.

"It gives you a lot of confidence because you know you have a lot of options," Cepero said. "It's easier to trick the other team because they don't know who I am going to set."

When Cepero isn't setting it to her outside hitters or middle blockers, she takes matters into her own hands with a quick tip over the net.

"Coach (Cook) gives me the green light to do it, and when I am at the net, if it's a good pass, the first thing I am thinking is dump," she said.

Cook said the dump shot is just one more thing for opposing teams to worry about as they try to deal with Cepero's athletic ability and height.

"One thing she has that no one else has had is the height. That's a new dimension that teams are not

*"They need character on and off the court and they need to know how to win."*

John Cook  
NU volleyball coach

used to seeing," Cook said.

And on top of her talent, Cepero is loaded with ambition.

"The way I handle myself is going to determine the outcome of the match. I have the responsibility and I take it as a challenge," Cepero said. "If I do good, my team will do good."

Cepero said it isn't difficult to be good with the players around her.

"If we come out on the court and play our best no one can beat us," Cepero said.

# NU battles each other in preparation for ISU, beyond

■ Volleyball team uses time between easy opponents to rest up and prepare for NCAA's.

BY MATTHEW HANSEN

Between Tuesday's white-wash of lightly-regarded Creighton and Sunday's 1 p.m. match at lightly-regarded Iowa State, Nebraska, predictably, has been taking it easy.

No practice Wednesday. A half-hour practice Thursday.

The laid-back atmosphere ends today. Today, it's time for war.

"The war," an intrasquad scrimmage named by NU Coach John Cook, will no doubt be the toughest test the starting lineup of NU gets this week.

The opponent is the "B" side, consisting of redshirting All-American Nancy Meendering, standout freshman Pam Krejci, former starting setter Jill McWilliams, Guo Jun Li, a Chinese volleyball star and formerly one of the best players in the world, and the tall, athletic Marcus, team manager.

The "B" coach is former Husker head man Terry Pettit, who has designed a game plan

to expose the weaknesses of this year's squad.

The objective: Prepare the Huskers for postseason play.

"It's how a team would attack us if we get to the Final Four," Cook said. "We're going to make it as tough as possible with the strategic plan and personnel."

Excuse Nebraska if they're looking ahead a little. NU's last seven wins have been in straight sets. And, on paper at least, the Cyclones will have a hard time ending that streak.

ISU is 2-12, including a sorry 0-7 in the Big 12. Nebraska beat

Texas A&M in straight sets. Texas A&M beat Iowa State in straight sets.

You get the point. Cook has no illusions about the Cyclones' weakness. His team can still gain something from the trip to Ames, he said.

"It's an opportunity for us to develop more depth, to continue to develop our mentality as a team," Cook said. "It doesn't matter who is over there, what the score is, were playing point by point to the national championship."

Point by point, and war by war.