

## Huskers wake up at halftime to beat KU

### Nebraska advances to second round of Big 12 tournament

Nebraska 4  
Kansas 0

BY JAMIE SUHR

The Nebraska soccer team shook off some rust from the first half to beat Kansas 4-0 in the first round of the Big 12 Conference Tournament.

The Cornhuskers were propelled by two goals from forward Christine Latham to break open an empty half time score.

"We weren't prepared to play," Latham said.

"(In the second half) we started doing things we knew we could do. We seemed tired in the first half. We weren't playing with our usual intensity."

Fueled by Latham, the Huskers poured four goals in the second half against the Jayhawks as the Huskers used Kansas goalkeeper Sarah Gonzalez's aggressiveness against Latham.

NU midfielder Meghan Anderson sent a long pass leaving Latham one-on-one with the goalie. Gonzalez and Latham both tackled for the ball, but the forward came up with it and scored in the open net.

Latham said her second goal was a "weird kind of thing."

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Christine Latham NU forward

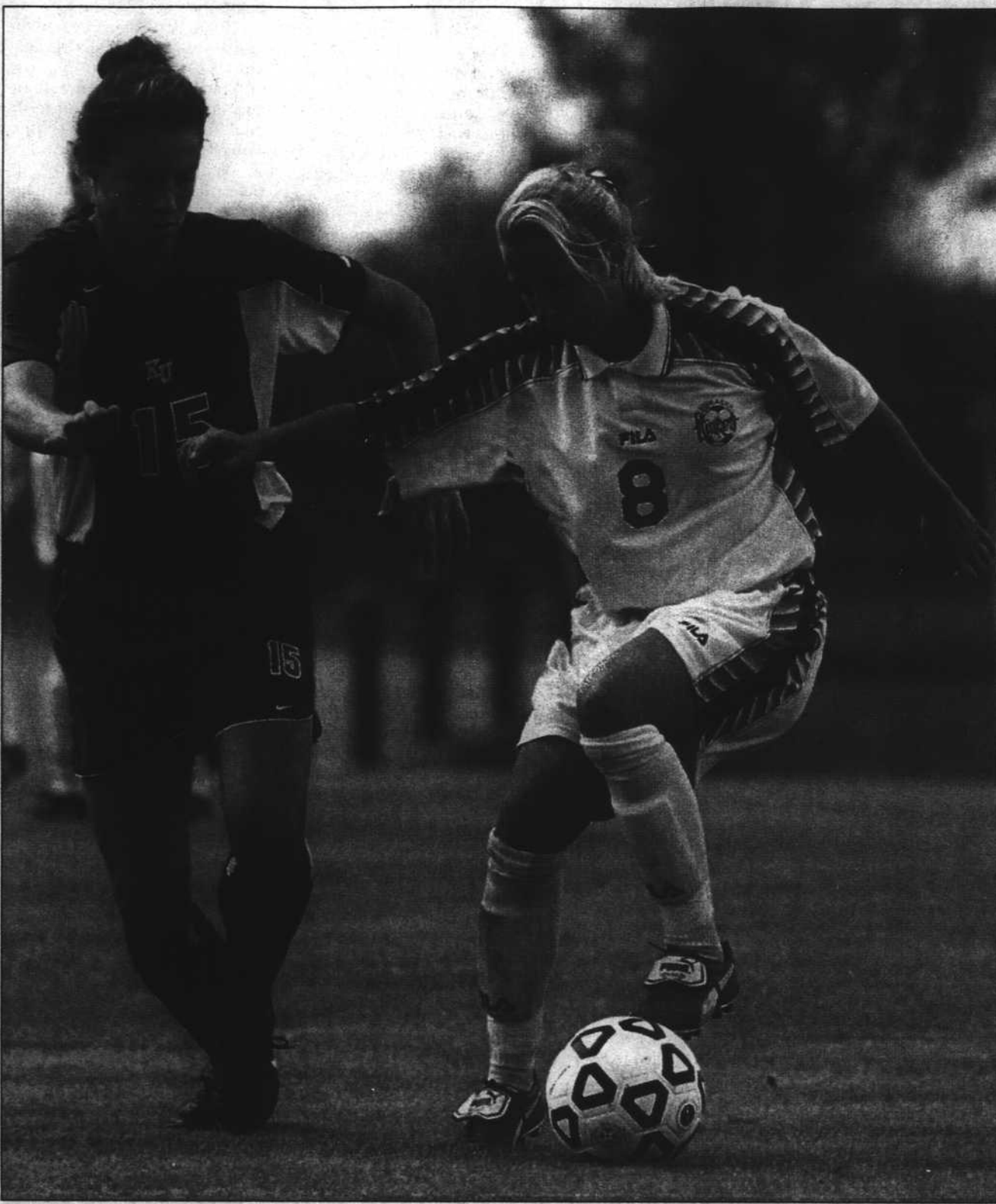
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Jenny Benson dribbles around Lindsay Horner in the first half of the first round of the Big 12 tournament. Benson had two assists in the game as the Huskers defeated Kansas 4-0.

## LeBlanc snubbed by Big 12's 1st team

BY JAMIE SUHR

While four Nebraska soccer players made the Big 12 all-conference team, one omission—goalkeeper Karina LeBlanc—could raise questions among Husker faithful.

The senior was left off the first team despite her 11.5 shutouts and 0.32 goal-against average, both conference bests. Baylor's Dawn Greathouse, who led the Big 12 with 6.9 saves per game, was on the first team. LeBlanc, with 2.6 saves a game, was on the second team.

Cornhusker forward Christine Latham, who was named first-team all-conference, said she was shocked to see LeBlanc's name on the second team.

"It was very upsetting for us and to her," Latham said. "She's an excellent goalkeeper, and anyone can say what they want, but she's a first-team keeper. That was bad on (the conference's) part."

While LeBlanc not being named to the first team came as a surprise to players and coaches, Latham was named Player of the Year as expected. The sophomore led the conference with 20 goals and 47 points.

"It's a great honor," Latham said. "There are a lot of good players in conference, but I knew I led the league in points."

Joining Latham on the first-team was two-thirds of NU's starting defense: Breanna Boyd and Jenny Benson. The other one-third, Christine Gluck, was named to the second-team. It was the fourth-straight year Benson was selected to the first-team.

Meghan Anderson joined Benson for the second-straight season. The midfielder was third in the conference with 13 assists.

Kori Saunders was named along with Kelly Rheem on the second team, but Saunders' selection was a bit more surprising.

The sophomore sat out the Huskers' first 10 games after a glass and wooden table she was sitting on collapsed and sent a shard of glass through her ureter, which connects the kidney to the bladder.

Saunders started just nine games, tallying two goals and five assists. Rheem found her way on the team in a more traditional way. The junior led the league with 15 assists and was also honored last season.

**Women's Soccer**  
The following Nebraska players have been selected for first and second Big 12 All-Conference teams

First Team	
D	Breanna Boyd
D	Jenny Benson
MF	Meghan Anderson
F	Christine Latham

Second Team	
G	Karina LeBlanc
MF	Kori Saunders
D	Christina Gluck
F	Kelly Rheem

## Former Husker moves past injury

Uhlir becomes a Husker undegrad coach after a career-ending neck injury.

BY JOSHUA CAMENZIND

Identity had never been a problem for Tyrone Uhlir.

Whenever somebody asked, he answered without hesitation: He was a football player. Had been all his life.

After starring at Battle Creek High School, Uhlir walked on to Nebraska as a linebacker. But he eventually latched on at fullback, grasping the offense with an ease not many players can.

Before he could blink, Uhlir was sitting at No. 2 on the depth chart last season as a sophomore. When Willie Miller sprained his ankle, Uhlir got the starting nod against Iowa State.

He helped NU rush for 439 yards in a 49-14 win over Cyclones. Uhlir was looking at a bright future plowing holes for Husker I-backs.

"He was a guy that really went after things," Miller said.

"He had himself in position to see a lot of playing time at fullback," NU Running Backs Coach Dave Gillespie said.

But something was wrong. During his college career, Uhlir would often go home after practice with pain shooting down his neck—a result of a rigorous workout at full speed. The coaches told him to avoid contact, but that just wasn't Uhlir's style.

He played through the pain until he could no longer bear it on the final day of 2000 spring practice. Team doctors ran Uhlir through some tests.

One day after the Spring Red-White Game, Uhlir was given the news—he would never play football again. His involvement with

NU from that point forward would have to be as an undergraduate coach, holding a clipboard instead of a pigskin.

"I didn't believe them at first," Uhlir said. "I couldn't comprehend that I was done playing football. I had done it all my life."

Uhlir calls it one of those "lucky to be alive situations."

When he was 16, Uhlir rolled his Isuzu Rodeo driving 90 mph. He was thrown out.

The accident was part of a troubled past that Uhlir had outgrown but not outrun. Doctors discovered the neck injury that ended Uhlir's career was a direct result of that crash in the Rodeo.

It earned Uhlir a charge of driving while intoxicated to go with three minor in possession charges, a criminal mischief charge and a disturbing the peace charge—all occurring in that same school year.

Before his senior year in high school, Uhlir was making bad choices and going nowhere fast.

"There were a lot of expectations that people had of me," said Uhlir, who had two older brothers, Troy and Todd, play for the Huskers. "I tried to do my best to live up to them, and sometimes the pressure got to me. That is where my drinking problems came in."

"It is evident that was a big part of my life with all the charges that were brought against me," he said.

Uhlir had accumulated a 1.8 grade point average in his first three years of high school. Succeeding in school was one of the farthest things from his mind. His release from that was to "go out and get crazy."

Uhlir was still a promising player in a town that loves the pigskin. He had been invited to camps and was being contacted by coaches his sophomore year.

But once his trouble with the law began, the phone stopped ringing.

Uhlir's dreams of playing college football were fading.

So in his senior season, Uhlir shaped up and promptly earned straight As to raise his GPA to 2.3 for his high school career.

Despite his newfound success in the classroom, Uhlir still had a ways to go to reach his goal of playing college football.

He contacted NU Coach Dan Young, and the man in charge of walk-ons told Uhlir that he would have a chance to tryout the following spring if he got his grades up and stayed out of trouble.

"He had a good work ethic about things and wanted to play here bad," Young said.

Uhlir decided to follow in his brother's footsteps, moving to Lincoln two weeks after graduation and attending summer school to remove his academic deficiencies. He sat out the 1997 season.

Former high school teammate and Husker offensive lineman Dave Volk said Uhlir didn't waste time.

"After the car wreck, he really straightened himself out," Volk said. "Everybody knew he was always a smart kid, and he proved that his senior year. That really says a lot about him."

"That first year (at NU), he worked his tail off by himself, and he was doing everything he could."

Uhlir made the team, but he weighed only 190 pounds, and doubts about the future still lingered in the back of his mind.

"I didn't know if I could do it," Uhlir said. "My brothers and parents believed in me, and I made the team, but I was worried about getting cut."

Those worries would soon go away as he moved to offense his second season and bulked up to 245 pounds.

With the help of his brothers, along with current fullbacks Billy Legate and Ben Kingston, Uhlir learned NU's system fast and thoroughly.

Through all of this, Uhlir stayed out of trouble. His life had

*"That first year (at NU), he worked his tail off by himself, and he was doing everything he could."*

Dave Volk  
Husker offensive lineman

purpose.

When the neck injury was discovered, Uhlir could have possibly played out his final two years of eligibility.

On the other hand, the injury could have killed him had he been hit in just the right spot. Uhlir said he was willing to take that risk.

"If they would let me, I would play," he said.

But they won't, which designated Uhlir to sideline duty. Now as an undergraduate coach, he helps with scout team work. On game days, he assists Young with keeping track of players who are available for certain units.

"It's a different experience," Uhlir said. "I think I have been handling it well. But I still miss not being out there on Saturdays and actually participating."

He isn't interested in furthering his football coaching career beyond next season. He's angling toward a life as a professional bass fisherman.

So with no interest in doing what he is doing past next season, it might seem Uhlir is hanging on by the last thread.

But Volk said a transition period is necessary.

"You can't be as involved in football for your entire life as he was and have it suddenly be done," Volk said. "He is still around all these people who care about him and have been here for so long."

And if he had to take the ride all over again, he wouldn't change a thing. "I had fun," said Uhlir. "A lot of people can't say that."

## Homecoming victories a Husker tradition

The last time NU lost a game during the celebratory week was in 1968.

BY GABRIEL STOVALL

For the 31 years, one thing has been a constant for the Nebraska football team—homecoming success.

And with this year's game coming on the heels of a Cornhusker meltdown at Oklahoma, Coach Frank Solich hopes the pattern of homecoming dominance won't be broken Saturday against Kansas.

"I didn't really know that it had been that long, (since NU lost)" Solich said. "But I hope that trend can continue this week."

Overall, Nebraska is 66-19-4 in homecoming game since 1911. The last time a team added a blemish to NU's record on homecoming was in 1968 when Kansas State blanked the Huskers 12-0.

Since that game, Nebraska has been on homecoming tear, defeating teams by an average score of 40-11. Most teams that have visited Lincoln during homecoming week have rarely been considered among the nation's elite.

In those 31 games, Husker homecoming opponents sport a mediocre .516 combined winning percentage, and 13 of the teams have come into Lincoln with losing records.

High profile games have come, however, during homecoming week.

In the 1992 contest, the Huskers gave an eighth-ranked Colorado team an awakened nightmare as NU thumped the Buffaloes 52-7 on Halloween night.

Two years later, CU, ranked second in the nation and

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Ross Hochstein  
senior offensive guard

with 1994 Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam, were beaten 24-7 by a third-ranked Husker team led by former back-up quarterback Brook Berringer. That victory placed NU in position to win its third national title that year.

Despite the domination, Solich said his team will focus more on the opponent at hand than on the occasion.

"I don't think our players are players that respond differently to things like that," Solich said.

"I think it's great that we've had that many wins (on homecoming), but Saturday's game will be hard fought and we're going to concentrate on bouncing back and winning this week."

While the Huskers appear to be focused on performing well—homecoming or not—senior offensive guard Ross Hochstein is not downplaying the effect a homecoming crowd could have on his team.

"We're excited to play especially after last week," Hochstein said.

"We're at home. Our team loves to play at home. And since it's going to be homecoming we're real excited about playing Kansas."