

Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska steamrolls over Kansas and avenges last weekend's loss to Oklahoma in Sports/6,7



Casting your vote for the next president on Nov. 7 just became a little bit easier in Election Guide

Columnist Yasmin McEwen explores triangles and Hemingway in Opinion/4



Election likely to go to wire, experts say

BY BRIAN CARLSON

It's a barn-burner. This year's presidential race between Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore could turn out to be the closest since 1960, when John F. Kennedy eked out a win over Richard Nixon. The outcome depends on the results in a dozen or more states now considered tossups. Although Bush has held a consistent lead in the polls the past couple of weeks, this election also has raised the possibility he could win the popular vote and lose the electoral vote. "I think nationally Bush is ahead, but not by much," said John Hibbing, a UNL political science professor. "In the electoral college, Bush does not lead by much, if at all."

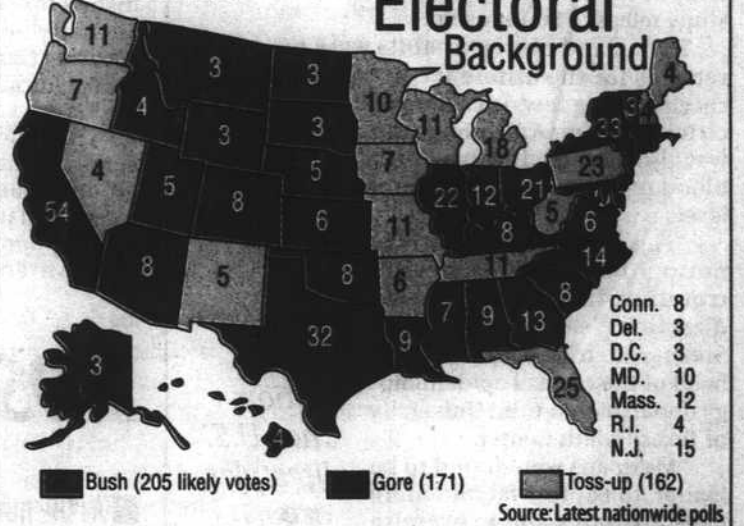
By Hibbing's estimate, there is a 10-20 percent chance Bush could win the popular vote and lose the electoral vote. "If it did, there's a chance it would be the end of the electoral college," he said. "In this day and age, people want to see that their voice really matters." According to polls, Bush appears to have slightly more than 200 electoral votes locked up, while Gore has probably secured slightly fewer. Enough states are in play that neither candidate can comfortably claim to have close to the magic number of 270. Bush is likely to win most of the Great Plains states and the Southern states. A cause for concern, however, is that Bush has fallen into a close race with Gore in Florida, where his brother, Jeb Bush, is governor.

Gore has strong support in the Northeast. He appears likely to win California and Illinois, although his leads in those states have narrowed. For Gore, a major concern is that traditionally Democratic states like Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa could go to Bush. The candidates have spent considerable time campaigning in battleground states along the Mississippi River and in the Pacific Northwest. Both candidates have made several trips to Iowa in the campaign's closing weeks. "It's always been a very strategic process," Hibbing said. "You want to campaign in the areas where it will do you the most good." Bush appears poised to win Ohio, but two other important states, Michigan and

Pennsylvania, are question marks. If Bush could win those states, that might neutralize a possible loss in Florida, Hibbing said. In states like Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oregon and Washington, Gore's problems are partly due to Green Party candidate Ralph Nader's candidacy, Hibbing said. Those states have large blocks of liberal voters who may vote for Nader rather than Gore, Hibbing said. But he said those voters generally account for 4-5 percent of the electorate, and the effect of their vote may not be decisive. Although Bush has led in polls recently, his support appears to have dropped a couple of percentage points, Hibbing said.

Please see PREDICTIONS on 5

The outcome of Tuesday's presidential election will depend on the result in several tossup states. Based on recent national polls, the map shows each state's number of electoral votes and the expected outcome: likely for republican George W. Bush, likely for democrat Al Gore or a toss-up. The winner needs at least 270 out of 538 electoral votes.



Phil and David Zach, UNL students, and their younger brother Paul, a high school student from Omaha, play with Danny Edwards Friday night in The Lounge at Neihardt Residence Center. The band, called Remedy, played Christian music and read scripture to the full-house audience. The group plays regularly around Lincoln and Omaha. David Clasen/DN

Election 2000

Nelson proud of bipartisan values

The former governor pledges to be an independent voice for Nebraska if elected to the Senate.

BY BRIAN CARLSON
Sporting a red, white and blue, star-spangled shirt, Ben Nelson is poised to march in Schulyer's Labor Day parade. Before the parade gets underway, he stops to talk to a reporter about the upcoming race and how it's shaping up. As he talks, an elderly man steps up and gets Nelson's attention. The 74-year-old man, Carl G. "Gil" Haase, tells Nelson he has gone without prescription drugs for his heart condition, arthritis and diabetes for four days. He says he could not afford the medication until he received his Social Security check the next day. "You've got my vote, Ben," says Haase, who tells Nelson he trusts him most to help provide prescription-drug coverage for seniors. Nelson turns to the reporter; "Did you get that down?" he asks. For Nelson, it's a tailor-made moment. It's almost like Nelson set it

up. It typifies what he believes is his broad, bipartisan appeal among voters. "The man is the individual I vote for," Haase said. "He did what he said he'd do as governor, and I figure he'll probably do it as a senator." Nelson, a former two-term governor, is now facing Republican Don Stenberg in this year's Senate race. He said he values a pragmatic, bipartisan approach to politics. "I do think I have a broad-based appeal among Democrats, independents and enlightened Republicans," he said. For critics though, Nelson's self-proclaimed independence is a facade which he must raise to win in mostly Republican Nebraska. In the beginning, Nelson barely clawed his way into Nebraska politics. In 1990, while running for governor, Nelson squeaked out a victory in the Democratic primary over Bill Hoppner. After several recounts, he was declared winner by a mere 42 votes. He went on to defeat Republican Kay Orr in the general election.

Please see NELSON on 5

Stenberg remains confident of victory

BY BRIAN CARLSON
It's Philadelphia in early August. Republicans from around the country are in a festive mood, hoping they can ride the momentum from their national convention to November, win the White House and keep control of Congress. On the evening before Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush is set to give his convention address, the states will dole out their electoral votes and name Bush their nominee. Sen. Chuck Hagel and Gov. Mike Johanns want to put Republican Senate candidate Don Stenberg out front when it's Nebraska's turn. Give him a moment of glory and some free national TV air time. But Stenberg, the state attorney general, is not interested. He's already given a five-minute speech to the convention, and he's ready to head back to Nebraska. He doesn't stay for Bush's speech. Stenberg is not a gregarious, backslapping politician. He doesn't have a strong flair for the dramatic. But what the staid, reserved attorney general has done during his Senate race against former Gov. Ben Nelson is to tell Nebraskans over and over again

Please see STENBERG on 10

Regents

NU Regents evaluate financial aid

BY VERONICA DAEHN
The NU Board of Regents took a look at the accessibility of need-based aid at its meeting Friday. Christine Denicola, a spokeswoman from the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, led a panel of financial aid experts. Nebraska ranks fifth nationally in the percentage of high school graduates who are enrolled in college by the time they are 19, Denicola said. But the state ranks 14th in the number of low-income graduates enrolled in college by the same time. Of the 20,000 Nebraska high school graduates, at least 40 percent, or 8,000, aren't going on to college, she said. University President Dennis Smith said the low number was the main concern. "Why are they not coming?" Smith said. "What proportion of high school graduates who are academically qualified simply cannot afford to go to college? That remains the critical question." As a state, Nebraska has increased its grant programs in the last five years, Denicola said. But for all Nebraska institutions, fewer than 30 percent of Pell-grant-eligible students received state grant awards. The average award of those who did receive assistance was \$600. Papillion Regent Drew Miller said he would expect the state's grant dollars to be low because the University of Nebraska's tuition is 10 percent less than its peers. The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education is responsible for recommending to the Legislature what the university's budget should be for the next year. Denicola said the commission would recommend a \$2 million increase in state aid. In other news, the Regents tabled a motion that would have made individual UNL football and UNO hockey tickets available for sale on the Internet. Miller said making tickets available on the Internet would allow more people to attend games and would help remove the Regents from their role as ticket-providers to charities. The technology required to sell tickets over the Internet would be cheap, he said. "This would be an overall win for us," Miller said. Regent Don Blank of McCook said he didn't know where the tickets would come from. "At UNL, there are no other tickets," Blank said. Miller suggested the Regents give up the pool of tickets they buy. Blank said he sells those tickets to people throughout his district and didn't want to give that up. "It bothers me that we're getting into the management of athletic policies at UNL and UNO," he said. "If I had to vote on this today, I'd vote against it." The motion will be referred to the Regents' athletic committee. The Regents also forwarded reviews of 12 academic programs to the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.