

McKoy Brings Positive Attitude to Field Every Day

By Marcus Dawson, NU Media Relations

When Bill Callahan was hired as Nebraska's head coach, fans knew the look of the Husker offense would change. Callahan may have installed the West Coast Offense and started bringing in a different style of offensive player, but these new players have had the same attitude and commitment that are part of the foundation of Nebraska's illustrious football tradition.



Shamus McKoy
Wide Receiver

Shamus McKoy is one of those players who gives the program a new look, but shows the same heart as his predecessors.

A product of Scottsdale Community College in Arizona, McKoy came away with honorable-mention all-conference accolades on two occasions. His 500 receiving yards and 30 receptions as a sophomore caught the eye of the Husker coaches.

"I came to Nebraska because I was interested in the West Coast Offense and what Coach Callahan was trying to do here," McKoy said.

Despite seeing action in just one game before his senior season, it is what McKoy brings to the team leading up to game day that has made him invaluable to the Huskers. Wide receivers coach Ted Gilmore commends McKoy for the work he puts in every day.

"He comes in to work every day and competes hard," Gilmore said. "He comes to the meetings and does a great job on the scout team to get everyone ready for the game. I tip my hat to him."

Gilmore describes McKoy as being "a team player never seeing things as just about him." This is also the way McKoy sees things off the field.

When he has spare time, you can find him in Lincoln hospitals visiting with patients to brighten up their day or working with the Lincoln Action Program. To McKoy, such a small thing to him can mean so much to others.

"If I can go out and spend a little bit of my time with them, the people terminally ill or whatever hardships they have, it can really give a spark to their day," McKoy said. "It makes it all worth it."

McKoy is on schedule to graduate in August of 2006 with a degree in sociology. He was named to the Big 12 Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll for the first time in his career in 2005. After his football playing days are over, McKoy hopes to find a position working in pharmaceutical sales.

When people look back on his career, McKoy's numbers won't jump out at them and his name won't be at the top of the charts. But it is players like McKoy who have laid the groundwork for success at Nebraska.

"He has such a great attitude," Gilmore said. "He is very humble. He comes to work every day with his lunch pail and gets things done."

Colorado Native Pike Makes Smooth Transition

By Brandon Gries, NU Media Relations

Growing up in Colorado is a little different than Nebraska. Mountains, not cornfields, dominate the landscape, and kids generally grow up rooting for one of the in-state teams, the Buffs or Rams. Lincoln is hundreds of miles away, and it would be easy to think that red is rarely seen inside the borders. But it is not always the case.



Gary Pike
Offensive Lineman

While many Colorado teens stay in state following high school, it seems that each year there are Colorado natives on the NU roster. Nebraska is thankful to have seen that situation with Pueblo, Colo., native Gary Pike.

Pike was recruited by out-of-state schools like Nebraska, Stanford and Notre Dame, and in-state rivals Colorado and Colorado State. After weighing his options, the first-team all-stater pulled the trigger on the Big Red.

"I thought about staying in-state and checked out the different places," Pike said. "But when I visited Nebraska it was where I wanted to come. I was in awe with how everything was. It was just amazing."

Pike expected to hear grief from his friends back home, but he relishes a 31-22 Husker victory in Boulder in 2003.

"A bunch of my friends gave me a hard time," Pike said. "I have friends who are big fans of CU. They're always getting on me, so it was nice to win in 2003. That was a great feeling."

Moving from Colorado to Nebraska was only the beginning of transitions for the offensive lineman. Now a senior, Pike has been coached by three different offensive line coaches, beginning with Milt Tenopir, who retired after the 2002 season.

"I learned quite a bit from Coach Tenopir because when I first came to Nebraska he introduced me to college football," Pike said. "He taught me a lot about how offensive linemen need to think and work."

Pike fought veterans for playing time during his first years as a Husker. Now under offensive line coach Dennis Wagner, Pike's hard work and determination has paid off. The senior has played in every game this season and appeared in 10 of 11 games last year.

Pike credits his father, Gary Sr., for having the most influence in his life, and has brought off-the-field experiences into football to earn that playing time on the turf of Memorial Stadium.

"My dad has had the most influence on me by far," Pike said. "I get a lot of my personality traits and hard work and drive from him."

The same traits that Pike has used to earn time on the field have also led to success in the classrooms at Nebraska. In December, Pike will earn a degree in physics and math. He has been named to the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll four times during his career, and has plans to attend graduate school to study physics after his time at Nebraska.

"I will miss playing football when I leave Nebraska," Pike said. "I will miss my friends and all this other stuff that goes on. It will be another big transition in my life."