

2003 Nebraska Cornhuskers Spring Notes

Huskers Begin Sixth Season Under Solich

The Huskers begin preparations for the 2003 season on Wednesday, March 26 with the first of 15 NCAA-allowed spring practices. Nebraska returns 14 starters from last year's 7-7 team that completed its season with an appearance in the MainStay Independence Bowl.

Since the close of last season, Nebraska has hired six new assistant coaches. Coach Frank Solich said this spring will be an even more crucial learning time as his sixth Husker team adjusts to a new coaching staff and a new playbook.

"I think it will be an exciting spring for us, both as a coaching staff and a football team," Solich said. "Everyone is looking forward to getting out there on the field. There is an added urgency that comes from there being a new coaching staff and wanting to make sure everybody is on the same page, both players and coaches."

Solich said the team and coaching staff are not dwelling on the finish to last season, but instead looking forward to a new start this spring.

"That season is in the books," Solich said. "You start off every spring focusing on what you can do in those 15 practices to best prepare you for the fall."

Nebraska will cap spring ball with the Red-White Spring Game on April 19 at Memorial Stadium. The Huskers open their 2003 regular season with a Big 12 Conference battle on Saturday, Aug. 30 against Oklahoma State at Memorial Stadium.

Four Weeks of Spring Ball to End with Annual Red/White Spring Game on April 19

Nebraska completed its winter conditioning program with testing on Wednesday, March 12. The Huskers took a week off for spring break before resuming class on Monday, March 24. Solich will put his team through the allowed 15 practices this spring, beginning on Wednesday, March 26 and capped by the annual Red-White Spring Game on Saturday, April 19. Leading up to the spring game, the Huskers will practice three times the first week of spring practice, and four times each of the final three weeks.

The Huskers will slightly alter their traditional routine of practicing on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday during the spring. The first week will end with a Sunday practice and the spring session will also include Sunday player meetings at the end of the second and third weeks. Also different than in past years, Nebraska will practice on the Friday before the spring game. In previous years, Nebraska's final practice before the spring game had been on Wednesday.

The spring game will be held on Saturday, April 19, at 12:30 p.m. in Memorial Stadium. The spring game will once again feature the Drug Free pledge at halftime. All students willing to take the pledge will be admitted free, but adults accompanying students will be asked to buy a \$5 ticket (\$3 for youth and senior citizens).

Fresh Faces on the Sidelines for Huskers

The 2003 spring practice session will feature the on-field coaching debuts of six new Husker assistant coaches. The Nebraska staff features three new assistants on each side of the ball, including new offensive and defensive coordinators.

Barney Cotton will head up the Husker offense, taking the reins from Solich who served as his own offensive coordinator for each of his first five seasons as head coach. Cotton comes to Nebraska after six seasons in the same position on the New Mexico State coaching staff.

Joining Cotton on offense is new running backs coach and passing game coordinator Tim Albin, who has been with the Husker program as a graduate assistant for the past three seasons. Albin previously served

for three seasons (1997-1999) as the head coach at Northwestern Oklahoma State. Scott Downing will tutor the Nebraska tight ends, kicker and punters, and also serve as recruiting coordinator. Downing had been on the Purdue coaching staff for the previous six seasons where he served as assistant head coach and running backs coach.

Former Green Bay Packer linebackers coach Bo Pelini was hired in late December as Nebraska's new defensive coordinator. Pelini has nine years of experience as an assistant in the National Football League with previous stints with San Francisco and New England. He was also a graduate assistant at the University of Iowa in 1990.

Pelini will head a defensive staff that includes new linebackers coach Jimmy Williams, a former Husker All-American at defensive end. Williams comes to Nebraska after one season as an assistant coach at Toledo. The Husker secondary will be coached by Marvin Sanders, who played at Nebraska in the late 1980s. Sanders spent the previous two seasons on the Colorado State coaching staff.

The newcomers join assistants Ron Brown (17th year), Turner Gill (12th year) and Jeff Jamrog (4th year). Brown will continue to coach Nebraska's wide receivers. Gill remains as the Huskers' quarterbacks

coach and has also added the title of assistant head coach. Jamrog will again coach the Husker defensive tackles, but will also tutor the defensive ends and serve as Nebraska's special teams coordinator.

Dave Gillespie, who previously coached NU's running backs, has taken over duties as Assistant A.D. for Football. Former Millard West High School head coach Dan McLaughlin has joined the NU staff as a graduate assistant on offense. The Huskers have a graduate assistant opening after Jimmy Burrow left in mid-March to accept the defensive coordinator position at North Dakota State.

Long-Time Husker Assistants Tenopir and Young to Be Honored

The spring game weekend will also feature a retirement celebration for former Husker assistant coaches Milt Tenopir and Dan Young.

Both coaches retired from coaching on Jan. 12.

Tenopir was a member of the coaching staff for 29 seasons and mentored the Husker offensive line. Under his direction, Nebraska won 13 NCAA rushing titles and his players won six Outland Trophies.

Young was on the Husker staff for 20 seasons, first as NU's freshman coach, then as an offensive line and kickers coach for the past 17 years. He helped the Huskers to 10 NCAA rushing crowns and the NU punting unit ranked in the top 10 nationally in net punting 10 times.

The coaches will be honored on Saturday, April 19 in an evening retirement party at Memorial Stadium. Many former players are expected to return to Lincoln for the weekend.

NU Winter Conditioning

Nebraska's six-week 2003 winter conditioning session was completed with testing on Wednesday, March 12 in Cook Pavilion. Director of Athletic Performance Boyd Epley and his staff conducted testing and Coach Solich indicated that it was a good close to an outstanding winter of work by his team.

"Winter conditioning went exceptionally well," Solich said. "We demanded a little bit more of them and think we put together a good winter conditioning program that challenged the players and caused them to develop a great work ethic heading into spring ball."

"Everyone got to a point at the end of winter conditioning where they were running through drills better and at the end they were in shape."

The post-winter testing was highlighted by a pair of outstanding 40-

Spring Schedule

Spring Practice Schedule

Week 1--March 26, 28, 29, 30

Week 2--April 2, 4, 5

Week 3--April 7, 9, 11, 12

Week 4--April 14, 16, 18

(Generally, practice is from 3:30-5:30 p.m. in Memorial Stadium)

Coaches Clinic

Friday-Saturday, April 11-12

Spring Game

Saturday, April 19, 12:30 p.m.

Fall Schedule

Aug. 25 -- First Day of Classes

Aug. 30 -- First Game vs. Oklahoma State

yard dash times. Junior wide receiver Dusty Stamer ran a 4.44 electronic 40, the fastest time recorded by a Husker since FieldTurf was installed in Cook Pavilion. Sophomore cornerback Fabian Washington ran a 4.47 40-yard dash, tying the second-best time on FieldTurf. Washington had run a 4.60 in the 40 in pre-winter conditioning.

Sophomore strong safety Shane Siegel had the top Performance Index score with 2,721 points, the second-highest index ever by a Husker defensive back. Siegel's vertical jump of 38 inches was the second-best on the team. Stamer also had the top 10-yard dash time (1.53) on the team. Defensive back Fred Thorne led the pro-agility testing (3.89), while linebacker Curt Tomasevich (38.5") had the top vertical jump on the team. Tomasevich's vertical jump was a position record for linebackers.

The Huskers gained 775 pounds of muscle as a team during winter conditioning, while dropping 620 pounds of fat.

Injury Update

Nebraska enters spring practice in fairly good health. Only two returning letterwinners have been ruled out of all of spring practice because of injury. Junior fullback Steve Kriewald underwent off-season ankle surgery and will not participate in spring drills. On defense, junior safety Philip Bland had surgery on his shoulder in the off-season and will not go through spring practice.

Several other Huskers could miss parts of spring ball, but Solich has not ruled out any additional players. Players who missed all of last season because of injury include defensive back Willie Amos (knee) and offensive linemen Tim Green (back) and Chris Loos (knee). Solich is optimistic about the prospects for all of those players. Solich indicated that Green is at full strength entering spring practice, Loos has made good strides during winter conditioning and Amos continues to make steady progress toward his return.

Redshirt freshman quarterback Curt Dukes underwent knee surgery last December. Solich said that Dukes will most likely not be allowed to have contact early in the spring, but could get practice time in by the completion of spring drills. Solich also noted that sophomore defensive tackle Seppo Evawaraye (shoulder) should be able to go through the majority of spring ball after missing most of last season. Linebacker Chad Sievers missed the end of last season with a knee injury, but is also hopeful of going through at least part of spring ball.

Position, Terminology Changes

Nebraska's revamped coaching staff will bring new ideas to both the offensive and defensive sides of the ball this spring. The changes will include some new names for positions on both sides of the football.

Offensively, the familiar receiver positions of wingback and split end will be replaced simply by wide receiver. Defensively, Nebraska's three linebacker positions will now be called Mike, Will and Buck, instead of Mike, Will and Sam. In addition, the position referred to as rover for the past several years will be labeled strong safety.

A few position changes have been announced heading into spring ball. Sophomore Richie Incognito started at offensive tackle for the Huskers last season and led Nebraska in pancakes. This spring he will make the move inside to center to anchor the 2003 offensive line.

Junior Lannie Hopkins has played in the NU secondary each of the past two seasons and is slated to move to Will linebacker this spring. In the secondary, sophomore Shane Siegel has shifted from cornerback to strong safety before spring practice.

The Head Coach

Nebraska Head Coach Frank Solich

Coach Frank Solich (Nebraska, 1966) enters his sixth season on the Husker sideline helm and owns a 49-16 school and career record. Solich's 49 wins place him in a tie for third place on the all-time Division I list for win in the first five seasons as head coach.

Solich was named Nebraska's 26th head coach on Dec. 10, 1997, after serving as an NU assistant for 19 years. He played fullback for Hall of Fame Coach Bob Devaney, lettering in 1963-64-65.

Coach Solich became just the third first-year Nebraska head coach to record nine wins in his first season at the helm, joining a pair of Hall of Fame Coaches—Tom Osborne (9-2-1 in 1973) and Bob Devaney (9-2 in 1962). Solich posted a 9-4 record in his first season, despite being hit heavy with injuries. He posted the best record of any Husker second-year coach as his team posted a 12-1 record in 1999, leading NU to a Big 12 championship and No. 2 (coaches poll) and No. 3 (AP poll) final national rankings. Solich has set NU records for most wins after two, three, four and five years as the Husker head coach, bettering Hall of Fame coaches Bob Devaney and Tom Osborne. Solich was named the 1999 Big 12 Coach of the Year by his league peers and the AP after winning the league championship, and was named coach of the year by the conference coaches a second time in 2001.

Solich has continued the Husker winning tradition and that is evident in his coaching staff. Including Solich, six of Nebraska's 10 full-time coaches played college ball at Nebraska. Solich is one of 19 current Division I-A football coaches who played and coach for their alma mater. Solich earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from NU in 1966 and 1972, respectively.

The Huskers in 2002

Season Recap...

Nebraska extended its NCAA record of consecutive bowl appearances to 34 in 2002, with a trip to the Independence Bowl. Nebraska finished 7-7 on the season, marking the 41st straight season the Huskers have finished at .500 or better. Nebraska did see its run of consecutive nine-win seasons end at 33 years and finished out of the national polls for the first time since 1968.

The Big 12 sent a record-tying eight teams to bowl games in 2002 and had four teams finish in the top 25 in the national polls. In addition to Nebraska, Iowa State, Kansas State and Colorado from the North played in the postseason, while Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas and Texas Tech went bowling from the league's South Division. The Big 12 finished 5-3 in bowl competition. Oklahoma defeated Washington State in the Rose Bowl and finished fifth in the AP Poll, followed by Texas (6), Kansas State (7) and Colorado (20).

The Huskers featured one of the nation's top special teams units in 2002 and again ranked among the country's best running teams. Nebraska finished fifth nationally in net punting, fifth in punt returns and 26th in kickoff returns, while boasting one of the nation's top coverage units. After leading the country in rushing in 2000 and 2001, NU finished fourth nationally in rushing last season, averaging 268.7 yards per game.

Senior punt returner DeJuan Groce finished fourth nationally in punt returns, averaging 17.0 yards per return and tied an NCAA record with four punt return touchdowns. Punter Kyle Larson finished 11th in the nation, averaging 43.2 yards per boot, while place-kicker Josh Brown connected on 14-of-18 field goals. Josh Davis was a dangerous kickoff return man for the second straight year, averaging nearly 24 yards per return, while establishing new Husker single game, season and career records for kickoff return yards.

Quarterback Jammal Lord also had a record-breaking season in his first year as a starter. Lord set NU season records for rushing yards by a quarterback (1,412) and total offense (2,774), while setting individual game records for total offense (369 yards vs. McNeese State) and rushing yards by a quarterback (234 vs. Texas).

National Awards and All-America Honors

DeJuan Groce's punt return prowess earned him first-team All-America honors from the American Football Coaches Association. Groce was also honored as a first-team All-Big 12 pick as a punt returner and was a second-team all-league selection as a cornerback.

Larson was one of 10 semifinalists for the Ray Guy Award, given annually to the nation's top punter. He was also a second-team All-Big 12 selection. Josh Brown was the first-team All-Big 12 place-kicker according to the league's coaches and earned second-team accolades from the Associated Press.

Several other Huskers received honors from the conference. I-back Dahrran Diedrick was a third-team all-league pick by the coaches, while 15 NU players earned honorable mention all-league honors, led by senior rush end Chris Kelsay and offensive tackle Richie Incognito.

Incognito also earned first-team freshman All-America honors from *The Sporting News* and the Football Writers Association of America. Fabian Washington (CB) earned second-team frosh All-America honors from *TSN*, while David Home (IB) was a fourth-team pick.

Nebraska was also honored off the field last season. Kelsay was one of 14 college football players named to the 2002 National Scholar-Athlete Class and received an \$18,000 postgraduate scholarship. Senior wingback Troy Hassebroek was one of 11 Division I-A players named to the AFCA Good Works Team, which annually honors players for their dedication and commitment to community service. Hassebroek was also crowned as NU's Homecoming King at halftime of the Huskers' game with Kansas.

Huskers Continue Lead Nation in Academic Honors

Nebraska continues to lead the nation in Verizon/CoSIDA academic All-Americans for all sports and all teams with 198; in first-team winners for all sports with 105; and also leads the nation in football academic honor winners with 59 first-team certificates and 76 football all-teams certificates. The 198 is 52 better than second-place Notre Dame, while the 59 football honorees is 21 more than second-place Notre Dame's 38.

Last season, Nebraska had four players named to the Verizon/CoSIDA Academic All-District VII first team—fullback Judd Davies, rush end Chris Kelsay, cornerback Pat Ricketts and tight end Kyle Ringenberg. Davies and Ricketts each posted a perfect 4.0 grade-point average during the fall 2002 semester. Seven other Huskers were second-team all-district selections, led by linebacker Chad Sievers who owns a 4.0 cumulative grade-point average.

The Husker football program also leads the nation with nine NCAA Today's Top Eight Award winners, 30 NCAA postgraduate scholarship winners and 20 National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame Scholar-Athletes, including Kelsay last season.

NU Places 24 Players on Big 12 Academic Teams

Nebraska had 24 players named to the Academic All-Big 12 team last fall, including 18 first-team selections. Senior rush ends Demoiné Adams and Chris Kelsay were honored for the fourth time, while FB Judd Davies, WB Troy Hassebroek, RE Trevor Johnson, CB Pat Ricketts and rover Aaron Terpening were honored for the third time.

The Huskers have nine returning first-team academic all-league picks, including Davies, Johnson, Ricketts, SS Philip Bland, WLB Chad Buller, TE Phil Peetz, MLB Barrett Ruud, SS Shane Siegel and MLB Chad Sievers. Defensive tackle Ryon Bingham, OT Mike Erickson, FB Steve Kriewald and P Kyle Larson return after earning second-team honors in 2002.

Nebraska had 71 football players named to the Big 12 Commissioner's Fall Honor Roll released in February. The honor roll recognizes all Big 12 student-athletes who earned a 3.0 grade-point average or higher during the fall semester. Nine players had perfect 4.0 fall semesters including Davies, Ricketts, Sievers, PK Sandro DeAngelis, QB Curt Dukes, CB Kellen Huston, RE Nathan Krug, OL Kurt Mann and FB Dane Todd.

Nebraska Tops Elite Programs in Consistency

Nebraska ranks third among Division I-A schools in all-time football victories with 771 wins. The Huskers have the nation's best record since 1962, posting a 405-85-5 record in the last 41 seasons. In that period, Nebraska has clearly been the most steady, consistent program in the nation and that is evident when comparing the Huskers' record to the other nine programs among the top 10 in victories.

The Huskers have had just three seasons (including 2002) since 1962 with eight or fewer victories. Eight of the other nine schools in the top 10 have had at least 15 seasons with eight or fewer wins in that span. Nebraska's last losing season occurred in 1961. Michigan has not had a losing record since 1967, however, the other eight schools on the all-time top 10 wins list have all had losing seasons since 1988, including six programs with losing campaigns in the past six seasons.

Nebraska hopes to find itself back in the national rankings and in contention for Big 12 and national honors in 2003. The Huskers need look no further than the top 10 winningest programs for direction. Although each has experienced a downturn of some degree, the group had a strong season in 2002. Eight of the 10 teams won at least nine games and finished ranked in the top 16 in the final Associated Press poll.

College Football's 10 Winningest Programs

School	All-Time Wins	Most Recent Losing Season	Seasons With Eight or Fewer wins Since 1962
Michigan	823	4-6, 1967	16
Notre Dame	791	5-6, 2001	22
Nebraska	771	3-6-1, 1961	3
Texas	766	4-7, 1997	20
Alabama	754	3-8, 2000	15
Penn State	753	5-6, 2001	16
Ohio State	745	4-6-1, 1988	8
Tennessee	726	5-6, 1988	22
Oklahoma	725	5-6, 1998	21
USC	695	5-7, 2000	25

Unprecedented Winning Tradition Continues

Nebraska, the nation's third-winningest program all time (fourth by percentage), boasts a 771-308-40 record in 1,119 games (.707). In the last 34 years, NU is tops, posting a record of 337-67-5 for an .830 winning percentage (409 games), an average of nearly 10 wins per year.

NU has won 10-or-more games 22 times in the Devaney/Osborne/Solich eras (since 1962), went undefeated and untied through the regular season seven times, played in 13 national title games (for at least one of the teams) and won the championship five times. Since the first Nebraska season in 1890, Husker teams have won 11 or more games 12 times, including seven of the last nine years. NU has won 12 or more games seven times, and 13 games three times (1971, 1994 and 1997).

Nebraska's streak of 40 consecutive winning seasons ended with last year's 7-7 mark. The streak was second all-time behind only Notre Dame's 42 (1889-32). NU has 41 straight .500 or better seasons, third behind Penn State's 49 (1939-87) and Notre Dame's 42 (1889-1932). Nebraska (702), Michigan (705), Alabama (728) and Notre Dame (736) were the only four programs to win 700 games in the last century. NU became the first Division I team to win 100 or more games in consecutive decades, ranking first in the 1980s (103-20-0, .837) and second in the 1990s (108-16-1, .890) and posted a nation's best 309-56-5 record in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

NCAA Record 255 Consecutive Sellouts

Nebraska's Memorial Stadium boasts an NCAA-record 255 consecutive sellouts dating back to Hall of Fame Coach Bob Devaney's first year in 1962 (vs. Missouri on Nov. 3). Notre Dame is second in all-time consecutive sellouts with 167, 88 fewer than Nebraska.

NU is 227-28 during the 255 sellouts (50-9 under Devaney, 145-16 under Osborne, 32-3 under Solich). The mark includes a 37-20 record against ranked teams. NU is 5-0 in the four milestone sellouts during that period (50th, 100th, 150th, 200th and 250th sellouts), including a 24-7 win over No. 2 Colorado on Oct. 29, 1994 (No. 200) and a 44-13 victory over Utah State on Sept. 7, 2002 (No. 250).

Looking Ahead to 2003

The 2003 Schedule

Nebraska made a change to its 2003 schedule in late February. The Huskers moved their road game at Southern Mississippi to Thursday, Sept. 25 for a national telecast on ESPN. The contest was previously scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 20 in Hattiesburg, Miss. To accommodate the schedule change, Nebraska dropped San Jose State (Sept. 27) from its schedule and added an Oct. 4 home game against Troy State, marking the third straight year Troy State will visit Memorial Stadium.

The Huskers open the 2003 campaign on Aug. 30 with a home contest against Oklahoma State. The game will mark the first time Nebraska has opened the season against a league opponent since a 64-21 victory over the Cowboys in Stillwater to begin the 1995 season.

In addition to Southern Miss and Troy State, Nebraska's non-conference schedule consists of home games against Utah State (Sept. 6) and Penn State (Sept. 13). Nebraska's second league contest will be at Missouri on Oct. 11. In Big 12 action, Nebraska also travels to Texas (Nov. 1), Kansas (Nov. 8) and Colorado (Nov. 28) and plays host to Oklahoma State (Aug. 30), Texas A&M (Oct. 18), Iowa State (Oct. 25) and Kansas State (Nov. 15). In all, the Huskers will face seven teams that participated in a bowl game last season, including non-conference foes Penn State and Southern Miss. With seven home games in 2003, Nebraska expects to extend its NCAA-record sellout streak to 262 games by the close of the season.

A Look at the 2003 Huskers

Nebraska returns 14 starters for the 2003 season, including five players on offense, eight on defense and its punter. The Huskers do lose 11 starters, but will enter the 2003 season as a more experienced team than a season ago.

The Husker defense boasts three returning starters on the front line—nose tackle Ryon Bingham, defensive tackle Patrick Kabongo and rush end Trevor Johnson. MLB Barrett Ruud and WLB Demorrio Williams return to starting roles and cornerback Fabian Washington and safeties Philip Bland and Josh Bullocks are back in the Husker secondary.

Nebraska returns three starters on its offensive line, in addition to quarterback Jammal Lord and fullback Judd Davies. The Huskers will have new starters at all three receiver positions and I-back. Kyle Larson will begin his third season as the Huskers' starting punter, but four-year starter Josh Brown must be replaced at place-kicker.

2003 Huskers by Position

2002 starters in caps, number of 2002 regular-season starts in (); *denotes letters earned; lists include returning lettermen only.

The Offense

Nebraska returns five starters on offense and loses six from last season. Offensive guard Wes Cody and center John Garrison exhausted their eligibility in the Husker offensive line. Also gone from last year's starting lineup are I-back Dahrran Diedrick, Nebraska's No. 8 all-time leading rusher, receivers Wilson Thomas and Troy Hassebroek and tight end Aaron Golliday.

The Huskers have ample experience returning at several of the positions where starters were lost. Five lettermen return at I-back, while four receivers and a pair of tight ends have lettered coming into 2003.

Offensive Line...

Lettermen Lost...

LT: Scott Koethe***

LG: None

C: JOHN GARRISON**** (14)
David Kolowski*

RG: WES CODY*** (13)

RT: Nate Kolterman***

Lettermen Returning...

Nick Povendo* (2)

MIKE ERICKSON** (14)

RICHIE INCOGNITO* (13)

Josh Sewell*

Junior Tagoa'i** (1)

Jake Andersen*

DAN VILI WALDROP (13)***

Chris Loos**

The Offensive Line in Brief...Nebraska returns three starters for the 2003 season and five players who saw extensive playing time last fall. In addition, Nebraska is expected to regain the services of a pair of veterans who have had injury-plagued Husker careers.

Sophomore Richie Incognito earned freshman All-America honors as an offensive tackle last season. He will move inside this fall to anchor the Husker line from the center position, where he will replace two-year starter John Garrison. Solich said Incognito has all the tools to continue Nebraska's tradition of excellent centers, a position that has produced seven Husker All-Americans since 1980.

"That is a pivotal spot for us," Solich said. "You need a guy that can take a first step and control things from that position. It'll be a change, but I don't think it's a change that will be difficult for him, or anyone to adapt to, if they have the talent. He has the strength, he has the drive

and determination to be an excellent player there."

Junior Mike Erickson returns as the starter at left guard, while Dan Vili Waldrop has started each of the past two years at right tackle. In addition, junior Nick Povendo started two games at offensive tackle last season and is a frontrunner to fill Incognito's shoes at left tackle. Offensive guard Junior Tagoa'i gained valuable experience last season and is a strong candidate to start at right offensive guard.

Offensive guard Jake Andersen and center Josh Sewell also lettered last season as reserves and will look for increased playing time this fall. Senior tackle Chris Loos has earned two letters and returns after missing all of last season with a knee injury. Tim Green missed all of last season with a back injury, but is at 100 percent for spring ball and could make a push for playing time at offensive guard.

Solich is high on a group of redshirt freshmen offensive linemen that includes Jemayel Phillips (6-6, 370), Jermaine Leslie (6-1, 315) Kurt Mann (6-3, 290) and Cory Timm (6-4, 325). Leslie is expected to miss spring ball after suffering a broken ankle during bowl preparations.

Receivers...

Lettermen Lost...

TE: AARON GOLLIDAY**** (12)

Jon Bowling**** (4)

Kyle Ringenberg** (1)

Will Dabbert*

WR: WILSON THOMAS**** (12)

Lettermen Returning...

Matt Herian*

Phil Peetz**

Ross Pilkington*

Mark LeFlore*

Tim Liley*

WR: TROY HASSEBROEK**** (7)

Ben Zajicek**

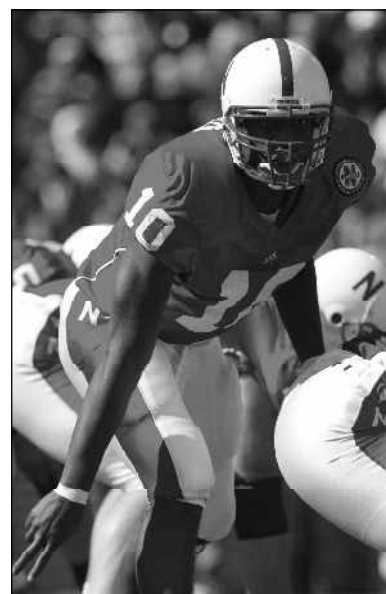
John Klem*** (5)

Ben Cornelsen***

The Receivers in Brief...Nebraska loses all three starters at its receiver positions. Split end Wilson Thomas finished his career sixth on NU's career receptions list. Aaron Golliday was a dominant blocking force at tight end for Nebraska and Troy Hassebroek supplied steady play at wingback. Five other lettermen graduated, leaving the Huskers with a young, but talented receiving corps.

This spring, Nebraska will label its two wideout positions simply as wide receivers, instead of split end and wingback. Sophomores Ross Pilkington and Mark LeFlore both saw extensive action at split end last season as true freshmen. Pilkington set the NU freshman receptions record (14) and receiving yards (301). LeFlore flashed big-play potential as a rookie. Tim Liley and Ben Zajicek also have experience at wideout. Matt Herian showed the potential of a future star as a true freshman tight end, averaging 43 yards on seven receptions, including four touchdowns. He is joined at tight end by senior Phil Peetz.

Kiffin Wigert, Mike McLaughlin, Jake O'Holleran and Ryan Ommert will all look to gain experience in the spring, while Isaiah Fluellen redshirted last season and should provide excellent speed on the perimeter. Tight end Chris Septak has been limited because of injury throughout his Husker career, but hopes to break out this spring.



Jammal Lord engineered the Husker offense in 2002, and set NU single-game records for total offense and rushing yards by a quarterback.

Running Backs...

Lettermen Lost...

IB: DAHRRAN DIEDRICK**** (13)

FB: Paul Kastl***

Lettermen Returning...

David Horne*
Josh Davis** (1)
Cory Ross* (1)
Marques Simmons*
Robin Miller**
JUDD DAVIES*** (13)
Steve Kriewald**
DeAntae Grixby***

The Running Backs in Brief...Dahrran Diedrick finished his career with more than 2,700 yards to rank eighth on NU's all-time rushing list. He graduated along with reserve fullback Paul Kastl.

The battle to replace Diedrick will include five returning lettermen, led by sophomore David Horne who rushed for more than 651 yards in nine games last season. Behind Horne, senior Josh Davis and sophomore Cory Ross also saw extensive playing time last fall. Sophomore Marques Simmons and senior Robin Miller both had outstanding spring practice sessions a year ago and could also figure in the mix.

Solich noted that the Huskers have outstanding depth at the position, but will be looking for a player to emerge this spring and clearly move to the top of the depth chart.

Fullback Judd Davies returns for his senior season after starting each of the past two years. He will be backed up by Steve Kriewald for the third straight year, while DeAntae Grixby played fullback last season, but could also return to his old position of I-back. Kriewald will miss spring ball after off-season ankle surgery.

Redshirt freshmen Grant Miller and Dane Todd both sat out last season as redshirts and will look to gain experience this spring.

Quarterbacks...

Lettermen Lost...

QB: Joe Chrisman****

Lettermen Returning...

JAMMAL LORD*** (14)
Mike Stuntz**

The Quarterbacks in Brief...Jammal Lord returns after starting all 14 games as a junior last season. Lord was brilliant at times, setting a Nebraska season record for total offense with 2,774 yards. Lord rushed for more than 1,400 yards to establish a new Nebraska season quarterback record and post the third-highest rushing total ever by a Division I-A quarterback.

According to Solich, Lord's focus this spring will be on improving his passing accuracy and consistency. Lord completed 46.6 percent of his passes last season, and Solich and quarterbacks coach Turner Gill are hopeful of that number pushing 60 percent this fall.

Lord will again wear a hands-off "green jersey" during spring practice. Solich said the coaching staff will evaluate the quarterback position like all others in spring ball, but that Lord has a clear edge at the position.

"He's still our only quarterback with a lot of game experience," Solich said. "We have a great deal of confidence in Jammal. At times last season, his talent showed as well as anyone playing college ball. Look at some of his runs, and even some of his passes."

Junior Mike Stuntz backed up Lord last season and saw action in six games, with his most extensive action at Iowa State. Stuntz's strength is his throwing ability. Redshirt freshman quarterback Curt Dukes hopes to participate in some of spring ball. He is recovering from December knee surgery and will likely have limited contact in the spring. Nebraska's only loss at the quarterback position was four-year letterman Joe Chrisman, who saw limited playing time at quarterback, but was Nebraska's holder for the past two seasons.

The Defense

Nebraska returns eight regular starters from last season's defense and 10 players who started five games or more in 2002. The Husker defense is far more experienced in 2003 than it was heading into the 2002 campaign. Nebraska lost just five players with significant starting

experience last season, however each of the four made solid contributions for each of the past four years. Rush end Chris Kelsay and cornerback DeJuan Groce earned all-conference honors last season, while linebacker Scott Shanle, defensive tackle Jon Clanton and rush end Demoin Adams also made significant contributions. Rush end Justin Smith was also a consistent performer throughout his career and each earned four letters.

Defensive Line...

Lettermen Lost...

LRE: CHRIS KELSAY****(9)
Justin Smith**** (2)

NT: None

DT: JON CLANTON**** (7)
Matt Behrends*

RRE: DEMOINE ADAMS**** (8)

Lettermen Returning...

Benard Thomas**

RYON BINGHAM** (14)

Titus Adams*

PATRICK KABONGO*** (7)

Le Kevin Smith*

Seppo Ewwaraye*

TREVOR JOHNSON*** (9)

The Rush Ends/Defensive Linemen Briefly...One of Nebraska's deepest positions is the interior defensive line. The Huskers return five lettermen at the two tackle positions, led by seniors Ryon Bingham and Patrick Kabongo. Bingham started all 14 games last season and finished the year with 67 tackles, including nine tackles for loss. Kabongo started half of the Huskers' games last season and registered 62 tackles, including nine against Iowa State.

The Huskers also welcome back three sophomore tackles who have shown flashes of being dominant players in the future. Le Kevin Smith saw significant playing time last season and finished the year with 42 stops, including six TFL. Titus Adams recorded 21 tackles in 13 games and showed excellent pass-rushing ability. Seppo Ewwaraye missed most of last season with a shoulder injury, but showed the ability to be a factor during an impressive 2002 spring practice session. The Huskers could also regain the services of Jason Lohr who has missed most of the last two seasons with knee injuries. He is petitioning for an extra year of eligibility. Brandon Greeson redshirted last year as a freshman, but is expected to make a push for playing time this spring.

The rush end position will get a long look from position coach Jeff Jamrog this spring. Kelsay, Smith and Adams combined for 55 career starts, including 29 by Kelsay. Senior Trevor Johnson showed flashes of becoming a dominant force at rush end in starting nine games last season. Johnson recorded 54 tackles and tied for third on the team with 11 tackles for loss.

Beyond Johnson, the rush end picture is unsettled. Junior Benard Thomas was a valuable reserve in 2000 and 2001, but sat out last season as a redshirt. Thomas possesses the size (6-4, 265) and ability to be a dominant player at the position. Tyler Toline saw limited action as a reserve last season, while Adam Carriker and Jay Moore sat out as redshirts and will be expected to push for playing time. Nebraska signed two rush ends this winter, including junior college prospect Wali Muhammad, who could push for playing time this fall.

Linebackers...

Lettermen Lost...

BLB: SCOTT SHANLE****(10)
Gabe Fries*

MLB: None

WLB: None

Lettermen Returning...

Ira Cooper** (1)

BARRETT RUUD** (14)

Chad Sievers*

Steve Safranek**

DEMORRIO WILLIAMS* (11)

T.J. Hollowell*** (2)

Chad Buller*

Lannie Hopkins* (1)

The Linebackers Briefly...New linebackers coach Jimmy Williams welcomes back eight lettermen for 2003. The Huskers lose the services of Sam linebacker Scott Shanle, who started 28 games over the past three seasons. The Sam 'backer position has been renamed "Buck" in new defensive coordinator Bo Pelini's scheme. Junior Ira Cooper is the only

returning letterman at the spot. He finished last season with 12 tackles and was a valuable special teams player. Sophomore Adam Ickes saw limited reserve time last season and will push for playing time this spring.

The weakside linebacker spot is loaded with four talented returning lettermen, who combined for 185 tackles last year. Demorrio Williams led NU in tackles last season with 92 stops, including six tackles for loss. He displayed outstanding play-making abilities from the position, while sharing time with fellow Texan T.J. Hollowell. A three-year letterman, Hollowell recorded 60 tackles and had nine quarterback hurries on the season. A versatile performer who has seen time at all three linebacker spots, Hollowell could try his hand at another spot during spring ball.

Junior Lannie Hopkins was a pass rush specialist and reserve rover last season, but has moved to linebacker for spring ball. Hopkins had 24 tackles, including five tackles for loss. Chad Buller also returns at position after recording nine tackles last season, primarily on special teams.

The Huskers return three lettermen at middle linebacker, led by junior Barrett Ruud who started all 14 games last season. Ruud was second on the team with 91 tackles and was second on the squad with 12 tackles for loss. He also had 14 quarterback hurries. Chad Sievers battled injuries throughout his sophomore season, but played in nine games and made 37 tackles. He had knee surgery late in the season and is hopeful of taking part in spring ball. Steve Safranek has earned letters each of the past two seasons as a reserve at the position, while senior Curt Tomasevicz provides valuable depth at the position.

Secondary...

Lettermen Lost...

LCB: Jay White*

FS: None

SS: Aaron Terpening**** (2)

RCB: DEJUAN GROCE**** (14)

Lettermen Returning...

FABIAN WASHINGTON* (11)

Terrell Butler*

Willie Amos**

JOSH BULLOCKS* (5)

Jerrell Pippens***

PHILIP BLAND** (13)

Daniel Bullocks* (1)

Shane Siegel* (1)

PAT RICKETTS*** (8)

Lornell McPherson** (4)

The Secondary Briefly...Nebraska must fill big shoes on the right corner in the form of four-year letterman DeJuan Groce. He finished his career with eight interceptions and 41 pass breakups. However, first-year secondary coach Marvin Sanders returns the services of six players with at least five career starts.

Sophomore cornerback Fabian Washington started 11 games last season opposite Groce and led the Huskers with 13 pass breakups and tied for the team lead with four interceptions. The second-team freshman All-American also made 49 tackles and possesses great speed, closing winter conditioning with a 4.47 electronic 40-yard dash time. Junior Willie Amos was Nebraska's starter two seasons ago at free safety. He moved to corner last spring, but suffered a season-ending knee injury in mid-April. He is hopeful of returning for at least part of spring practice and would make an impact at cornerback. Senior Terrell Butler has provided valuable depth the past two seasons.

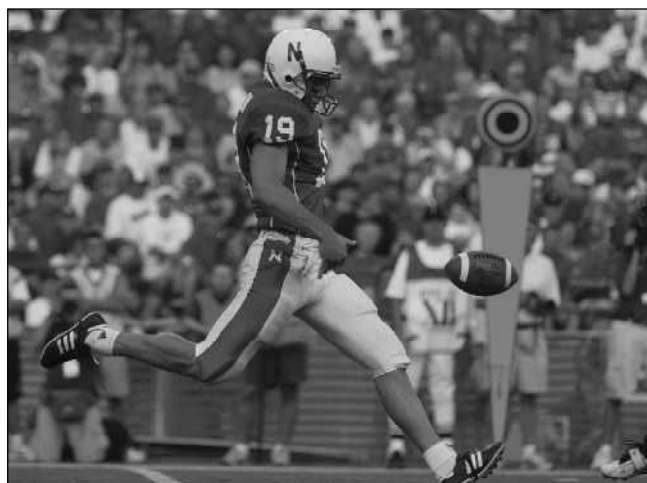
Senior Pat Ricketts and junior Lornell McPherson both have extensive starting experience in Nebraska's nickel and dime packages in their Husker careers. Ricketts started eight games last season and finished with 56 tackles and 10 pass breakups, while McPherson had 17 tackles. The pair will get the first shot at replacing Groce in the starting lineup.

Sophomore free safety Josh Bullocks started five games last season and continued to improve throughout the season. He finished the year with 48 tackles. Also back at free safety is three-year letterman Jerrell Pippens, who had 33 tackles and played a key role on NU's special teams.

Junior Philip Bland started 13 games last season splitting time between free safety and rover, a position now called strong safety. He is expected to play a key role again this fall, but will not see action this spring after undergoing off-season shoulder surgery. Bland finished with 84 tackles last season. Also back at strong safety is Daniel Bullocks, who

started one game and had 16 tackles last season. Sophomore Shane Siegel saw reserve time at corner last season, but has moved to strong safety. Siegel posted the team's best Performance Index during testing following winter conditioning.

The Huskers stressed the secondary during the recruiting season, signing four defensive backs, including junior college cornerback Donald DeFrاند, who could push for playing time this fall.



Kyle Larson has ranked among the nation's best punters for the past two years. He was one of 10 semifinalists for the Ray Guy Award last season.

Kickers/Return/Specialists

Lettermen Lost...

PK: JOSH BROWN**** (13)

Punter: None

Holder: JOE CHRISMAN**** (14)

Snapper: JOHN GARRISON**** (14)

DAVID KOLOWSKI*

PR: DeJUAN GROCE**** (14)

Ben Cornelsen***

KOR: None

Lettermen Returning...

Sandro DeAngelis*

KYLE LARSON** (14)

None

None

Cory Ross*

JOSH DAVIS** (14)

Marques Simmons*

The Specialists Briefly...Nebraska had one of the nation's top special teams units last season. Place-kicker Josh Brown was a four-year starter for the Huskers who finished his career as Nebraska's third-leading scorer. He also handled kickoff duties. Junior Sandro DeAngelis split time with Brown in 2001 and is the heir apparent to handle the kicking duties. DeAngelis made 2-of-3 field goals in 2001.

Punter Kyle Larson returns for his senior season, his third as a starter. Larson was a second-team All-Big 12 pick and a Ray Guy semifinalist in 2002 when he averaged 43.2 yards per punt. Larson buried opponents inside the 20-yard line 23 times last season and had at least one punt of 45 yards or more in all but one game. Larson has a career punting average of 42.9 yards per attempt. Sophomore Sam Koch will back up Larson. The kickoff return duties are in the capable hands of senior Josh Davis, who has held the position for the past two seasons. A year ago, Davis set Nebraska records for kickoff return attempts and single-game, season and career kickoff return yardage. Marques Simmons also has kickoff return ability and could again back up Davis.

Nebraska must replace DeJuan Groce as a punt returner. He handled the duties the past two seasons and tied an NCAA record with four punt return touchdowns last year. Ben Cornelsen backed Groce last season and has also graduated.

The Huskers must also replace long snapper John Garrison, short snapper David Kolowski and holder Joe Chrisman. Center Richie Incognito has experience as a long snapper, while Cory Ross could get a look as a punt returner.