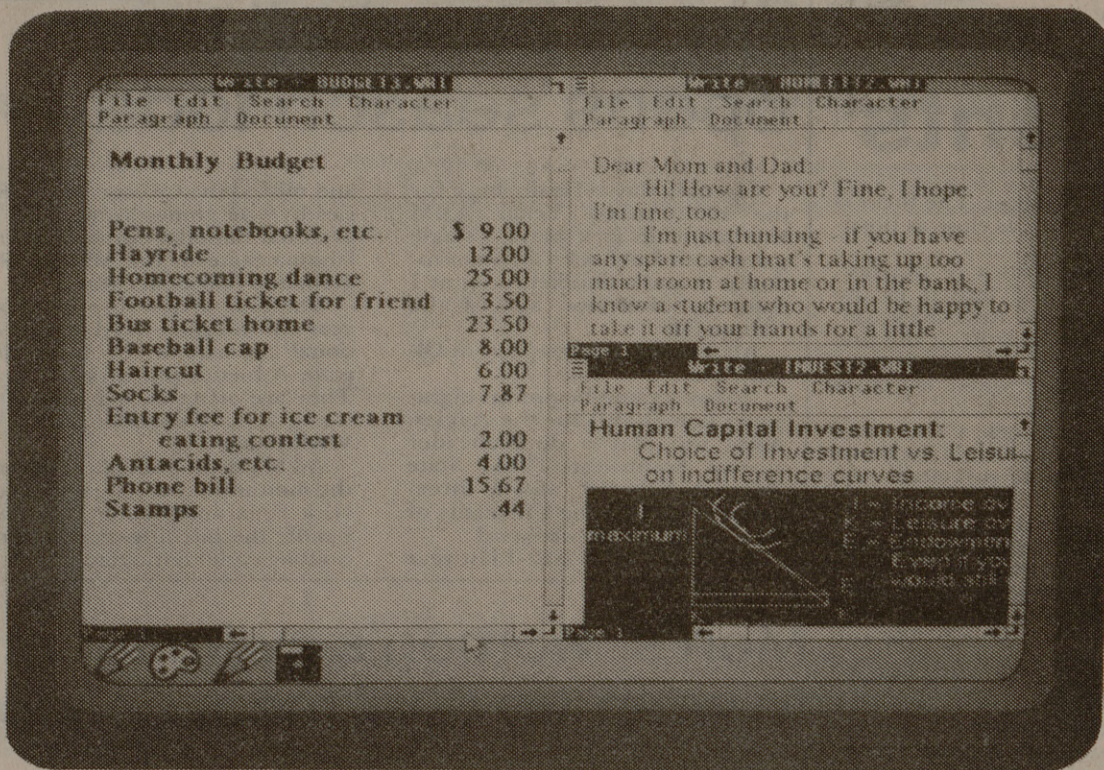


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Aggie-Husker matchup definite for '88 Kickoff Classic Aug. 27

From Staff and Wire Reports

Nebraska and Texas A&M, both with designs on college football's national championship, will open the 1988 season in the sixth annual Kickoff Classic.

The New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority, which puts on the game at Giants Stadium, announced the matchup Thursday and said the Kickoff Classic will be played on Saturday night, Aug. 27.

"Both teams should be ranked in the top 10 going into the season, so whichever team loses probably won't drop off the cliff," A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill said.

Nebraska finished sixth in the final 1987 Associated Press poll and A&M was 10th, both with 10-2 records. They have met on five occasions, the last time in 1972, with Nebraska winning four of the five.

Nebraska defeated Penn State 44-6 in the first Kickoff Classic in 1983 while A&M, winner of three straight Southwest Conference championships, is making its first appearance. It also is the first time the SWC is represented.

"These teams are genuine candidates for the 1988 national championship, and the game will have national impact," said Bob Mulcahy, president and chief executive officer of the Sports Authority.

"It gives us the highest ranked teams since Miami and Auburn in 1984, and we look for a blockbuster game."

When Miami defeated Auburn 20-18 in Kickoff Classic II, the Hurricanes were coming off the 1983 national championship and Auburn had finished third.

An NCAA rule limiting a team to one Kickoff Classic appearance in five years prevented Miami from being invited this year.

The addition of Nebraska gives A&M another rugged game on a schedule which includes September dates with three 1987 bowl teams — LSU, Alabama and Oklahoma State.

"They can accuse me of a lot of things, but they can't accuse me of dodging anybody," said Sherrill, who also is A&M's athletic director. "I don't think anyone in the country will play a schedule as tough as that one."

"Jackie Sherrill the athletic director woke up this morning and wanted to play this game. Jackie Sherrill the coach is still asleep. I suppose I'll take a saliva test tomorrow."

"It's a great opportunity for us to play a team the caliber of Nebraska in front of a national audience — but that's why our players come to A&M: to play national-caliber competition. I hope we can be a good representative of the Southwest Conference."

"There are two ways to look at it (the schedule). We're taking on a very tough schedule, but in our conference we're fighting for the Cotton Bowl and playing those four people up front is going to prepare us for the conference race."

"Last year, playing LSU and Washington in our first two games certainly prepared us for the conference race."

Athletic Department officials originally had cast doubt on A&M's participation in the game because the game would be only one week before the Aggies' regular-season opener against LSU. Athletic Department officials had said as late as Monday night A&M might not play in the game.

Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne was unavailable, but Athletic Director Bob Devaney said the Cornhus-

ers were picked because of football tradition. Nebraska has at least nine games for 19 consecutive seasons.

"The players and coaches looking forward to the game," Devaney said.

Nebraska won its first nine games last year and was ranked No. 12 in the nation before losing to Oklahoma State 17-7. The Cornhuskers then lost to Colorado but lost to Florida State 28 in the Fiesta Bowl.

The Cornhuskers will be led by senior quarterback Steve Taylor, defensive end Broderick Thomas.

After a 2-2 start last season, Nebraska won its last eight games, including a 35-10 rout of Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl, and has the second longest winning streak by All-American linebacker Roper, the Aggies finished nationally in total defense, 244.7 yards a game.

The Kickoff Classic guarantees each team a minimum of \$100,000. The College Football Hall of Fame in Kings Island, Ohio, pays \$350,000 a year while the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics gets \$225,000 and American Football Coaches Association receives \$100,000.

Under the ground rules, the Kickoff Classic had to invite at least one team from each of seven conferences plus independents in the first year.

A&M's appearance satisfies requirements since the key word is "invite." Independents Penn State, Miami and Boston College played the first three Kickoff Classics in the Big Eight, Southeastern Conference, Western Athletic Conference, Big 10 and now the SWC have represented. Atlantic Coast Conference and Pac-10 teams have received invitations.

Navratilova survives upset bid in tourney

DALLAS (AP) — Top-seeded Martina Navratilova, trailing 2-4 in the first set, rallied to a 6-4, 6-2, third-round victory over Larisa Savchenko of the Soviet Union Thursday in the \$250,000 Virginia Slims of Dallas.

Savchenko's serve-and-volley game and unpredictable tactics confounded Navratilova early in the match.

Navratilova went ahead 5-4, then had to fight off a break point before she closed out the first set.

"She made some crazy shots, shots you wouldn't normally try in certain situations," Navratilova said. "You wonder if she's really that good, if she knows what she's doing, or what. She either hits a winner or misses."

Savchenko, 21, is one of six Soviet women competing this winter on the

Virginia Slims tour in preparation for Olympic competition. Eighth-seeded Natalia Zvereva, the 16-year-old top junior in the world, is the only Soviet player left in the tournament. She faces second-seeded Pam Shriver in one of Friday's quarterfinals.

"It was very bad," Savchenko said through her interpreter, Soviet coach Olga Morozova. "When I was ahead, I wasn't exactly nervous but I didn't really believe I could win. I knew what I had to do. I just didn't have enough concentration."

"You have to believe you can do it," Morozova said. "You have to be strong inside and she's not really strong yet."

The two other seeded players in action Thursday night easily advanced.

Fourth-seeded Zina Garrison of Houston downed Maria Lindqvist of Sweden, 6-1, 6-1. Seventh-seeded Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria won 6-0, 6-1, winner over Gigi Fernandez of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Garrison will meet Katerina Maleeva in Friday's quarterfinals. Maleeva's sister, Manuela, faces Lou Daniels in another quarterfinal match.

Navratilova, playing for the time since the Australian Open, met sixth-seeded Barbara Potter in Friday's quarterfinals. Navratilova seeking to regain the top ranking she lost to West German Steffi Graf.

"Potsie (Potter) has a big serve, has really improved from a year ago," Navratilova said. "It would be a footrace to the net."

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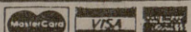
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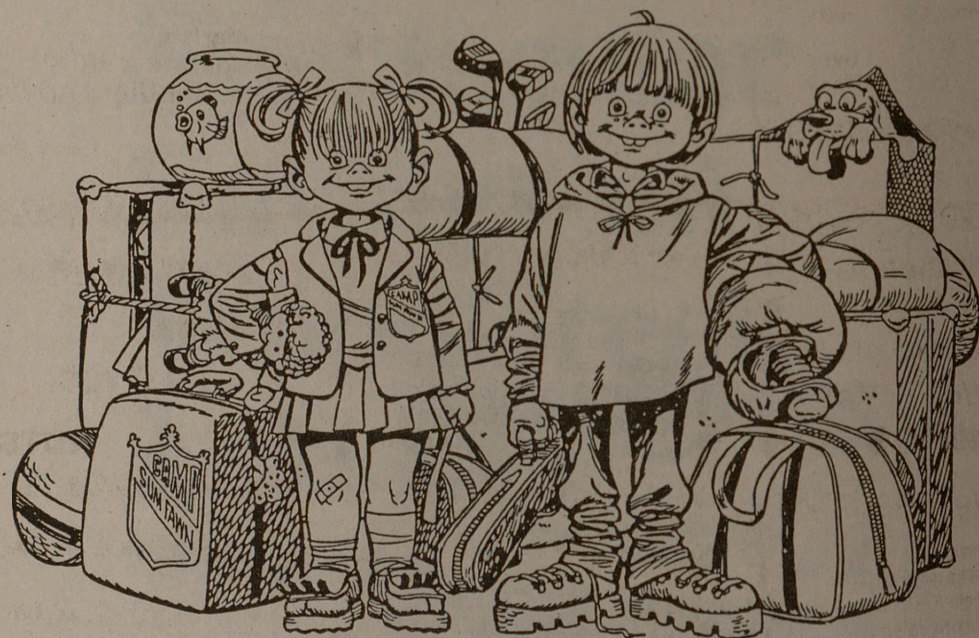


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