

No Fear

Cross Training with Eric Hagg

An emerging star for the Nebraska football team is sophomore defensive back, Eric Hagg. He has been a perfect fit for the Huskers at nickel back. His team's perfect season ended this past week when Virginia Tech upset the Huskers 35-30. Eric's team rallied from a 28-10 hole that was dug from turnovers and mental mistakes to make for an exciting fourth quarter. Just a year ago, it's not very likely that the Huskers would have come to life in the second half for the rally. In fact, following the game, former Husker coach Tom Osborne told an assistant coach, "There were a lot of positive things from tonight's game. I'm not sure last year's team could have rallied from behind like these guys did." I agree, last year's team seemed to struggle with fear - the fear of losing, the fear of not meeting the high expectations that surround a program like Nebraska. Something has changed, not just in the football program, but in the life of some of the players as well.



Q: Who do you play for?

A: Doing sports God's way is about playing for Jesus, rather than the fans, teammates or even coaches. That's not to say that they don't matter, but you're really playing for the Lord. During the game, I'm aware of His presence as I talk with Him in prayer. That helps to remind me that God gave me these abilities and I need to stay focused on playing my best for His glory.

Q: What did you learn from the FCA Doing Sports God's Way Camp this past summer?

A: I learned to use focal points (reminders) to help me stay focused on giving my best effort even when the circumstances are difficult. I write "play for God" and "don't fear" on my arm before every game. The Bible says over 300 times "don't fear" so this helps remind me that the Lord didn't put a spirit of fear in me.

Q: How does God's Word help you deal with fear?

A: I used to be fearful of getting hurt on the football field, but once I understood that a Christian should have "no fear" because the Lord gave us a spirit of power, love and self-control according to 2 Timothy 1:7. Now I play as hard and fast as possible.

Q: What are you reading in the Bible?

A: Right now, I'm reading the Book of Romans, but this past summer I read the Book of James. The study on James helped me to better control my anger. James 1:19, says, "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger"

WARMUP

1. Watch the internet interview with Eric Hagg. Go to www.youtube.com and search for "Cross Training with Eric Hagg"

WORKOUT

1. Can you relate to Eric's fear in becoming hurt or Failing in his sport? Explain.
2. What is your favorite movie featuring acts of courage?
3. Describe a time when you or your teammates showed Tremendous courage in the face of opposition or fear.
4. How can showing courage make a difference to People around you?
5. Read John 6:22-67. How did Jesus show courage in this Situation? What are other examples of Jesus' courage?
6. What would be the impact on your team if you demonstrated the same type of courage that Jesus did?

WRAPUP

This week, memorize . . .

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control!" 2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)

PRAYER

Lord, I desire to be courageous in my words and actions. Help me to . . .

GOSPEL FOCUS

You can't always preach the positives...you have to preach the negatives, because the negatives are needed to bring some folks to Christ. If you have never committed yourself to Jesus Christ, you are separated from Him by a gulf that you could never ever span on your own. Not all of your good deeds, self-righteousness, or religion could do it. The only way that gulf can be spanned is for you to recognize your sin and receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

– John MacArthur

Gordon Thiessen is the founder of Cross Training Publishing and serves as the Director of Training and Resources for the Nebraska Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He is author of 12 books for Christian athletes and coaches that can be found at www.crosstrainingpublishing.com.

Visit www.nebraskafca.org for more lessons