

Sooners prove they're top team

NORMAN, Okla. — All right, so Oklahoma doesn't have it all.

The offense chugs more than it hums. Senior quarterback Nate Hybl leaves you yearning for more. The place-kicker is average, and the punter might be a notch below that.

But entering the final month of college football's regular season, the Sooners (8-0, 4-0) have established themselves as the nation's best team.

On Saturday, as No. 1 Miami struggled at Rutgers, No. 4 and 6 Notre Dame lost to Boston College and No. 8 and 10 North Carolina State lost to Georgia Tech, No. 2 OU methodically defeated a third straight ranked opponent.

Oklahoma, a 27-11 winner over No. 12 and 13 Colorado, has become a master of playing to its strengths and avoiding its weaknesses.

That means:  
 ■ Letting its defense create turnovers, which it did against CU with two interceptions and one fumble in the first 35 minutes.

■ Having its special teams define field position, which they did with two fumbled kickoff recoveries in the first half.

■ Keeping the offense in a spot where it can plug along at its own speed. Hybl completed only 10 of 23 passes, but three were for touchdowns.

"This is starting to remind me of our Orange Bowl year," said junior defensive tackle Kory See Barfknecht: Page 2

Iowa closer to smelling the roses

By CRAIG SESKER  
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

IOWA CITY, Iowa — The packed house of 70,397 fans at Kinnick Stadium stood and roared its approval as the final seconds ticked off the clock Saturday afternoon.

But nobody threatened to rip down the goal posts, and the postgame celebration was, relatively subdued.

The No. 9 Iowa Hawkeyes were favored to win and expected to win, and they did exactly that by capturing their seventh straight game with a business-like 20-3 Big Ten football win over Wisconsin.

Iowa is 6-0 in the Big Ten for the first time in school history and is 9-1 overall for the first time since 1991. The Hawkeyes See Hawkeyes: Page 2

Huskers, fans left in anguish after dream comeback ends in heartbreak against Texas

PICKED OFF



Texas Coach Mack Brown, left, and Nebraska Quarterbacks Coach Turner Gill console Husker quarterback Jammal Lord, who ran for 234 yards. JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD

By ELIZABETH MERRILL  
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

LINCOLN — In a stomach-churning minute, the Nebraska football team went from dejection to jubilation to down in the dumps again.

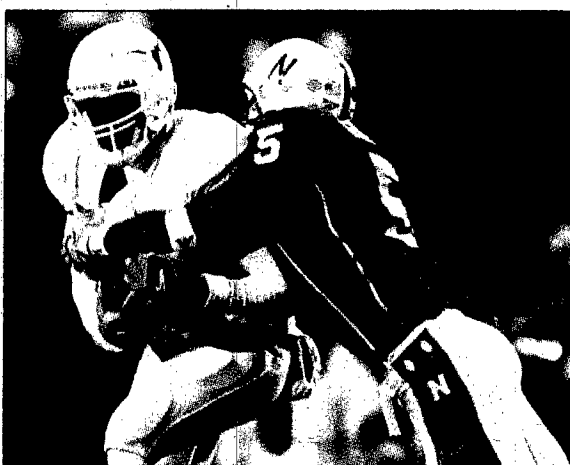
It was a microcosm of this unpredictable season, the Huskers' 27-24 loss to No. 7 Texas on Saturday night. The story kept changing.

The Nebraska football team's 26-game home winning streak came crashing down in dramatic fashion, and the talk today probably won't be about Jammal Lord's inspired game or the Huskers' moxy.

It'll probably focus on Coach Frank Solich's decision to go for the end zone — and the win — with 10 seconds left and a record crowd of 78,268 holding its collective breath.

Lord's pass fell into the outstretched hands of Nathan Vasher, and the Longhorns stormed the field in celebration. All Nebraska was left with was a dead-silent stadium and a 6-4 record.

"I feel badly for our players,"



Wide receiver Roy Williams makes a catch in front of Nebraska cornerback DeJuan Groce in the second quarter. The play gained 14 yards to the Texas 43 yard line. JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD

said Solich, whose team dropped to 2-3 in the Big 12. "I thought they played their hearts out. They put themselves in position to win the game.

"The decision to not kick the

field goal was a soul-searching decision. Certainly if I had to do it all over again, I would do it."

Character wasn't an issue in See Huskers: Page 2

Eyes of Nebraska on Solich's call

LINCOLN — Kick. Kick. Kick. Kick. Kick.

Hindsight is always 20-20, but this time hindsight was 27-24. Nebraska had a chance to win this one. A chance to take Texas into overtime. A chance to let the wild crowd and wild night take the Huskers into a mad run through November.

Somehow, this autumn classic had fallen into Frank Solich's lap.

The Huskers trailed 27-17 with three minutes left. Then all heck and DeJuan Groce broke loose. Suddenly, the Comeback Corn had been given the gift of new life and suddenly were a chip shot away from tying the game and taking Texas into overtime at Memorial Stadium, where the Huskers never, ever lose.

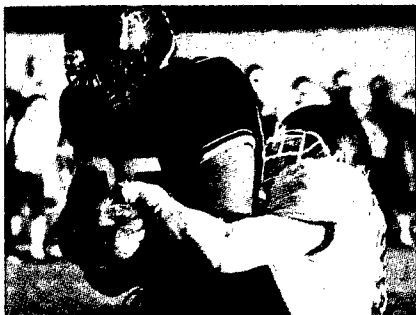
Except to Texas. The Longhorns, the last to leave here victorious, four years and 26 Husker wins ago, somehow survived, 27-24. in See Shatel: Page 2



Tom Shatel

Solich got greedy. That's the only way to explain it. He was feeling good. Too good.

INSIDE



Dirge

Matt Huebner and his St. Cloud State teammates wiped out UNO while racking up a 47-19 victory.



Surge

After trailing at halftime, Willie McGahee and the No. 1-ranked Miami Hurricanes used a strong fourth quarter to stop Rutgers, 42-17.



Purge

Quarterback Seneca Wallace's record-breaking day was instrumental in boosting Iowa State past Missouri, 42-35.



Submerge

Derrick Knight, No. 20, and Brian St. Pierre helped engineer Boston College's 14-7 upset of previously undefeated Notre Dame.

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