

# College Football

## NU Takes Bite Out of Wildcats

Tom Shatel



### NU Targets New Orleans

Manhattan, Kan. I don't think we're in Arizona anymore, T.O.

Brian Kavanagh is no Jake Plummer. Or Scott Frost, for that matter. And while Aggieville will never be confused with Bourbon Street, another Nebraska football trip to Kansas State turned into the Big Easy.

But make no mistake: Bourbon Street is on the agenda. Say, Jan. 2, 1997.

You can book it. Right now, Nebraska will be in the Sugar Bowl, against either Florida or Florida State, to play for some part of the national championship trophy. Maybe the wood base part of it.

### Field Narrows

The national title game of musical chairs continued to narrow Saturday, but the Huskers still have a chair. Permanently, it says here. It's not that a 39-3 victory over Can't State makes you world-beaters so much as what Nebraska's third victory of the season was made of.

1) A defense, maybe its best ever, that creates more chaos than Mardi Gras.

2) A right leg, maybe the school's best ever, with more kick than a hurricane.

3) An offense, with the newest star I-back stretching his legs, that stopped playing like the Satirists.

Nebraska. New Orleans. Book it.

After the Huskers' forgettable showing in the desert two weeks ago, maybe it didn't seem possible or out of their hands. Nebraska still has no control over Ohio State or Arizona State. But the teams the Huskers do have control over—starting with themselves—are a different story.

### Possible Pothole

Texas Tech? A possible pothole, but the Red Raiders couldn't beat Kansas State. Kansas? Colorado? The Huskers won't lose at home. Texas or whoever else wins the "Going South" Division of the Big XII? No. Not if this is the real Nebraska team. Not if this Nebraska team keeps showing up.

"This is how things were supposed to happen all year," linebacker Jon Hesse said. "Which one is the real Nebraska? I sure hope this one is, here. We feel pretty good about ourselves now."

Indeed, whatever confidence was lost two weeks ago in the 19-0 debacle to Arizona State has now been regained. Back to square one. The Arizona State game was not a fluke. It was a very real thrashing. But Saturday the Huskers showed that that hapless scenario will never be played out again this season.

Which one is the real Nebraska?

That was the very real question heading into a game that looked like another dangerous set-up. Another "goal-post" game. Road game. Crazy crowd. A Kansas State team with a ball-control passing game and a wily coach smart enough to walk his quarterback through the pass-rush booby traps. And a Nebraska offense that had showed it could pummel Colorado State, but little else.

### Big Difference

What a difference two weeks, and two teams, make.

Kansas State's offense was pathetic, Kansas State gained 86 yards on 52 plays (1.7 yards per play). And Kavanagh (5 of 19 for 34 yards, two interceptions) was not on the kind of Vegas roll that Arizona State quarterback Jake "The Snake" Plummer hit two weeks ago in the desert.

The difference was, he never got the chance.

That was a major lesson learned by the Blackshirts in two weeks. Plummer took ASU down the field on its first possession and stuck six points into the Blackshirts' heart. The ASU crowd jumped into the game. ASU's confidence became a tidal wave.

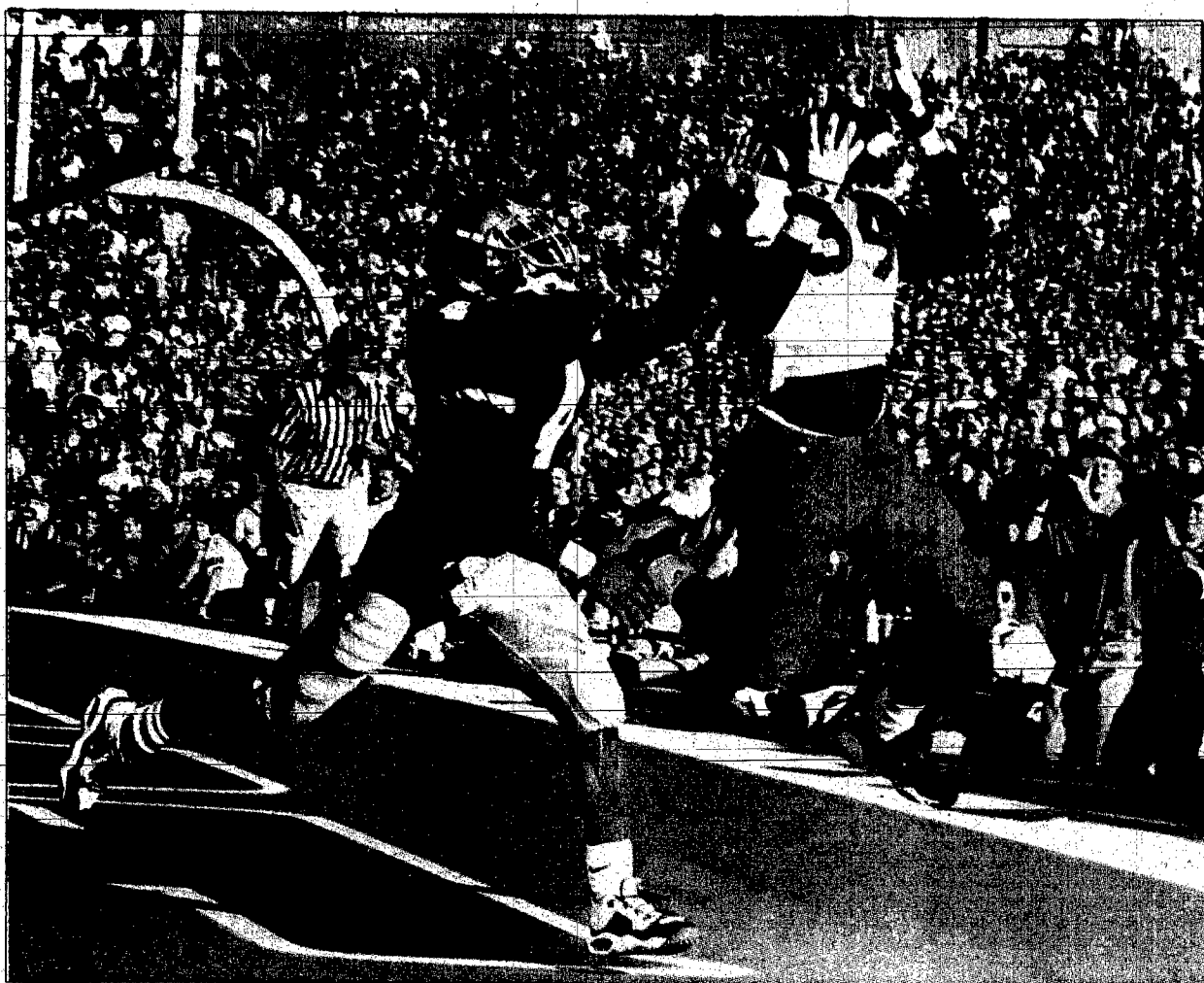
Nebraska couldn't let that happen again here Saturday. If the Wildcats got any kind of break, or drive, going early, then KSU Stadium might turn into another Nebraska episode on the Twilight Zone. Stuff them early, and all that false bravado and paper-thin confidence would blow away in the prairie wind.

### Farley Sack

First play, Kavanagh sacked by Terrell Farley for a loss of 4 yards.

It went downhill for K-State from there. Kavanagh kept coming to the line and checking out of plays and into bad ones. Credit the NU coaches for disguising their defenses and making Kavanagh outsmart them. Between those mind games, and then watching his backside, Kavanagh was a mess.

"We've been emphasizing trying to



TOUCHDOWN CATCH: Nebraska tight end Vershan Jackson grabs a 21-yard scoring pass from Scott Frost, beating Mario Smith in the back of the end zone with 43 seconds left in the third quarter to boost the Husker lead to 32-3. NU, sparked by freshman DeAngelo Evans' 168 rushing yards, finished with 432 total yards.

### Kick Returns Help Kansas Sink Sooners

BY STEVEN PIVOVAR  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Norman, Okla. — Kansas took advantage of an Oklahoma kicking game that was anything but special Saturday afternoon.

The Jayhawks returned a kickoff for 100 yards, brought a punt back 94 yards for another score and capitalized on many other breakdowns in the Sooners' special teams in winning 52-24 in the teams' Big 12 Conference opener.

"Our special teams let us down today," Oklahoma Coach John Blake said. "We're not good enough to make those kind of mistakes and win."

As a result, the Sooners dropped to 0-4 under Blake and lost for a school-record seventh straight time over the past two seasons. Meanwhile, Kansas improved to 3-1 with its most decisive victory in the 94-game series with Oklahoma since 1905, when the Jayhawks won 34-0.

Some of the diehards who remained from the original turnout of 64,333 at Memorial Stadium taunted Kansas Coach Glen Mason as he left the field. The Jayhawks' final touchdown, with 4:25 remaining, came on an 8-yard pass from backup quarterback Ben Rutz to Brian Gray.

"This is a fun place to play, the fans

Please turn to Page 2, Col. 4

### Halftime Talk Inspires Iowa To Prevail

BY ELIZABETH MERRILL  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Iowa City, Iowa — A spirited halftime pump-up session was all Iowa needed to deflate Michigan State Saturday in the Hawkeyes' Big Ten opener.

Iowa scored one of its biggest comebacks in Hayden Fry's 17 years as coach in the Hawkeyes' 37-30 win over the Spartans in front of a sold-out crowd of 70,397 at Kinnick Stadium.

Iowa, which dug itself into a 17-0 hole in the first quarter, went on a 27-7 tear in the second half to move to 3-1 and 1-0 in the Big Ten.

"Everybody was just going around the whole locker room at halftime telling each other to stick it in, we were going to do it," said receiver Tim Dwight, who helped Iowa stage its biggest comeback win since 1986.

"The greatest thing was that we just didn't win. We came back and showed a lot of character and faith in each other."

A good dose of confidence was exactly what the Hawkeyes needed after losing to Tulsa in their last outing two weeks ago, Dwight said. When Damien

Please turn to Page 8, Col. 2

### How The AP Top

25  
FARED

1. Florida (5-0) beat Arkansas 42-7.
2. Florida State (4-0) beat Clemson 34-3.
3. Ohio State (4-0) beat No. 4 Penn St. 38-7.
4. Penn St. (5-1) lost to No. 3 Ohio St. 38-7.
5. Arizona State (5-0) beat Boise State 56-7.
6. Mich. (4-1) lost to No. 22 N. Westm. 17-16.
7. Nebraska (3-1) beat No. 16 K-State 39-3.
8. Miami (4-0) did not play.
9. Tennessee (3-1) did not play.
10. Colorado (3-1) did not play.
11. Notre Dame (3-1) did not play.
12. Virginia (4-1) lost to Georgia Tech 13-7.
13. Alabama (5-0) beat Kentucky 35-7.
14. LSU (4-0) beat Vanderbilt 35-0.
15. N. Carolina (4-1) beat Wake Forest 45-6.
16. Kansas State (4-1) lost to No. 7 Neb. 39-3.
17. Southern Cal (3-2) lost to California 22-15.
18. Washington (3-1) beat Stanford 27-6.
19. W. Virginia (6-0) beat Boston College 34-17.
20. Auburn (4-1) beat South Carolina 28-24.
21. Brigham Young (5-1) did not play.
22. Northwestern (4-1) beat No. 6 Mich. 17-16.
23. Texas (2-2) beat Oklahoma State 71-14.
24. Utah (5-1) beat Texas-El Paso 34-27.
25. Wyoming (6-0) beat San Jose State 45-22.

## Ohio St. Pummels Penn St.

CENTRE DAILY TIMES

Columbus, Ohio — They got it all wrong. It wasn't the game of the week, it was just one weak game.

The supposed clash of the college football titans was nothing more than a myth. Third-ranked Ohio State systematically decimated No. 4 Penn. State on Saturday afternoon, demonstrating unending free will in a 38-7 win at sun-kissed Ohio Stadium.

The loss ended the Nittany Lions' (5-1 overall, 1-1 in the Big Ten) win streak at eight and put the Buckeyes (4-0, 1-0) in charge of the conference race.

"Ohio State is an awfully good football team," Penn State Coach Joe Paterno said. "We got a good whipping in every which way."

"Obviously we are better than all of the teams we have played," Ohio State Coach John Cooper said. "I don't know if anyone is better than us. It doesn't get much better than this. I know that."

The only thing Ohio State didn't do was score on its first possession, a feat it accomplished in its first three games. It didn't matter, though, as the Buckeyes shook that off and scored on their next four series to turn the game into a foot-note.

"We respected them, but we had no idea they could do that," Lions defensive end Brandon Short said. "There was no excuse. They came right at us and kept going."

### Northwestern Wins Thriller

Evanston, Ill. (AP) — Brian Gowins thought he had won the game, completing one of Northwestern's greatest comebacks Saturday. The crowd was in a frenzy as his kick sailed through the uprights.

Then he was told he had to kick it again.

And he did, hitting a 39-yarder with 13 seconds left as No. 22 Northwestern rallied from a 16-0 fourth-quarter hole to stun No. 6 Michigan 17-16.

"The first one was really perfect, the second one was probably three or four feet off-center," Gowins said. "There was a lot of pressure on me to kick it and also a lot on the holder and the snapper."

Gowins' initial kick was good, but officials ruled the play had not been whistled to start. Gowins said he understood that one of the officials was not in proper position when the ball was initially snapped, so the play had to be run over.

"That was tough," he said.

Indeed, The Buckeyes had more yards passing (215) and rushing (350) than Penn State had overall (211). Ohio State

So he simply kicked it through a second time — his third field goal of the final period that capped an amazing comeback victory for the defending Big Ten champions.

"That I had to do it twice made it even sweeter," Gowins said.

"They had to reset the clock back to 17 seconds, and I was basically mad at the officials. I yelled, 'Like what are you trying to do?' Michigan had already used its timeouts and couldn't ice me."

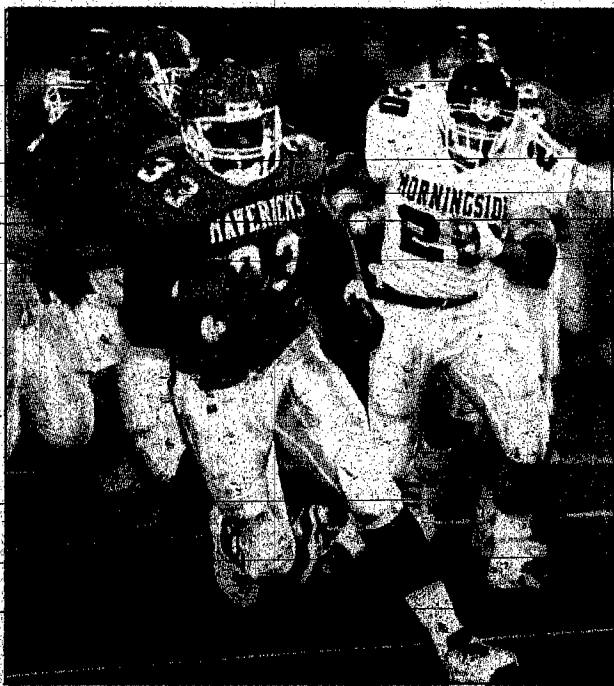
The Wolverines couldn't do much of anything in the fourth quarter. Entering Saturday's game, the defense hadn't yielded a point in the final period all season.

But Northwestern drove 80 yards in the final two minutes to set up the game-winner by Gowins.

"I've coached in a lot of games, but right now there doesn't seem like there's one that's bigger, better or sweeter than this one," Northwestern Coach Gary Barnett said.

took turns deciding what to do next: Should we strike quickly or go for a

Please turn to Page 8, Col. 1



HOME-COMING THRILL: Melvin McPhaul, No. 33, scores UNO's first touchdown on a 35-yard run with Morningside's Mike Mollet, No. 20, in pursuit

### Behrns Tells Mavs: Be Happy to Win

BY RICH KAIPIST  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

UNO, after its 32-9 victory over Morningside Saturday night, definitely wasn't in the mood for celebrating as it did Sept. 28.

Coach Pat Behrns didn't discourage it. It's just the way his players felt.

"The thing I told them is undoubtedly you have to be happy with the victory, be happy that you're 4-1, be happy that you've moved the program this far ahead," Behrns said. "But I don't think we can be very happy with our performance."

"Here we are sitting here, feeling terrible about winning. I guess our expectation level is at the point where I'd like to win and look good."

The University of Nebraska at Omaha didn't rack up a whole lot of style points despite staying a game off the lead in the North Central Conference. The victory came before a season-high crowd of 8,600 at Cangelia Field in the Mavericks' homecoming game.

The Mavs allowed more first downs than they made (19 to 12), gave up more total yards than they gained (285 to 233)

and punished themselves with 100 yards in penalties.

Behrns had envisioned a little better outing from UNO (4-1 overall, 2-1 in the NCC) coming off the Sept. 28 upset of then-No. 1 North Dakota State, Morningside (1-4, 0-3) is now 0-14-1 in its last 15 NCC games.

"In his own sense, he's got a feeling about the way we need to play," UNO linebacker Jason Bartling said. "Tonight, everybody in there is happy we won. But everybody knows the offense didn't get enough yards and the defense, although we got turnovers, felt like we were back on our heels and gave up some big plays."

As bad as it sounded, UNO was never threatened in reaching its best start since the 1989 season. The Mavs scored the first 18 points of the game and never let Morningside within a two-touchdown distance in the second half.

"We just couldn't ever gain control of the game," Behrns said. "We never put a long drive together, which ordinarily is the trademark of this football team."

UNO's longest scoring drive was 46

Please turn to Page 4, Col. 1