

Michael
Kelly
Sports Editor



Cornhuskers Back on Top

Lawrence, Kan. — Darned if they didn't do it. The Nebraska Cornhuskers, 9-0 outdoors this year and 9-1 indoors, have made it back to the top. They needed a little help, as Coach Tom Osborne said last week, and on Saturday they got it. Houston beat Texas, Southern Cal beat Washington, and looky who's No. 1.

Well, not yet. But in a day or two, the Huskers will be back on top in the national polls, just where they stood until Syracuse so rudely interrupted the season at the Carrier Dome on Sept. 28.

Now, in this unusual season of college football, the Huskers no longer have to rely on outside help. The national championship is right there, theirs for the taking, if they can win two more ballgames. Let's see. Who's next on the schedule?

Oh, them.

The Oklahoma Sooners, perfectly capable of spoiling it all, will visit Nebraska on Saturday, unwilling to give the Huskers any help. NU fans will pray a little this week, but the Huskers are on their own now. And you know the old saying:

God helps those who help themselves.

A Message

The Huskers, ranked No. 2 and No. 3 last week in the two major polls, helped themselves Saturday by defeating Kansas 41-7 on a cold, windy day. Kansas had defeated Oklahoma 28-11, and it was almost as though the NU players were trying to send the Sooners a message.

The Sooners sent one back. They easily defeated Colorado, a team that dealt Nebraska fits until the fourth quarter. But now there's no comparison. There's just a game.

"Oklahoma was a good team," said Kansas linebacker Willie Pless, "but Nebraska is just the type of team that overpowers you. It's a tough bunch to go against. They're a combination of power and finesse. They're not only strong, but real fast."

The law of averages is all against Nebraska. I mean, can you imagine beating Oklahoma four years in a row?

That's what it will take. The Huskers have won their last three against Oklahoma, and they need one more. And then a win over someone in the Orange Bowl.

"Everybody's ready to go back to Miami," said middle guard Ken Shead. "It's getting cold!"

Kenny Shead embodies the type of team Nebraska puts on the field this year. A 5-foot-11 junior from Plano, Texas, a suburb of Dallas, he won't make any All-America teams.

A lot of guys on Nebraska are really good, and Bret Clark and Mark Traynowicz probably should make All-American, but this is not a team of superstars. It's a team of players.

And who knows what's in the stars between now and Jan. 1?

Great Story

If you like great stories in sports, look to Lincoln. The team lost \$10 million worth of pro talent, and people cracked that the only problem with the defense was that nine starters would return.

But players such as Ken Shead and Travis Turner and Brian Hiemer and Greg Reeves and Greg Orton and Ken Graeber, no names on the national scene over the summer, worked themselves into a football team.

They made it to No. 1 in the rankings early in the season, fell at Syracuse, and then have gotten better almost every week. The defense has virtually shut down the rushing game of the last four opponents. The offense gets it points.

Shead is a second-teamer, but Nebraska alternates so much that he plays almost as much as the first-team Blackshirts. In the third quarter Saturday, you looked up and there was Kenny Shead — chasing a play with no helmet.

His hat got knocked off in a collision at the line, but he picked it up and tore after the action, carrying it in his hands.

Shead, who twice dropped Kansas players for losses, said Saturday's game was fun, and that a No. 1 ranking would be nice, too.

"It would give us a lot more incentive, playing Oklahoma, even though we have enough incentive anyway," he said. "But that would be one more reason to go out there and play the best game of our lives."

Remember?

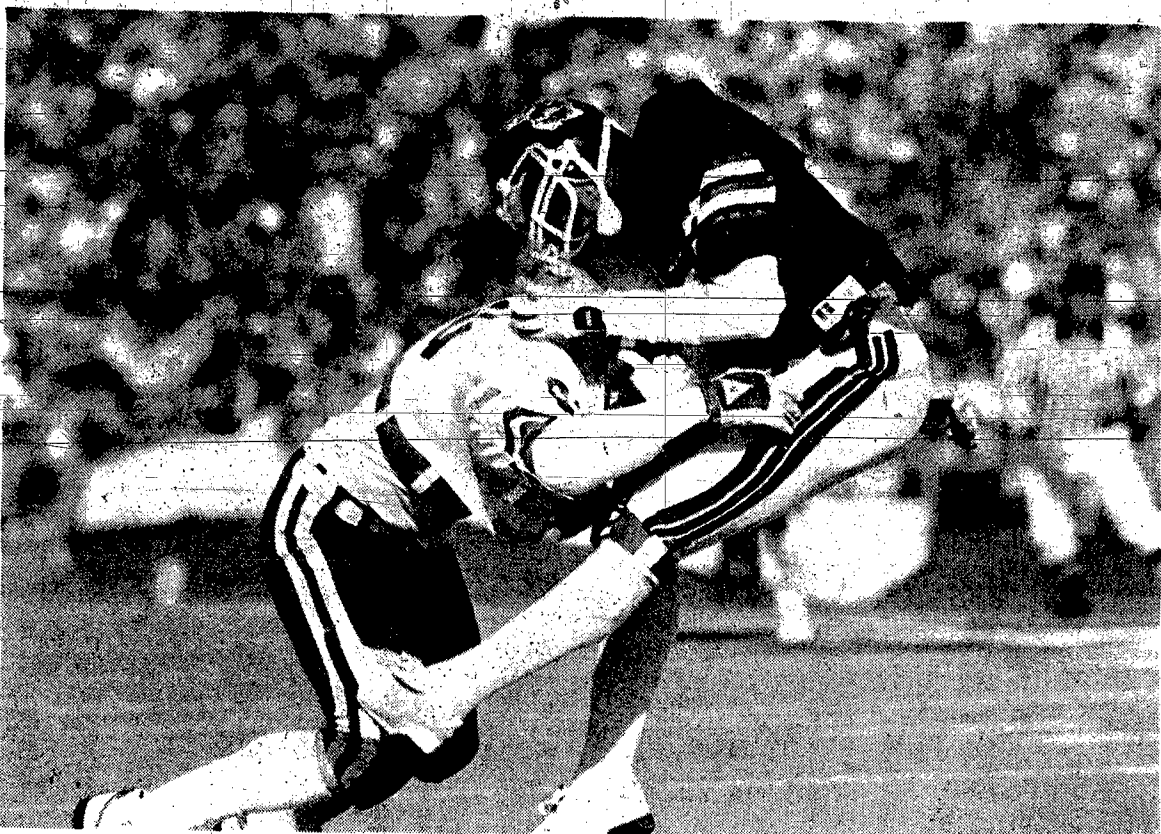
If the Huskers pull it off, it will be because they don't just throw 22 players at you. It's more like 40.

Remember last January? Husker fans felt depressed after the loss to Miami in the Orange Bowl. That was supposed to be Nebraska's national championship, not Miami's.

The Huskers were the best team in the nation if you looked at the three previous years as a whole, but owned no national championship for the effort. This year? Fans didn't expect a national title. Sure, they always hope for one, but they didn't want to get hurt like that again.

And now look. In a remarkable season, the Huskers climbed back to the top, and now they've got a chance. At this point, that's all they can ask for. They've got the chance.

NU Says Bring on Barry's Sooners As Path Clears for Return to No. 1



Nebraska defensive end Scott Strasburger tackles Skip Peete at the Kansas 33 after a 4-yard pass reception early in the second quarter... "The defense played real well," Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said.

By Steve Sinclair
World-Herald Staff Writer

Lawrence, Kan. — Bring on Barry and the Sooners.

Bring on that No. 1 ranking again. The Nebraska Cornhuskers said Saturday that they are ready, clinching at least a tie for their fourth straight Big Eight Conference championship with a 41-7 win over Kansas.

And the victory, before an estimated 15,000 Nebraskans in a crowd of 52,000 at KU's Memorial Stadium, set the stage for even bigger things ahead.

Next Saturday in Lincoln the Huskers will go for an undisputed championship against Oklahoma. And thanks to two big upsets Saturday, Nebraska might play Coach Barry Switzer's Sooners as the nation's No. 1 team.

"It would be nice at this stage of the season if it would happen," Nebraska Coach Tom Osborne said. "I hope it will."

Nebraska fell from the No. 1 spot after an early-season 17-9 loss at Syracuse. It's possible the Huskers will return after Saturday's upsets — Southern Cal's 16-7 win over top-ranked Washington and Houston's 29-15 victory over Texas.

Nebraska and Texas shared the second and third positions this week. Nebraska is No. 2 in Associated Press and No. 3 in United Press International and Texas just the opposite.

Nebraska cornerback Dave Burke said the timing of Saturday's upsets couldn't be any better.

"I was thinking on the sideline at the end of the game that now would be a nice time to go to No. 1," Burke said. "We've played most of this season with virtually no pressure. Nobody was asking us how it feels to be No. 1."

Burke said with just the Oklahoma game and a bowl game left being No. 1 won't mean any extra pressure.

"Regardless of what number we are,

Please turn to Page 6, Col. 5.

Nos. 1, 3 Topple in Topsy-Turvy Top Ten

Turnovers Doom Texas

The Dallas Morning News

Austin, Texas — The University of Houston left the University of Texas twisting slowly in a swirling, gusting wind Saturday with a 29-15 defeat.

The loss dropped Texas half a game behind first-place Texas Christian in the Southwest Conference.

The loss, ending an SWC winning streak for the Longhorns that spanned two years and 18 games, dating back to a 30-17 loss to SMU in 1982, was particularly frustrating since it was gift-wrapped and handed to the Cougars.

Thrown, however, is perhaps a better term.

Texas quarterback Todd Dodge, having the worst day of his career — and that probably includes every game of football, including two-handed touch, that he has ever played — completed more passes to the Cougars than he did to his teammates.

For the record, Dodge was 2 of 16 for 23 yards with five interceptions.

"Never have I had a game like that," said Dodge. "Everybody has one of those days, and this was my turn. What

Please turn to Page 9, Col. 1.

How the AP and UPI Top 20s Fared

| AP/UPI | Next Opponent |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1/1 — Washington (9-1) lost to Southern Cal 16-7 | at Washington State |
| 2/3 — Nebraska (9-1) beat Kansas 41-7 | Oklahoma at TCU |
| 3/2 — Texas (8-1-1) lost to Houston 28-15 | at Utah |
| 4/4 — Brigham Young (10-0) beat San Diego State 34-3 | at Navy |
| 5/5 — South Carolina (9-0) beat Florida State 38-26 | Boston College, Nov. 24 |
| 6/6 — Miami, Fla. (8-3) lost to Maryland 42-40 | Iowa State at Auburn |
| 7/7 — Oklahoma State (8-1) beat Missouri 31-13 | at Nebraska |
| 8/8 — Georgia (7-2) lost to Florida 27-0 | at Kentucky |
| 9/9 — Oklahoma (7-1-1) beat Colorado 42-17 | Tenn.-Chattanooga at Auburn |
| 10/11 — Florida (7-1-1) beat Georgia 27-0 | at Mississippi State |
| 11/10 — Florida State (6-2-1) lost to South Carolina 38-26 | Michigan at UCLA |
| 12/15 — Louisiana State (7-1-1) beat Alabama 16-14 | Texas at Texas Tech |
| 13/13 — Ohio State (8-2) beat Northwestern 52-3 | at Minnesota |
| 14/12 — Southern Cal (8-1) beat Texas Tech 27-16 | at Temple |
| 15/14 — Texas Christian (8-1) beat Texas A&M 45-31 | at North Carolina |
| 16/16 — Boston College (6-2) beat Army 45-31 | Georgia |
| 17/20 — Southern Methodist (6-2) beat Rice 31-17 | |
| 18/17 — Iowa (6-3-1) lost to Michigan State 17-16 | |
| 19/18 — West Virginia (7-3) lost to Rutgers 23-19 | |
| 20/ — Virginia (7-1-1) beat North Carolina State 45-0 | |
| 20/ — Auburn (7-3) beat Cincinnati 60-0 | |

Washington Exposed

The Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles — Washington, which was supposed to make its case as the No. 1 team in the country Saturday, instead reinforced a much whispered suspicion: college football has been struck by a nasty dose of parity this season.

A 16-7 loss to Southern California at the Coliseum cost the Huskies their No. 1 ranking, their perfect record, the Pacific 10 Conference title and a trip to the Rose Bowl.

Tailback Fred Crutcher, who carried 35 times for 116 yards, scored on a 2-yard run early in the final period to rally Southern Cal from a 7-6 deficit in the defense-dominated contest.

The Trojans are 8-1 overall and 7-0 in the Pac-10, assuring them their first Rose Bowl appearance since the 1980 game.

Washington is 9-1 and 5-1.

The Huskies were exposed Saturday as a team with a basic deficiency — virtually no offense. It's hard to get to the Rose Bowl that way.

"The coaches have been telling us that the time would come when the offense would have to take up the slack,"

Please turn to Page 4, Col. 1.

Mavs Brave Cold To Ice NCC Crown

By Jerry Fricke

World-Herald Staff Writer

Mankato, Minn. — Neither wind nor snow nor Mankato State could stop the University of Nebraska at Omaha Saturday.

The Mavericks conquered the elements and another herd of Mavericks, Mankato's, 28-7, to clinch their second straight North Central Conference championship and a berth in the eight-team NCAA Division II playoffs.

An elated Coach Sandy Buda, eight days removed from a hospital bed, told his UNO Mavs:

"Men, you guys just did what is the hardest thing in sports to do, and that is repeat as champions."

The Mavs were in championship form despite a field covered with four inches of snow and a 29-degree temperature at kickoff time.

Blown Off Field

They took the 20-mile-an-hour wind and used it to their advantage, blowing Mankato off the field with quarterback Randy Naran's passing arm in the first and third quarters.

"I think they thought they were the only ones who could play in this type of weather," said Buda, who was upset no effort was made to remove snow from the football field until noon. "But they forget we're from Nebraska. This is nothing new to us."

UNO scored on its first two possessions, with Naran passing 2 yards to tight end Kevin Munro and 4 yards to split end James Quaites for touchdowns, completing drives of 44 and 63 yards. The Mavs were on top 14-0 with only 9:44 gone.

"Mankato won the toss and chose to receive," Buda said. "We had to take the wind. We thought the wind was such a factor we decided to take it and kick off in the second half."

Chilled Turnout

The Mavs also scored with the wind on their first two possessions of the third quarter — on a 10-yard draw play by sophomore Steve MacCaitis and on a 3-yard shot up the middle by senior fullback Brian Nelson. Those drives covered 52 and 30 yards, with the latter being set up by linebacker Mark Watkins' interception.

With a 28-0 UNO lead after Greg Morris' fourth extra-point kick, the final 23:28 could have been called off, and few in the chilled turnout of 500 would have cared.

Mankato scored its touchdown in the fourth quarter, also going with the wind, on a 20-yard pass from freshman quarterback Joe O'Connor to senior tight end John Wodnick. Mav cornerback Dan Nielson slipped in the snow to allow Wodnick to get open.

That touchdown was small consolation.

Please turn to Page 2, Col. 1.

Inside Sports

Roncalli Is Loser In Class B Semifinal

Columbus Scotus upsets Omaha Roncalli in the semifinals of the Class B football playoffs. Meanwhile, the Class A title game between Omaha Burke and Omaha Central is postponed until Monday night.

Page 13.

VOLLEYBALL: Lincoln Northeast downs Bellevue East to win the Class A volleyball championship.

Page 13.

HUNTING: Snowy weather greets deer hunters in Nebraska.

Page 18.

Terrapin Rally Stuns Miami U.

The Miami Herald

Miami — A few oranges — as in Orange Bowl Classic or bust — landed on the field in the first half. By the end of the game, lemons might have been more appropriate.

The University of Miami football team jaunted off the field with a 31-0 halftime lead Saturday and returned to suffer a devastating 42-40 loss to Maryland before 31,548 at the Orange Bowl.

It was the worst collapse in the his-

Please turn to Page 9, Col. 3.

Long Shot, Inquiry Foil Bid by Dancer

By Andrew Beyer

The Washington Post

Inglewood, Calif. — Only in Hollywood could they have dreamed up such a spectacular finish to Thoroughbred racing's biggest day.

Wild Again, an implausible 31-1 shot, won a photo finish from Gate Dancer and Slew o' Gold to finish first Saturday in the \$3 million Breeders' Cup Classic. Then he survived a controversial stewards' inquiry into a bumping incident during the stretch that led to Gate Dancer's disqualification from second place.

The crowd of 64,254 booed the verdict lustily.

"I couldn't tell you what happened in the stretch," said Wild Again trainer Vincent Timpony. "I was just praying to God they didn't take my number down."

The stunning upset climaxed a day that had already produced high drama and brilliant performances.

Royal Heroine equalled a world record in winning the one-mile turf race. Fran's Valentine suffered the most expensive disqualification in history in the \$1 million race for 2-year-old fillies. Princess Rooney gave the best performance of the day, winning the 1 1/4-mile Breeders' Cup Distaff a full second faster than Wild Again did.

But of the seven championship events

on the \$10 million Hollywood Park card run before a national television audience on this first Breeders' Cup day, it was the Classic that will be most remembered — and debated.

Slew o' Gold came into the race with an unbeaten 1984 record but with a troublesome right front hoof. Gate Dancer, owned by Kenneth Opstein of South Sioux City, Neb., and trained by Jack Van Berg, was supposed to be his major foe.

The only attention paid to Wild Again came from incredulity that his owners had paid \$360,000 to make him eligible for a race in which he appeared to have no chance.

And for most of the Classic, Wild Again looked as if he had no chance: He engaged in a suicidal battle for the lead, sandwiched between swift Precisionist and Slew o' Gold's "rabbit," Mugate.

While they went a half-mile in :45 3/5, Slew o' Gold remained in perfect position in the middle of the pack, and Gate Dancer was trailing. Wild Again disposed of his early competition, but Slew o' Gold drew abreast of him and Gate Dancer started to accelerate on the outside.

In midstretch it became clear that Slew o' Gold wasn't going to get past the tiring leader.

"He just didn't seem willing to run,"

Please turn to Page 11, Col. 1.

Inside College Football

Oklahoma 42
Colorado 17
Page 9

Oklahoma State 31
Missouri 13
Page 9

Michigan State 17
Iowa 16
Page 12

South Carolina 38
Florida State 26
Page 18

Kansas State 7
Iowa State 7
Page 9

Florida 27
Georgia 0
Page 18

Brigham Young 34
San Diego State 3
Page 16

Kearney State 24
Wayne State 13
Page 17