

Michael Kelly
Sports Editor



Cornhuskers Had It Together

Minneapolis
Now this, confidentially, was really inside Nebraska football.

The Huskers visited Minnesota, the land of the great outdoors, and went indoors — at the Metrodome, where they manhandled UM. The Huskers, who held a players-only Saturday-afternoon meeting in Minneapolis to hash out why they weren't meeting their potential, Saturday night came together as a team.

The Gophers dug some holes for themselves, but Nebraska, too, burrowed some Gopher holes — in the Minnesota offense and defense.

The Huskers took it inside and outside. Their punt returns improved. The defense was almost flawless, and the offense not only ran well, but passed well, too.

Instead of their characteristic 80-20 percent yardage ratio on rushing and passing, the Cornhuskers mixed passing and rushing well — 295 yards on the ground, 235 in the air.

Senior quarterback Gerry Gdowski, who posted his third straight splendid performance, completing 10 of 15 for 190 yards and one touchdown and rushing 5 yards per carry, said he hopes the added passing will become a permanent feature.

Passing Grades

"I think it will make us so much harder to defend against," he said. "When people can come up and put eight guys on the line of scrimmage against us, it's much harder to run."

Despite the harping by some writers and fans in recent years about passing more often, Osborne has stuck to his guns. Nebraska will pass more, he said, when it passes more efficiently.

The time, it appears, has arrived.

Mr. Efficiency, Gdowski, is 19 for 29 (65.5 percent) after three games as a senior. If he continued that pace for the season, he could finish as Nebraska's most accurate passer on record (since 1950).

The percentage leader among Husker quarterbacks is Craig Sundberg, who completed 64.3 percent (63 of 96) in a career ending in 1984. Gdowski had completed 6 of only 10 passes before this year, and his career percentage is 64.1, easily the second best.

Steve Taylor, who finished his Husker career last season with school rushing records for a quarterback, completed 45.5 percent of his passes while at NU.

The Huskers were 19-point favorites Saturday against a team that had gone winless last year in the Big Ten, but NU's uninspired play in the first two games, against Northern Illinois and Utah, made them look vulnerable.

Against Minnesota, they rose to the occasion and then some.

Grant Plays

Topics of conversation among Husker fans this season, besides the NU sluggishness, had included the controversial book, "Big Red Confidential: Inside Nebraska Football," and the future of sophomore quarterback Mike Grant.

Grant took a gutsy, risky and possibly unprecedented step in the previous NU game. He became probably the first Husker in Osborne's 17-year head coaching career who was uninjured and refused the coach's order to enter the game.

He had decided to redshirt. But Osborne and Grant had a little talk last week, Michael played Saturday against Minnesota, and after the game was sounding like Dr. Tom himself.

Grant wasn't smiling, but he said he'd do whatever was for the good of the team.

Gdowski, who never took a redshirt year but doesn't have Grant's unlimited potential, said he liked what he saw of Grant on the touchdown drive he directed in the fourth quarter.

"He's going to be a great player," Gdowski said. "I don't know if he wanted to play. But he played great, and you want to have your best players (ready) when the times comes. He's definitely one of them."

It would have been nice to get three full years from Grant as a starter beginning next year, but Osborne might be right. Grant isn't needed now, but he will be this season. He was listed No. 3 at his position, but should move up to No. 2 — and he's bound to get more playing time.

Dropped Pass

The Huskers started a bit slowly against Minnesota, and that raised fears of another so-so first half, as in the first two games. But they scored on their third and fourth possessions to take a 10-0 lead, and then disaster struck Minnesota.

In one of Nebraska's few defensive lapses, UM receiver Paul Hopewell was allowed to run deep down the middle uncovered — wide open — where he received a perfect pass. He dropped it, and the disheartened Gophers were never the same.

We probably should resist the temptation to get overly excited about this game but, man, the Huskers looked good. Maybe Minnesota isn't really a Big Ten contender, as Osborne said it was, but the Cornhuskers played as though they wanted to lay to rest any doubts that they deserve their No. 3 national ranking.

"They gave their coach no reason to be a doubting Thomas."

Minnesota Doesn't Get Past Midfield Until 4th Quarter Huskers Keep Gophers Holed Up



Chris Young/World-Herald

Nebraska's defense collected six quarterback sacks for losses of 34 yards, intercepted three passes and held the Gophers to 163 total yards. Junior tackle LeAndre Anderson, No. 96, hovers over Minnesota's Scott Schaffner after sacking him for an 8-yard loss in the second quarter.

Sal Aunese Dies Of Cancer at 21; Ex-QB for Buffs

Denver (AP) — Former University of Colorado quarterback Sal Aunese died of cancer Saturday night, a week after being admitted to University Hospital.

The 21-year-old Aunese died shortly before 9 p.m. MDT, hospital spokesman Brad Bawmann said.

No other details of Aunese's death were immediately available.

University of Colorado President Gordon Gee and Chancellor Jim Corbridge praised Aunese's courage and extended sympathy to his family.

"Sal Aunese was an inspiration to his teammates and indeed to all of us during his courageous fight against the toughest of his opponents," Gee said.

"Sal Aunese was a special young man who fought a brave battle. We are all very proud that he was one of our students," Corbridge said.

Aunese experienced breathing problems earlier Saturday and his condition was changed from stable to serious.

Aunese, first diagnosed as having inoperable stomach and lung cancer last March, was brought to the hospital last Sunday after he began having

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How Rated Teams Fared

AP/UP	Next Opponent
1/ 1 Notre Dame defeated Michigan State 21-13	Purdue
2/ 2 Miami defeated Missouri 38-7	Michigan State
3/ 3 Nebraska defeated Minnesota 48-0	Oregon State
4/ 3 Auburn did not play	Tennessee
5/ 7 Michigan defeated UCLA 24-23	Maryland
6/ 5 Colorado did not play	Washington
7/ 8 Clemson defeated Maryland 31-7	Duke
8/ 8 Arkansas defeated Mississippi 24-17	Texas-El Paso
9/ 9 West Virginia defeated Louisville 30-21	Pittsburgh
10/ 13 Syracuse lost to Pittsburgh 30-23	Florida State Oct. 7
11/ 10 Washington played Arizona, late	Colorado
12/ 15 Southern Cal defeated Ohio State 42-3	Washington State
13/ 14 Pittsburgh defeated Syracuse 30-23	W. Virginia
14/ 11 Tennessee did not play	Auburn
15/ 12 Alabama defeated Kentucky 15-3	Vanderbilt
16/ Oklahoma did not play	Kansas
17/ Houston played Arizona State, late	Temple
18/ 16 N. Carolina State defeated North Carolina 40-6	Kent State
19/ 17 Washington State defeated Wyoming 29-23	Southern Cal
20/ Illinois defeated Utah State 41-2	Ohio State Oct. 7
21/ Texas A&M did not play	Southern Miss
22/ 18 Oregon lost to Stanford 18-17	Arizona
23/ Arizona played Washington, late	Oregon
24/ UCLA lost to Michigan 24-23	California
25/ 20 Ohio State lost to So. Cal 42-3	Boston College

Inside Sports

Orioles Cut Toronto's Lead to One Game

Baltimore beats the Yankees 10-2 to trim Toronto's lead to one game in the American League East, Oakland maintains 4 1/2 game lead in AL West, and National League leaders Chicago and San Francisco win.

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By Lee Barfknecht

World-Herald Staff Writer

Minneapolis — Nebraska bit back Saturday night at those who have been dogging its defense.

The Huskers, who gave up more points (47) in their first two games than any other team in the 28-year Bob Devaney-Tom Osborne era, held Minnesota to five snaps in NU territory — three of which came in the final minute — while pounding out a 48-0 shutout.

The crowd of 58,368 at the Metrodome didn't see Minnesota move past midfield until 12:53 remained in the fourth quarter against a Nebraska defense that Northern Illinois nicked for 17 points and Utah for 30.

By that time, third-ranked Nebraska had boosted its 24-0 halftime lead to 34-0, much to the delight of the nearly 15,000 fans in red.

"Our defense played tremendous football," NU Coach Tom Osborne said. "We played defense like I thought we could play defense."

"We were able to get wound up and zeroed in on them a little better than on Utah. That helped."

"And some of those young guys on defense have got settled down to where they can play well. So defense was

really the name of the game, especially the first half."

The Huskers held Minnesota 1-back Darrell Thompson — labeled a probable first-round NFL draft choice — to 45 yards rushing in 17 carries and one pass reception for 3 yards.

The 6-foot-1, 220-pounder gained 6 yards on his first carry, but never had anything longer. Minnesota finished with 58 yards rushing and 105 passing for 163 total yards.

"We were concerned about Thompson," Osborne said. "But when you control the line of scrimmage, the greatest back in the world will have a hard time."

While the Nebraska defense was rampaging, the offense shook off some early rust and finished with the highest passing yardage total in 54 games.

The 235 yards on 13 completions in 19 attempts were the 12th-most in history and tops since throwing for 236 yards against Oklahoma in 1984.

NU 1-back Ken Clark scored first-half touchdowns of 6 and 14 yards to give the Huskers breathing room.

The senior out of Omaha Bryan gained 100 yards in 18 carries to move to No. 7 on Nebraska's all-time rushing

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Bell Grabs NU Spotlight With Returns, Receiving

By Doug Thomas

World-Herald Staff Writer

Minneapolis — Richard Bell spent Nebraska's first two games doing detail work.

Saturday night, he took his turn in the spotlight.

The senior wingback from Altadena, Calif., battered Minnesota with 225 all-purpose yards in the Huskers' 48-0 victory.

He caught five passes for 121 yards, including a 26-yard touchdown from Gerry Gdowski that put Nebraska in command 17-0 in the second quarter.

He also returned seven punts for 78 yards — including a 24-yarder — in his

first week as the top punt returner. And he brought a kickoff back 26 yards.

"He played a great game," Gdowski said. "He ran hard when he got it and caught the ball well."

Said 1-back Ken Clark: "He's got the ability. I guess he really showed it today."

"We started to get the ball to him more. If we get the ball to him, he can make things happen."

Bell said it was his best game as a Husker.

"I had a chance to be involved with the whole game," he said.

He took over return duties this week from split end Morgan Gregory. The Huskers came into the game ranked 94th nationally in punt returns at 2.4 per attempt.

Saturday, though, the returns gave Nebraska good field position all game.

"Now we can get the coaches off our

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Iowa Extends Streak Over Cyclones to 7

By Steve Pivovar

World-Herald Staff Writer

Ames, Iowa — Iowa's defense slammed Iowa State's hopes of finally reclaiming state bragging rights down the Cyclones' throat Saturday afternoon.

The Hawkeyes erased a seven-point halftime deficit by holding Iowa State to 22 yards in the final two quarters in a 31-21 victory before 54,458 — the largest crowd ever to watch a football game at Cyclone Stadium.

"The State of Iowa is still a Hawkeye State," Iowa Coach Hayden Fry said proudly.

The victory extended Iowa's winning streak in the series to seven games and helped the Hawkeyes right themselves after a 44-6 loss to Oregon in their season opener a week ago.

"We needed some confidence after the Oregon game," said senior wide receiver Travis Watkins, who caught one of the three touchdown passes that sophomore Matt Rodgers threw in his

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Mavs Display Parade of Own To Beat Chiefs

By Eric Olson

World-Herald Staff Writer

Sioux City, Iowa — On a day the Shriners paraded up and down the streets of downtown Sioux City, the UNO offense did the same Saturday on Heelan High School's football field.

The Mavericks wore down a new and improved Morningside squad in the second half with two long touchdown marches en route to a 30-13 victory before a turnout of 3,378 at the 25th annual Shrine Game.

The victory moved the University of Nebraska at Omaha to 3-1 overall and 2-0 in the North Central Conference. The Chiefs, losers of 15 straight NCC games over three seasons, dropped to 2-2 and 0-2.

"We won a game against a young, scrappy team like ours," UNO Coach Sandy Buda said. "We were just a little more scrappy. I really thought we played pretty well, aside from a few dumb mistakes."

Quarterback Paul Cech threw for 177 yards and two first-half touchdowns and tailbacks LaRon Henderson and Bruce Martens led a rushing attack that churned out 222 yards, all but 44 after

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Rudy Smith/World-Herald

UNO tight end Scott Barbach, a sophomore from Omaha, leaps to get into the end zone after breaking tackles on his second-quarter touchdown reception from Paul Cech. The 3-yard touchdown capped a 13-play, 73-yard drive and gave the Mavericks a 6-0 lead.