

POSTGAME

55  7

Abdullah and the offense enjoy a field day, Westerkamp makes a Top 10 play and the Husker defense overcomes an early stumble to rumble past Owls



MATT MILLER/THE WORLD-HERALD

Nebraska I-back Ameer Abdullah bursts through the Florida Atlantic defense in the third quarter. Abdullah carried 21 times for a career-high 232 yards, including a 47-yard touchdown in the second quarter.

784 reasons for optimism

Slimmed-down playbook seems to work as offense nets Big Ten yardage mark

By SAM MCKEWON
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

LINCOLN — Efficient. Explosive. Impressive. Historic. Nebraska's offense blasted its way to a modern-era Big Ten record and its defense blitzed through first-quarter glitches as if they were that new, wispy Tunnel Walk smoke that trailed the team's entrance onto the field.

The suits in NU's athletic department added the smoke, revamped sound system and post-touchdown fireworks to excite fans in Saturday's season opener, but the Huskers' on-field sizzle sold itself in a 55-7 rout of Florida Atlantic.

Nebraska rolled up 784 total yards of offense — fifth best in school history and best ever for a Big Ten team in the modern era. Ameer Abdullah ran for a career-high 232 yards. Tommy Armstrong threw for a career-high 271 yards. Jordan Westerkamp had a career-high 125 yards and, what the heck, caught a ball behind his back while tiptoeing the sidelines. Circus stuff.

"Lucky play," Westerkamp said sheepishly.

"I've never seen that one," coach Bo Pelini said.

"ESPN, right?" offensive coordinator Tim Beck said. "Probably be one of those,

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REBECCA S. GRATZ/THE WORLD-HERALD

Nebraska quarterback Tommy Armstrong passed for a career-high 271 yards and two touchdowns, and added 62 yards rushing and a score.

MORE COVERAGE, 6CF-12CF

AMAZING ABDULLAH

Ameer Abdullah's performance against Florida Atlantic could be the start of something great, writes Dirk Chatelain.

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VIDEO: MCKEWON'S BREAKDOWN

Watch as staff writer Sam McKewon offers his quick takeaways from the Huskers' 55-7 win over FAU.

Omaha.com/bigred

TOM SHATEL



COLUMNIST

With playmakers all over, Huskers flash the lightning to live up to the nickname

LINCOLN — On a steamy late summer afternoon, it came out of the sky like a ... lightning bolt.

What's that? An identity. And the Nebraska Cornhuskers didn't so much find it as seize it.

Playmakers.

Red Storm.

Lightning, after Thunder.

It was one game, granted, a routine 55-7 opening day win over Florida Atlantic. There have been other blowouts in the Bo Pelini Era, other chances to preen and strut and pound chests.

But it's hard to remember one that had this "Wow" factor.

It's hard to remember a recent Nebraska stage with so many stars.

There was Ameer Abdullah, hopping, spinning and galloping, going for a career-best 232 yards on 21 carries and looking like a senior hell-bent on catching

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READY TO WORK: Creighton's Cole Huff is looking to improve during his redshirt transfer season. Page 1C



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FLORIDA ATLANTIC