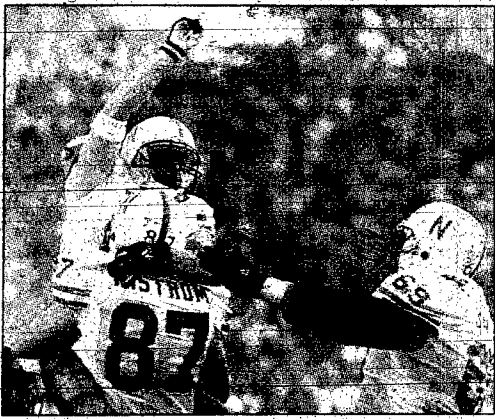


# College Football

**BIG TEN, 3  
 SCORES, SUMMARIES, 4**

OMAHA, NEBRASKA, SEPTEMBER 26, 1999

PAGE 1-FOOTBALL



JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD

## No Miracle Needed; NU's Win a Snap



**Tom  
 Shatel**

### Huskers Ride 'Air Frankie'

Columbia, Mo.

What's this? A week of Nebraska football without a crisis?

There will be no mini-dramas this week in Lincolnland. There will be no players quitting. There will be no players, or former players, ripping each other or the coaches. No fans calling for Sid Gillman to please report to the Husker chalkboard. There was no Tiger ambush here at Faurot Field. No controversy in a 40-10 Nebraska laugher.

Nebraska even caught a few passes that weren't first touched by human feet.

If the coast is clear, and Husker Head Coach Frank Solich can finally peek out of the bunker without fear of the next mortar shell dropping on his program, Saturday night seemed like a good time for Solich & Co. to gaze ahead and plan for the future.

In fact, if you looked close enough, you could see a Big Red formula starting to take shape.

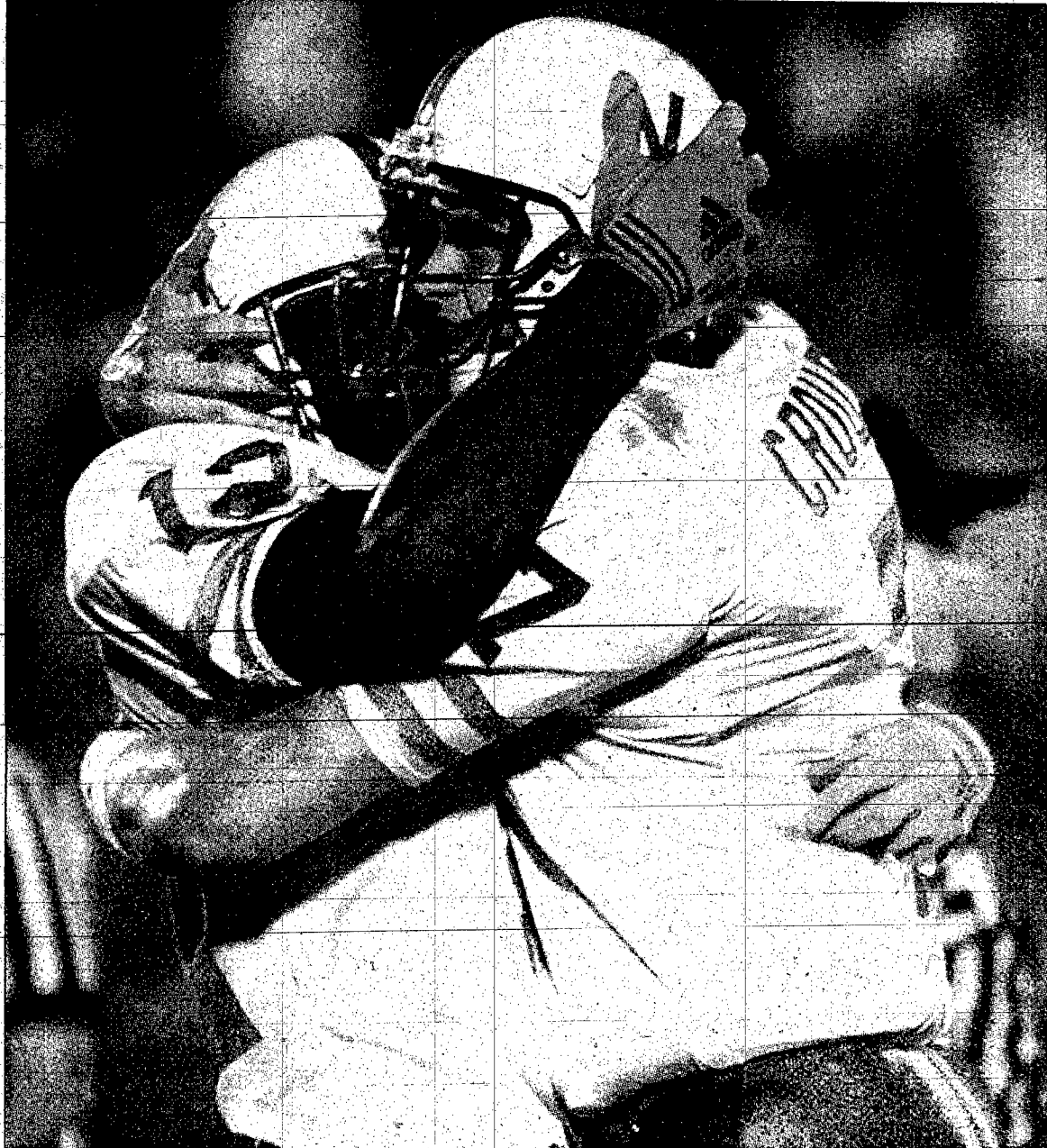
Can you say Air Frankie?

There were two orders of business for Nebraska this week, besides the obvious chore of getting out of Columbia alive with a win. First, clean up the sloppiness that has been so un-Nebraska-like this season. Two turnovers, seven penalties was progress. Next up: pick an offense, any offense, preferably one that works.

Air Frankie? Why not?

It sounds crazy, especially on a night when they seemed to rediscover their rushing game, a night when Correll Buckhalter became the first Husker to go for over 100 yards this season. But it's still early to be fully convinced of Nebraska's rushing prowess. Dan Alexander still has the fumbles. And, until Buckhalter's 57-yard run in the third quarter, you never got the feeling that a Husker I-back could break a big one. But no question, with 333 yards, NU's rushing game began to recognize itself in the mirror.

On the other hand, that has to be See **SHATEL** Page 8-Football



JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD

**TEAMING UP:** NU's Bobby Newcombe and Eric Crouch, who replaced Newcombe at quarterback, celebrate Newcombe's 53-yard scoring catch of a Crouch pass. At top, NU's Matt Davison celebrates his TD catch, his first since the "Miracle in Missouri," with Tracey Wistrom and Adam Julch, right.

BY STEVEN PIVOVAR  
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Columbia, Mo. — Nebraska needed no miracles or last-play dramatics Saturday to extend its mastery of Missouri.

Instead, the fifth- and sixth-ranked Huskers relied on an offense that showed rejuvenation and a defense that showed no mercy to roll to a 40-10 victory before a sold-out Faurot Field crowd of 68,174 and a Fox Sports Net national cable broadcast.

The final outcome, in stark contrast to the past two meetings that went down to the wire, allowed the Huskers to win their Big 12 Conference opener, improve to 4-0 and claim their 21st straight victory over the Tigers.

Most important to Husker rover back Mike Brown, it came in a fashion that should quiet Missouri's players and fans.

"Since I've been here, Missouri has always talked a lot and said what they're going to do," Brown said. "I said today that they were going to see the real Nebraska—the past two years they really haven't gotten our best game. Today, we really wanted to come out and play well against them."

The Huskers proved their point emphatically, dismantling Missouri's previously productive offense with a defensive effort that limited the Tigers to 174 total yards, Missouri, which brought the country's No. 4 rushing offense into the game, finished with 25 yards rushing—285 below its average of 310. The Tigers didn't score a touchdown against Nebraska's top defensive unit.

Offensively, Nebraska shook off sluggish performances in its past two games to pile up 476 yards, including 333 on the ground. Quarterback, Eric Crouch ran for 92 yards and passed for 143, while backup I-back Correll Buckhalter gave the Huskers their first 100-yard rusher of the season with a 132-yard night.

"We're not quite where we want to be, but we're definitely getting there," said Crouch, assessing the progress the offense made in one week. "We need to focus on eliminating penalties—we had too many today—but when we clean that up and we execute, we're going to have good days like this."

Nebraska's offensive performance contrasted with the 185-yard output it achieved a week ago in a 20-13 win over Southern Mississippi. The Huskers' offense recorded just eight first downs in that game and scored.

See **HUSKER** Page 9-Football

## Cyclones Let the Cats Out of the Bag

BY COREY ROSS  
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Ames, Iowa — The finest half of Iowa State's football season became the forgotten half on Saturday.

Blowing a 28-7 halftime lead will do that.

Afterward, Iowa State's players and coaches did more, wondering about what went wrong than talking about what went right after an upset slipped away in a 35-28 loss to 15th-ranked Kansas State before 40,057 at Jack Trice Stadium.

Darren Davis' first-half rushing ef-

fort of 131 yards and two touchdowns as part of a freewheeling Iowa State offense went for naught, as did a solid defensive half by the Cyclones. Davis was held to 21 yards in the second half, and the defense spent the half on its heels.

Kansas State (3-0) avoided its first loss in 16 regular-season Big 12 Conference games despite giving up over 300 yards of offense in the first half. A re-dedicated defensive effort and the play of backup quarterback Adam Helm, who relieved Jonathan Beasley, sparked the second-half comeback.

Helm rushed for two touchdowns

and David Allen added a school-record 94-yard punt return for a score in the second half to let Kansas State wriggle away with a win. A 1-yard scoring plunge by Helm with 2 minutes, 34 seconds left gave Kansas State the final points needed to hand Iowa State its first defeat.

Iowa State Coach Dan McCarney watched his team's first-half swagger turn into a stagger and finally a collapse.

"We had to improve in the second half, and we didn't," McCarney said. "Nobody was celebrating at halftime. I don't think we got complacent. Kansas

State just out-toughed us in the second half."

The Cyclones blew a chance to be 4-0 for the first time since 1980 and an opportunity to knock off a ranked foe for the first time since they beat Kansas State in 1993.

They also lost much-needed momentum during a portion of their schedule where they play six straight teams that appeared in bowl games last season. Next up: Nebraska in Lincoln on Oct. 9.

Iowa State offensive lineman Bill Marsau said the Cyclones need the bye week to recover emotionally and physi-

cally.

"It's a hard lesson we learned today," Marsau said. "We didn't do what it took to win. But this can't be the end. We have a lot of season left."

Some of the off week will undoubtedly be spent evaluating Iowa State's inconsistent kicking game. A blocked field goal in the second quarter and a missed 42-yard field goal attempt in the fourth loomed large.

The 42-yard miss by Mike McKnight could've stemmed Kansas State's tide of 14 straight second-half points. Instead, it gave the Wildcats the ball on See **CYCLONES** Page 2-Football

## Buffaloes Show Soft Underbelly

BY LEE BARFKNECHT  
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Seattle — Colorado got a cold slap in the face Saturday that could leave the Buffaloes shivering as they enter Big 12 play.

Washington, supposedly a finesse team with a finesse coach in Riek Neuheisel, used a Nebraska-style offense — power running inside, an option game and some play-action passes — to hammer out a 31-24 victory before 72,068 fans at Husky Stadium.

From the time Coach Gary Barnett took over for Neuheisel in late January, Colorado (2-2) has touted its "Return to Dominance" based on physical, hard-nosed play and strong running. Many considered the slogan a back-handed slap at Neuheisel, whose four years at Colorado featured a passing attack.

But it was Washington (1-2) doing the slapping Saturday.

UW used second-half scoring drives of 80, 56, 79 and 70 yards to avoid its first 0-3 start in 30 years. The Huskies outrushed the Buffs 295 yards to 122 and held a 415-to-289 edge in total yards.

"We're going to face a lot of option teams in the Big 12, so this was a good test for us," Colorado linebacker Ty Gregorak said. "Unfortunately, we failed the test — with an F-minus."

"I really thought last week our defense was pretty darn good, and that it would carry over to this week. It did. See **COLORADO** Page 2-Football

## Mavs Avoid Morningside Upset

BY RICH KAIPUST  
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Either UNO didn't play like the No. 5 team in NCAA Division II football on Saturday or Morningside didn't act like the North Central Conference doormat it's been in recent years.

Call it a combination of both.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha never shook the Mustangs until the closing minutes in a 42-30 victory at Caniglia Field. Before getting two touchdowns in the final 2:13, the Mavericks were stuck in a 30-30 tie with a team that was 1-38-1 in its previous 40 NCC games.

"We're just glad we got out of it alive and with a victory," UNO cornerback Ahmad Austin said. "That's all that really counts. But you let big plays happen and a team starts thinking they can stay in the game."

UNO 14-0 overall, 2-0 in the NCC) held a 501-242 edge in total offense over Morningside (1-3, 0-2) and a five-minute advantage in time of possession. But the Mavs helped level the playing field by collecting 14 penalties, and backing themselves into corners, they shouldn't have been in.

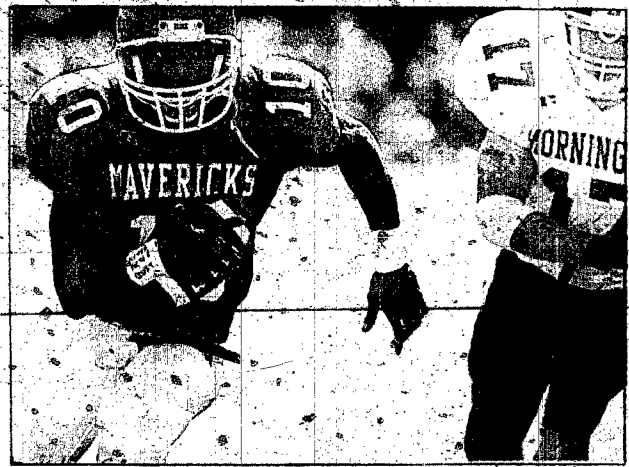
"I guess the thing that's a little disappointing to me is the complete execution on both sides of the ball," UNO Coach Pat Behns said. "There are times when we flat don't execute and flat aren't disciplined enough of a football team to make the right things happen."

Kwanzi Watts accounted for more than 300 yards in total offense to lead the UNO attack before a crowd of 7,200. The junior quarterback ran for 142 yards and two touchdowns and passed for 161 yards and another score. It took one last solid drive by Watts

and the UNO offense to break the 30-30 tie. The Mavs moved 73 yards in nine plays and 4½ minutes, capped by tailback Jess Holland's 11-yard run — and led 36-30, with 2:13 remaining after kicker Troy Severson missed the extra point.

"One unique thing about our offensive line and our offense is that we can step it up whenever," Holland said. "Just looking into our offensive line's eyes you could tell everyone was mad up front about the way things were going. That's when we started running down the field."

Morningside's next possession didn't last long. Quarterback J.J. White was chased down from behind by UNO linebacker Lawrence Butler on a third-down play and fumbled, and free safety Chad Geiger ran the ball back 29 yards for the Mavs' final touchdown. See **UNO** Page 6-Football



EGAN HALL/THE WORLD-HERALD

**SEICK WATTS:** UNO quarterback Kwanzi Watts has running room as Morningside free safety Matt Walker pursues. Watts accounted for 303 total yards.