

IT'S WHITEOUT FOR NU



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Ron Monteilh, No. 4, reacts after scoring the winning touchdown with five seconds left during Colorado's 38-31 victory.

Buffaloes may make another K.C. visit

BOULDER, Colo. — At the Big 12's summer football media days in Kansas City, Mo., Colorado Coach Gary Barnett and two of his players took a sightseeing trip to Arrowhead Stadium, site of the league championship game.

When word of that got out, laughter erupted across the conference.

Who was Colorado to think it could challenge for a championship?

The Buffaloes, 5-7 last year, were coming off a six-month recruiting scandal investigation. Six players transferred. Then once the season started, 10 other players suffered season-ending injuries.

Yet there stood Barnett late Saturday afternoon with a smile stretching from one end of the North Division to the other.

Why? Check the scoreboard at Folsom Field, thanks to a broken-play, 64-yard touchdown pass with five seconds to play — Colorado 38, Kansas State 31.

The Buffaloes (6-4, 3-4) are bowl eligible, and still have a chance to claim the North title with a win Nov. 26 at Nebraska.

"We're the Fiesta Bowl's worst nightmare right now," Barnett cracked after adding the latest 90-degree turn to the race for the Big 12's automatic spot in the Bowl Championship Series.

The North Division still is expected to be no factor in that chase. After a season of hide-your-eyes football, many have suggested that the North winner simply bow out of the Dec. 4 matchup with South champion Oklahoma.

But now, at least, the North has a signature game for 2004 to be proud of. Among the highlights:

■ In the final 9:12, the teams combined for 35 points.

■ Colorado tailback Bobby Purify, playing with two separated shoulders, ran for 155 yards and two touchdowns.

■ Kansas State quarterback Allen Webb, looking at times like Eli Roberson while rushing for 103 yards and like Michael Bishop while passing for 140, rallied the Wildcats from deficits of 10-0 and 24-10 to tie the game both times.

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Lee Barfknecht



JEFF BUNDY/THE WORLD-HERALD
Oklahoma's Mark Bradley drags Husker defensive back Daniel Bullocks after a long pass reception. The Sooners completed 30 of 36 passes for 413 yards.

■ Sooner quarterback Jason White is nearly perfect in passing for 383 yards in 30-3 win over Huskers

By RICH KAIPUST
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

NORMAN, Okla. — Jason White is good. Nebraska is in trouble. The Big 12 North is a mess.

Not exactly breaking news, but three things that became clearer than ever after three hours of football Saturday night at Oklahoma Memorial Stadium.

White shredded Nebraska's defense in a 30-3 victory before a stadium-record 84,916. With flashbulbs popping nearly every time he threw a pass, Oklahoma's sixth-year senior quarterback was brilliant as the Sooners stayed unbeaten.

Nebraska, meanwhile, had no offensive answer for White and No. 2-ranked Oklahoma. The Huskers crossed midfield just three times and needed a field goal on the last play to avoid being shut out for the first time since 1996.

Now NU has 12 days to think about what's at stake when it plays host to Colorado on Nov. 26.

Nebraska (5-5, 3-4 Big 12) will need to beat CU to become bowl eligible, putting its NCAA-record 35-year bowl streak on the line. It also will need a win over the Buffaloes to avoid a losing regular-season record for the first time since the 1961 team went 3-6-1.

"We've got to go get us a bowl game," Husker I-back Cory Ross said. "The history of Nebraska is that we've been going to bowl games every year. We have to do that."

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JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD
Oklahoma Co-Defensive Coordinator Bo Pelini, former Husker defensive coordinator, hugs NU cornerback Lornell McPherson after the game.

NU shows heart in this mismatch

NORMAN, Okla. — Diary of a NU Era. Game Ten: Honor in defeat?

Who said Nebraska's not in a national championship hunt? The Huskers found themselves smack dab in the middle of the debate on Saturday night.

Oklahoma needed a patsy. The mighty Sooners, No. 2 in the human polls and in the Bowl Championship Series ratings, can feel No. 3 Auburn breathing down their necks.

And now that the BCS has put more weight on the two human polls, and those polls are only human and give credence to margin of victory, Oklahoma needed style points against Nebraska.

The Sooners weren't playing the Huskers. They were playing Auburn. The Tigers fired the first salvo. They beat tough Georgia 24-6 in a game sure to fuel the Auburn BCS bandwagon.

Oklahoma had to answer, defend its ranking, against an unranked, down-on-its-luck Husker team. The Sooners needed to pound Nebraska or else. The spread was 30 points. Everyone expected a bloodbath.

But the Huskers are nobody's pat-



Tom Shatel

They beat the spread. They watched as OU quarterback Jason White carved them up for 29 completions for 383 yards. But Kevin Cosgrove's bend-but-don't-break defense was only the third team this season to hold the Sooners to 30 points.

They came out hitting hard and playing with all of the gusto that has made this series one of college football's great traditions. They played like brawlers. They played with heart.

And nobody more than junior running back Cory Ross, who galloped and tugged and broke a gantlet of tackles before his broken body could take no more and he was taken off to the locker room late in the fourth quarter.

They went for a touchdown on fourth and goal at the OU 6 when it

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INSIDE



Like the fella

Wide receiver Steve Breaston was a popular guy after scoring twice in 35 seconds for Michigan, helping to defeat Northwestern 42-20.

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Once said

Saturday's Notre-Dame-Pittsburgh game should keep conversations rolling. The Panthers scored with one second left to break ahead, 41-38.

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Ain't that a kicker?

Waiting on the West Virginia sidelines, punter Phil Brady couldn't watch as Boston College upset the Mountaineers, 36-17.

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In the head

This wasn't where Oklahoma State wide receiver D'Juan Woods expected the pass to go. He and the Cowboys won 49-21 over Baylor.

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