

It'll take a few quarters to work out the bugs, but NU should slip by Seminoles, predictor says

By Bob Asmussen
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Accountability for a football prediction column is usually negligible. Oh sure, the guy will say he hit 86 percent of the games last week, but does anyone ever really go back and check? If you did, you might find that 86 percent was actually the percentage of wrong guesses the columnist had made. It's true. Extensive research has led me to this discovery.

Predictions

So, how about a prediction columnist who doesn't make outlandish claims about his accuracy? How about a prediction columnist who's shooting for 50 percent right and will be happy with 40 percent? How about a prediction columnist who won't shake and quiver when he hears someone say, "I wonder how many what's-his-name got right last week?"

One of my favorite things on TV is when the "Love Boat" calls Gavin McLeon "your ship's captain" and Fred Grandy "your yeoman purser." So, for now on, I'd like to be known as "your bad football predictor."

Nebraska 31, Florida State 14

at Lincoln — The Seminoles were great last week holding Toledo (Toledo?) to less than 200 yards total offense. That's sure something to write home to Mom about. This game would be an even bigger margin of victory for Nebraska if the Cornhuskers had already played a game. But it will take a quarter for the bugs to be worked out, then the Huskers will roll.

UCLA 28, Oklahoma 21 at Norman, Okla. — This one is easy. The Sooners had a player on the cover of Sports Illustrated's Football Spectacular, a certain kiss of death. While they were at it, the good people at SI gave the Sooners a vote of confidence as the preseason No. 1-ranked team, another kiss of death. But the key element in the OU loss will be turnovers. It's always said, and it's always true, it takes a few games for the Sooners to warm up. OU's defense might be a tad overrated and the Bruins will be able to exploit the weak areas in the Sooner defense.

Miami 21, Florida 18 at Gainesville, Fla. — One would be inclined to pick Florida simply because the Gators are at home. Last season that would have been the logical thing to do. But 1986 brings us a weaker Florida team and a new, improved Miami team. Either the Hurricanes are great or South Carolina is horrible.

Probably it's a little bit of both. This is a battle of Heisman Trophy hopefuls, Vinny Testaverde for Miami and Kerwin Bell for Florida. Vinny will get the upper hand and probably will win the Heisman. Miami is probably the best team in the country.

Kansas State 21, Texas Tech 20 at Lubbock, Texas — How can anyone not like and root for the Wildkittens? They've been so horrible for so long, but now they've finally got a coach who wants to take the team to the top. Stan Parrish has been able to restore the confidence at Kansas State. This Parrish guy has got some nerve, he's got guts. He's Rambo with a whistle, John Wayne in shorts, Clint Eastwood with a game plan. If he doesn't turn the program around, no one will notice. If he does turn the program around, Manhattan will be renamed Stanville. By the way, the Wildcats really probably don't have a chance in hell of winning this game.

Akron 35, Salem 3 at Akron, Ohio — The Gerry Faust era has begun at Akron. The Zips couldn't have picked a better opening opponent than the Witch Trials. Akron will set Salem on fire and then tie rocks to its feet and throw it in a lake. Faust has taken a step down, but, will it be a successful step down. Next coaching stop for Gerry is Iowa School of the Armless.

Penn State 24, Temple 10 at State College, Pa. — While Kansas State is a team that you have to love, Penn State is a team you have to hate. The uniforms they wear is reason enough. The Penn State uniforms make the players run two seconds slower in the 40-yard dash. Put these guys in some decent uniforms and they'd be killers. In the late '60s and early '70s when Penn State kept getting the shaft in the national rankings, the two reasons listed by voters were the Penn State uniforms and Joe Paterno's wardrobe. Sadly, 15 years later, nothing has changed. In this game, by the way, Temple's Paul Palmer will run for about 200 yards and continue to be the most ignored great football player in America.

Colorado 38, Colorado State 14 at Boulder, Colo. — The Buffaloes are a legitimate contender for the Big Eight title. You read it here first, and it will never be repeated again. With a solid offense and a strong defense, the Buffs have what it takes to win it all. Colorado State, on the other hand, is not a contender for much of anything, other than last place in the Western Athletic Conference. Ralphie, the team's buffalo mascot, will have a field day and probably do his business on the Colorado State equipment bag. Way to go, Ralphie.

UTEP 14, Air Force 3 at El Paso, Texas — UTEP is another team that has to be loved. They won one game in 1985, but it was against those hated wimps from Brigham Young. Last Saturday, UTEP blasted, I mean creamed, Northern Michigan. It was ugly. So, all of a sudden UTEP is building a dynasty. Well, not really a dynasty, more of a Knots Landing or a Falcon Crest. But still pretty good for UTEP. Air Force had a bad game last week against Hawaii, beating the Jack Lords by only seven. That kind of playing might work against the Mai Tai drinkers, but it won't accomplish a win against the Miners.

Other games that I'll probably be wrong about — Hawaii 17, Wisconsin 7; Illinois 35, Louisville 21; Mississippi 20, Memphis State 17; Syracuse 30, Mississippi State 21; Tennessee 42, New Mexico 9; Washington 35, UNLV 3; Oregon 19, San Jose State 7; Virginia 17, South Carolina 13; Alabama 28, Vanderbilt 7; Arizona 38, Houston 2 (two-run home run by Glenn Davis saves the shut-out); Baylor 41, Wyoming 7 (and sorry they invited the Bears); Boston College 21, Rutgers 15; North Carolina 40, The Citadel 6; Duke 10, Northwestern 10 (both coaches quit after the game, all players gain their Ph.Ds) and North Carolina State 23, East Carolina 8.

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