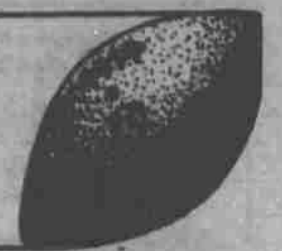


## sports



## Osborne cites Pillen as game saver, warns of ISU's motivated Cyclones

By Mike McCarthy

Without senior linebacker Clete Pillen, the Huskers would have lost to Oklahoma State University (OSU) Saturday, Husker coach Tom Osborne said Monday at the Extra Point Club luncheon.

"Our coaches believed if Clete Pillen wouldn't have done what he did, we would have lost the game," Osborne said. "It was the finest defensive performance of the year."

What Pillen did in the Huskers' 14-10 victory over the Cowboys was tackle. He made 30 tackles, 14 of them unassisted against a strong OSU rushing offense that netted 292 yards.

"What is more amazing," Osborne said, "is that he has had a bad ankle since the TCU (Texas Christian University) game (Sept. 25)."

Pillen has instinct

"Cleto isn't the fastest player," Osborne said. "But he has the instinct of getting to the football. Either you have that instinct or you don't."

Pillen said he had to change his coverage after watching films of OSU's earlier games.

"After watching films I knew I had to go deeper on coverage since they have such fast backs coming out of the backfield," Pillen said.

"I felt I played a good game after watching the game films," Pillen said. "But Okie State only threw six times and ran 78 plays, so that many tackles isn't that unusual when the defense is playing so much. You just have to hustle and work at it."

Osborne termed the OSU game awfully hard-hitting. Physically there was little difference between the two teams, he said.

Osborne also cited senior split end Chuck Malito for a "great game," but he said UNL's other ends are almost interchangeable with Malito.

"There is not much difference between Malito, (Bobby) Thomas and (Dave) Shamblin. It doesn't matter which one is in there at the time."

## UNL backpacking trip getting set for Mexico

A 10-day backpacking trip through Mexico will highlight the end of this year for at least 12 UNL students.

An organizational meeting for the trip, sponsored by UNL's Recreation Dept., will be today at 4 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Small Auditorium, according to Ed Wan of the Recreation Dept.

"There will be a limit of 12 persons on the trip because of van capacity," Wan said. "We'll be driving to the border in university-provided vans."

Wan said the group also would travel by bus and train before reaching the Barrancas Del Cobre Canyon where the backpacking will begin.

"We'll be making a loop around the canyon so we end up at virtually the same place where we began," Wan said.

Total cost for the trip, from Dec. 28 to Jan. 14 will be \$192.

The department also sponsored a nine-person canoe trip to the Missouri Ozarks from Oct. 22 to 25, Wan said.

"We canoed down the north fork of the White River in Missouri," Wan said. "It rained most of the time but I think everybody still had a pretty good time. We were there just at the right time of year because the trees were just turning color. It was really beautiful."

Cost of the canoe trip was \$45 per person, Wan said. Wan said that the only difficulty involved on trips is the weather.

"Sometimes it's hard to suit everyone's tastes, but that's no big problem. We never have trouble filling up these trips. People sign up well in advance."

Students wanting additional information should contact the Recreation Dept. at 472-3467.

Senior quarterback Vince Ferragamo also had a good day despite throwing two interceptions, Osborne said, adding the offensive line did "a good job protecting Vince."

Osborne expressed concern with the Huskers' five turnovers against OSU and about UNL's next opponent, Iowa State University (ISU).

"A year ago we did a great job, averaging about two turnovers a game," he said. "It would have been a much different ballgame had we taken care of the ball on our first two possessions."

On the Huskers' first two possessions Saturday, drives were thwarted inside OSU's 30-yard line. One was stopped when Ferragamo threw an interception. On the other, Thomas fumbled after catching a Ferragamo pass.

Double trouble

ISU quarterbacks Buddy Hardeman and Wayne Stanley offer the biggest problem for the Huskers Saturday, Osborne said.

"Both are great runners," he said. "But they can also pass. You won't find two quarterbacks that do things so well."

Osborne said the difference between last year's and this year's ISU team is that the 1976 Cyclones have stayed healthy and 1975's team had little to play for.

Osborne said the Huskers' 4-1 mark doesn't give UNL much breathing room while leading the Big 8, and any talk about the bowl picture is premature.

"It could end up one Big 8 team goes to the Orange Bowl and everybody else (in the Big 8) sits home," Osborne said. "The best thing we could do is make sure we're the team to go."

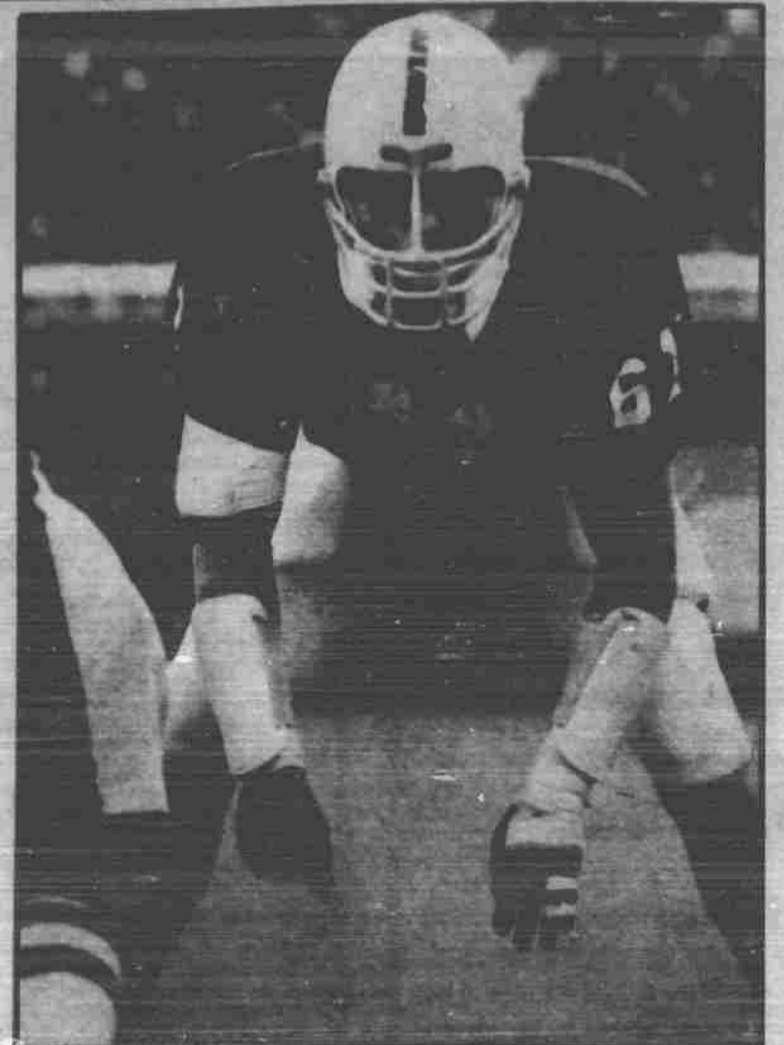


Photo by Kevin Higley

Husker senior co-captain and linebacker Clete Pillen logged 30 tackles Saturday in the Huskers' 14-10 win over Oklahoma State University. Coach Tom Osborne called it "the finest defensive performance of the year" for the Huskers.

## UNL equipment manager Babcock has shared in Husker gridiron luck

By Rob Barney

If Gib Babcock quit farming just to get Big 8 Conference championship watches, he has been lucky.

During his 12 years at UNL, Babcock, football equipment manager, has received seven Big 8 championship rings and two national championship rings.

It was 14 years ago that Babcock decided to leave his farm near North Loup to work on the UNL grounds crews.

"It was getting to where it (farming) wasn't profitable," Babcock said. "I just decided I wanted to do something else."

After two years on the grounds crew, Babcock applied for the equipment manager job.

Responsibility

"I knew one thing when I applied for the job," Babcock said. "That it would be quite a responsible job. But I figured I would maybe get a championship watch."

Babcock is in his last year at UNL. He said he plans to retire and go back to North Loup at the end of April.

Babcock said his busiest time of the year is just before the football season starts.

"The hardest thing I do is to try to get the players fitted with the right equipment," he said. "Some players who wear a large in one type of pants might wear a medium in another."

Babcock said he has had problems fitting some players. He said the biggest problem was fitting Marvin Crenshaw with shoes, adding that Crenshaw wore a size 16 shoe, which had to be specially made.

"Bob Lingenfelter (UNL senior offensive tackle) is about as big as they come. He wears a size 15 shoe, but those are a lot easier to come by than size 16s," he said.

Game preparations

Babcock, who also is equipment manager for baseball and track, said his game preparations start Thursday.

"On Thursday we get four trunks full of practice clothes, sideline capes if the weather is bad and face

masks and chin straps along with other odds and ends ready," he said.

Also on Thursdays, the players pick up their own game equipment, he said.

"The players are responsible for all of their game uniforms and equipment," Babcock said. "Plus we take along an extra jersey for each player."

Babcock said jerseys usually last a couple of years, then are used as practice jerseys.

"We have to replace the mesh jerseys a little bit more often," he said.

After being packed, the equipment is taken to the airport to be loaded on the Husker plane. If the team takes a bus, the equipment is loaded in the van which Babcock drives to the game. He shares driving time with UNL groundskeeper Bill Shepard.

After the game.

He said the van also goes to the road games that the team flies to.

"We bring back the equipment ourselves in the van instead of by plane because in the past we hired people to do it and we haven't got our stuff back when we wanted it," he said.

After the game is over and the equipment is returned, Babcock's job is not over. He has to wash all of the jerseys and pants.

"We use 60 pounds of soap a week and over a ton a year," Babcock said. "The only things we don't wash are the towels. There is a towel service for that."

He said the installation of AstroTurf has helped save on washing costs, but has cost UNL in another way.

"Before the turf, players had shoes for practice and then for the game. But now some players have four or five pairs of shoes—depending on if the surface is wet or dry."

Babcock said he has noted some differences in equipment over the years.

"The biggest difference is how the prices have gone up but the quality stays the same."

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