

sports

Fairbanks hoping for a 4-foot snowfall

When the Colorado Buffaloes invade Nebraska's Memorial Stadium, the stage will be set for another attempted upset of the Huskers second-ranked football team.

When asked how he felt his team would do against the Huskers, Colorado Head Coach Chuck Fairbanks responded much the same way Iowa mentor Hayden Fry did before the Nebraska-Iowa game in which the Huskers rallied to win.

paul huscher

In a Daily Nebraskan interview before the Sept. 22 game, Fry said "I already know we're going to lose." Fry said he hoped the weather was terrible so the game would be called off.

Likewise, when Fairbanks was told that Lincoln received its first snow fall of the year on Monday he responded by saying, "The snow might be the best thing for us. I hope there is four feet of snow on the ground this Saturday."

"I'm kind of hoping it's blizzarding and we might have a chance then," Fairbanks said.

Fry had said he wasn't worried about playing Nebraska.

"What I am worried about is getting my players out onto the field on Saturday," Fry said.

ON THE SAME note Fairbanks said, "We're not a very good team. The only chance we have against Nebraska is if we play about 1,000 percent better than we have been playing."

"Nebraska is a far superior football team than we are right now," Fairbanks said. "They are just too good."

Nebraska's Blackshirt defense has three shutouts in a row and Colorado could be their fourth victim this year.

"It may be tough to score on Nebraska," he said. "There have been some pretty good teams who haven't scored on them."

Colorado, which had a respectable 6-5 record last year under coach Bill Mallory, returned 15 starters and 41 lettermen this year for Fairbanks. His return to college football hasn't been pleasant because the Buffs are 1-5 and have been outscored 168-76 so far.

Before going to Colorado, Fairbanks was the head coach for six years at Oklahoma and six more years as the head coach of the NFL New England Patriots.

At OU, Fairbanks was 52-15-1. His teams finished in

the nation's top ten four of six years and were 3-3 against Nebraska.

AFTER FINISHING second in the nation behind USC in 1972, Fairbanks tried his hand at coaching in the NFL. His pro career record was 46-40 and two of his six Patriot teams made the NFL playoffs.

So, Fairbanks' last twelve years as a head coach, have given him a combined record of 98-55-1 in both ranks. Fairbanks said his move to Colorado probably hasn't turned out to be the best thing he's done.

"I'm not used to losing," he said.

Comparing the two teams, the Huskers look awesome compared to the Buffaloes, who will have a difficult time

trying to stampede over the Husker's defense or trying to stop Osborne's nationally leading offense.

CU ranks sixth or below in six Big Eight categories: total defense (7th), total offense (6th), rushing offense (6th), rushing defense (last), scoring offense (7th) and scoring defense (last).

On the other hand, the 6-0 Huskers are nationally ranked in many of the same categories and lead the Big Eight in all of them. Conference leading categories with national ranking include: total offense (first), total defense (fourth), rushing offense (second), rushing defense (second), scoring offense (third), and scoring defense (seventh).

The figures do look pretty imposing, but remember what Iowa did just five weeks ago.

Huskers aim to stampede the Buffs

By Ed McClymont

The second-rated Nebraska Cornhuskers will attempt to continue their dominance over Colorado when the Buffaloes come to Lincoln Saturday.

Nebraska has lost to Colorado only once in the last 17 years. The Buffs took a 21-16 decision in Lincoln in 1967. And if the first six games of the 1979 season are any indication it appears that Colorado is going to be hard pressed to end the losing string. The Nebraska Blackshirts have posted three straight shutouts while the offense is atop the nation's offensive charts.

"The offense has taken a lot of pressure off the defense because they've been able to take a lot of time off the clock," defensive coordinator Lance Van Zandt said.

Although the defense has posted the shutouts Van Zandt said they've been doing nothing different in the last three weeks.

"We played good the first three games, it's just that everybody got upset when Utah State threw for 200 yards and they turned out to be second in the nation in passing."

SENIOR MONSTER BACK Mark Leroy felt the Huskers first two games were good testers for the Blackshirts.

"Our first game we played a great passing team and only gave up 14 points, and our second game we had a lot of turnovers and were able to overcome them," Leroy said. "We just didn't know how good we could be."

Middle guard, Kerry Weinmaster, said the defense wasn't familiar with each other at the beginning of the season.

"It took a while for everyone to get used to each other," Weinmaster said. "We're starting to jell together now."

Van Zandt said the defense has a lot of pride in themselves. The reason we play well is because we practice well. It really takes a dedicated effort in practice, and I also think our players prepare themselves well mentally," Van Zandt said.

"You don't see a lot of our players around the Union messing around. They're usually up here watching films. It takes this kind of dedication to be a good football team."

Van Zandt said most of the defensive play is recognition and the more times they watch the play on film the better they're going to be able to recognize it Saturday.

THE LAST TIME a Chuck Fairbanks team came to Lincoln was in 1972 when Oklahoma avenged its loss in the "game of the century" a year prior by defeating Nebraska 17-14, and starting its six game winning streak over the Huskers.

Fairbanks' return to the Big Eight hasn't been quite as sweet as his departure, however. The Buffs will have to win the rest of their games to equal last year's 6-5 record, one that got Bill Mallory fired. Colorado has improved over the last three games, including a near upset of Missouri a week ago. The Buffs had four chances to score from the Missouri six-yard line, the last with 12 seconds on the clock.

Individually, Colorado has decided on Bill Solomon as the full-time quarterback, according to head Nebraska coach Tom Osborne.

Earlier in the season the Buffaloes had been switching Solomon and Charlie Davis.

THE STRONGEST AREA for Colorado this year is in the defensive backfield where the four starters have a combined total of 13 years experience.

Mark Haynes and Mike Davis are both in their fourth year of starting, Jesse Johnson in his third year and Tim Roberts in his second. They are currently second in the Big Eight in pass defense. However in rushing defense the Buffs find themselves in the cellar giving up 234 yards a game.

Offensively, Colorado averages 267 yards a game. Van Zandt is hoping the Buffs put up a lot of passes.

"I hope they have to pass a lot because that means we've shut them down on their running game," Van Zandt said.

Monster Mark LeRoy is also anticipating an aerial circus on the Buffs part.

"Colorado has been getting better, but we're not going to change anything for them," LeRoy said. "I'm expecting them to pass a lot. They have a quick split end (16-year-old Don Holmes)".

Van Zandt said that even though Colorado is 1-5, beating Nebraska would be a big, big victory for them.

Doubtful to play for the Huskers Saturday are Brent Williams with a nagging ankle injury and Paul Letcher, with a knee injury.

Defense shooting for fourth shutout

This columnist finally bounced back up above the 70 percent mark in predictions by hitting 24 of 32 games last week for 75 percent. That makes the season tally 156-62-5 for 71.5 percent.

lee barfknecht

After eight weeks, the number of undefeated teams in NCAA Division I-A play has dwindled to 13 and that number will shrink even more after this week's slate. But Nebraska won't be among the victims.

Colorado at Nebraska—The Husker defense will be shooting for their fourth straight shutout and they might get it if the Colorado offense is as bad as Chuck Fairbanks says it is. Fairbanks was asked why his team threw 37 times against Missouri last week. Chuck said: "We threw 37 times because we can't run." But much of the Nebraska defensive success has come about because the offense hasn't turned the ball over in the last two games. The Huskers' week-by-week improvement has been astounding, but they can't afford to get sloppy and leave the ball lying around for a bunch of hungry Buffaloes to gobble up. Having already played Oklahoma and being 1-5, this is CU's "bowl game," and it could be a bit closer than one might expect. . . Nebraska 31, Colorado 15.

Houston at Arkansas—One occurrence that has persisted through the first seven weeks of the football season is when a Top 10 rated team plays highly ranked opponents two weeks in a row, the Top 10 team wins the first game and loses the second. As a pair of examples, Notre Dame nipped Michigan 12-10, then lost to Purdue 28-22 the next week. And Texas beat Oklahoma 16-7, then fell to Arkansas 17-14 the following Saturday. Now Arkansas, ranked 4th in AP and 5th in UPI, must follow up its emotional upset of the Longhorns by meeting Houston, ranked 4th in UPI and 6th in AP. Part-time magician and full-time Hog football coach Lou Holtz pulled one rabbit out of his hat last week, but it will probably take a trick in the magnitude of a Houdini escape to get his players emotionally prepared for this one. Ask Tom Osborne how easy it was to prepare for Missouri last year after the Huskers upset Oklahoma the

previous week. Look for this trend to continue . . . Houston 20, Arkansas 17.

Auburn at Wake Forest—By entering the year with a 10-game losing streak and being a consensus choice to finish last in the ACC, Wake Forest, with a 6-1 record, may be the best kept secret in college football. With only a field goal loss to North Carolina St. and wins over Maryland, North Carolina and Georgia, the Demon Deacons are proving they can play something else in college athletics than golf. Auburn is 5-1 this year, but 0-1 against the NCAA—the Tigers are on probation for recruiting violations. We say the Wake Forest Cinderella story will go at least one more chapter . . . Wake Forest 19, Auburn 13.

Florida St. at LSU—It's "Upset Special" time. The seventh-ranked Seminoles are 6-0 and well-known for being tough at home in their own "pit." But they haven't seen anything until they ride into Baton Rouge on an unbearably sultry Saturday night to play among the LSU "Chinese bandits." . . . LSU 35, Florida St. 24.

Virginia Tech at Alabama—Another "bill paying" game for the Crimson Tide. The Bear brings in a group of slabs for his boys to pound on, guarantees the opponents a set fee and deposits the rest in the athletic department coffers. This is the third time we've listed Alabama in the "Wipeout of the Week." No, that doesn't tell you how good they are. But it might tell you what kind of schedule they play . . . Alabama 53, Virginia Tech 7.

Other Games Saturday

Midwest—Oklahoma over Iowa St.; Missouri over Kansas St.; Kansas over Oklahoma St.; Minnesota over Illinois; Michigan over Indiana; Wisconsin over Iowa; Ohio St. over Michigan St.; Purdue over Northwestern; Notre Dame over South Carolina.

South—Georgia over Kentucky; North Carolina over East Carolina; Tulane over Georgia Tech; Mississippi St. over So. Mississippi.

Southwest—Texas A&M over Rice; Texas over SMU; Baylor over TCU.

East—Maryland over Duke; Penn St. over West Virginia; Pittsburgh over Navy; Syracuse over Miami (Fla.).

West—USC over California; Colorado St. over Air Force; Washington over UCLA; Oregon over Washington St.; Arizona St. over Utah St.; Stanford over Oregon St.; BYU over New Mexico.