

# Sports

## Huskers burn Sun Devils in Tempe

By Chuck Green  
Senior Editor

TEMPE, Ariz. — Nebraska's football team accomplished something Saturday no Cornhusker squad ever had before — it won a game in Sun Devil Stadium.

In 1975, Nebraska lost to Arizona State 17-14 in the Fiesta Bowl. In 1986, the Huskers lost to Michigan 27-23 in the Fiesta Bowl at the same site.

With the score tied 21-21 at the end of the third quarter, the field temperature standing at 122 degrees and the highly partisan crowd of 71,264 — the fourth largest in Sun Devil Stadium history — screaming for an upset, a third loss in Tempe seemed to be unfolding for Nebraska.

But Nebraska, led by a 145-yard rushing effort by 1-back Keith Jones and a 134-yard, two-touchdown performance by quarterback Steve Taylor, defeated No. 12-ranked Arizona State 35-28 to increase its record to 3-0 and likely keep its No. 2 ranking.

Nebraska generated 459 yards of offense — 364 rushing — while the Sun Devils passed for 200 yards and ran for 177.

Nebraska's defensive effort did not impress Husker coach Tom Osborne.

"I was surprised at the way they moved the ball on us," Osborne said of Arizona State's offense. "I am pleased to get out of here alive. Arizona State will win a lot of games this year."

After a scoreless first quarter, Nebraska safety Mark Blazek intercepted a pass from Arizona State quarterback Danny Ford in the end zone, giving the Huskers the ball at their own 20-yard line. On the first play of the drive, Taylor scrambled 32 yards to the Sun Devil 48-yard line. Eleven plays later, Taylor scored the first of two touchdowns from 1 yard out. Chris Drennan's extra point gave Nebraska a 7-0 lead.

Arizona State answered with a 13-play, 62-yard drive that ended with a 36-yard field goal by Alan Zendejas.

Nebraska then marched 85 yards in 12 plays on its next possession to increase its lead to 14-3. Fullback Micah Heibel capped the drive with a 1-yard touchdown burst up the

middle.

Zendejas then booted a 28-yard field goal as time ran out in the first half to cut Nebraska's lead to 14-6.

Arizona State received the kickoff to start the second half and drove 80 yards in eight plays to cut Nebraska's lead to 14-12 on a 2-yard pass from Ford to flanker Chris Garrett. The Sun Devils tied the game 14-14 on a Ford pass to Aaron Cox for the 2-point conversion.

Husker wingback Dana Brinson returned the ensuing kickoff 29 yards to the Nebraska 30-yard line. Nebraska's drive stalled at the Arizona State 27-yard line, and Drennan came in to attempt what appeared to be a 44-yard field goal. But Clete Blakeman received the snap and passed to tight end Todd Millikan on the left sideline. Millikan rambled to the 1-yard line for a first-and-goal. Jones scored on the next play, giving the Huskers a 21-14 lead after Drennan's extra point.

"We didn't do anything great on it," Osborne said of the play. "It's just a play we wanted to try. It worked. If it hadn't, it would have been a dumb call."

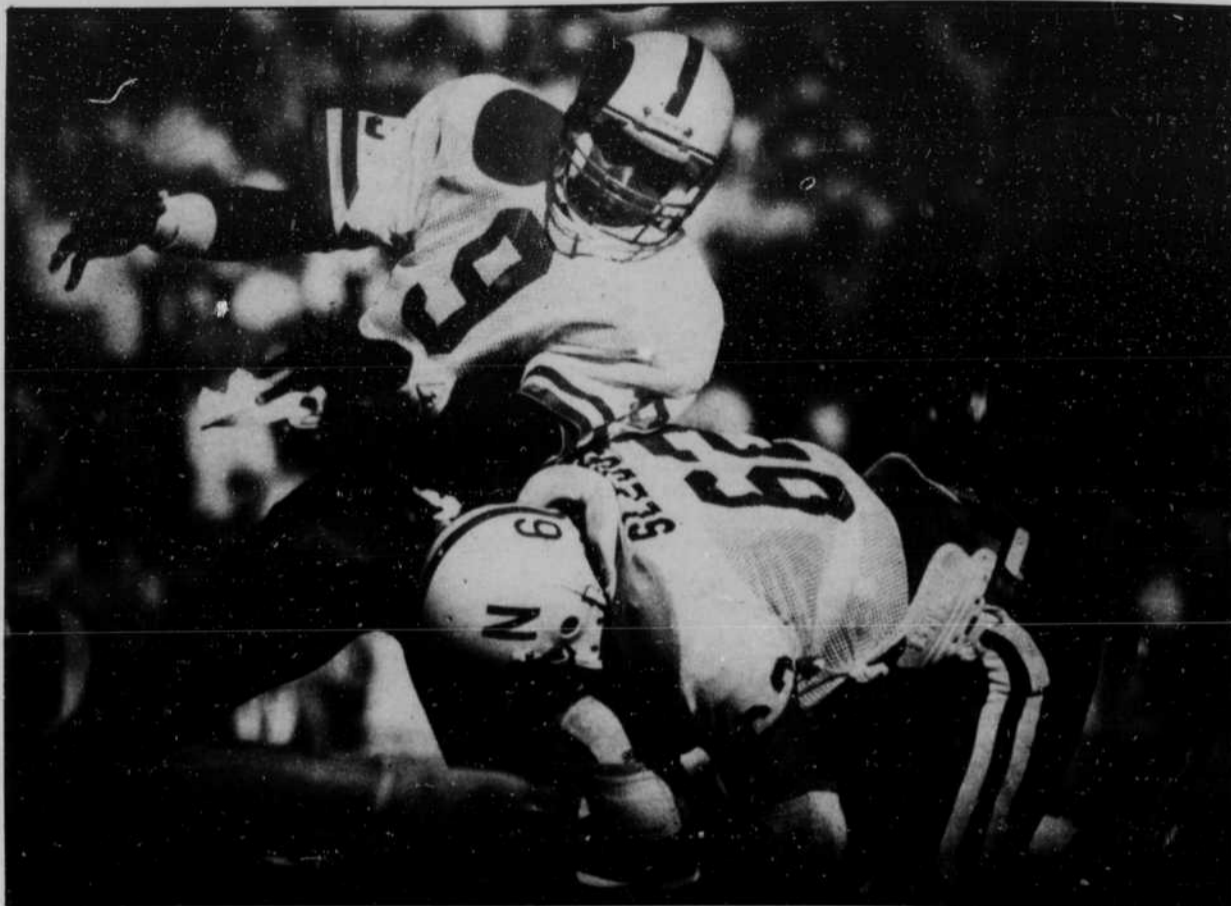
"It really wasn't any stroke of genius at all."

After the Huskers stopped the Sun Devils on their next drive, Taylor fumbled at the Nebraska 15. Arizona State middle guard Saute Sapulo recovered, and the Sun Devils scored four plays later on a 4-yard sweep by tailback Darryl Harris.

After both teams traded possessions, Nebraska took over at its own 30. Taylor hit Millikan on a 12-yard pass over the middle to give the Huskers a first-and-10 at their own 45-yard line. On third-and-two from the Arizona State 47, Taylor carried the ball over the right guard for a 24-yard gain and a first down at the 23-yard line. Three plays later, Taylor found split end Rod Smith wide open in the end zone for the go-ahead touchdown.

"I thought that touchdown would take the wind out of their sails, but it didn't," Smith said. "They just kept coming."

After stopping Arizona State on its ensuing possession, Nebraska began another drive at its own 12-yard line. On third-and-15 from the 7-yard line,



Andy Mrozinski/State Press

Nebraska quarterback Steve Taylor fumbles during the fourth quarter of the Cornhuskers 35-28 victory over Arizona State Saturday at Sun Devil Stadium.

Taylor tried to pass out of the end zone but was forced out of the pocket. He was hit and fumbled the ball, which was recovered by Sun Devil strong safety Nathan LaDuke at the Nebraska 13.

Five plays and 13 yards later, Arizona State tied the game 28-28 on a 1-yard run by Harris with 4:55 remaining.

Nebraska began its final drive at its own 18-yard line. After a 12-yard run on the first play, Jones took a pitch and sprinted 62 yards to the Arizona State 7 before Anthony Parker ran him out of bounds.

"It was a 49 Pitch," Jones said. "I was definitely tired, but if Coach (Osborne) hadn't been switching I-

backs the way he did, I don't think I would have had enough energy to get as far as I did."

Taylor scored from 3 yards out two plays later, and the extra point by Drennan was the final point of the game.

But the contest remained in doubt until the game's final minute. On Arizona State's ensuing possession, the Sun Devils drove to the Nebraska 47-yard line before linebacker Steve Forch intercepted. After failing to move the ball, Nebraska was forced to punt.

Ford had one more chance. But on fourth-and-14 from the Arizona State 44-yard line, Ford threw his third interception of the game, this time to

Husker strong safety Brian Washington.

Taylor then dropped on the ball on the game's last play to preserve the win.

"People say that a game like this will build character," Smith said. "I think it will. I'm not disappointed in the score. We can do better, but a win's a win."

Taylor said the heat and the crowd at Sun Devil Stadium was a factor in the Huskers' performance.

"The heat wore us down a bit," he said, "and the crowd had a large effect on the game. At times, the offensive line couldn't even hear me, so we couldn't audible. That took some things away from us."

## ASU players say Sun Devils as good as Huskers

By Jeff Apel  
Senior Editor

TEMPE, Ariz. — A teary-eyed Daniel Ford learned a painful lesson during Nebraska's 35-28 victory over Arizona State Saturday at Sun Devil Stadium.

Ford, who replaced Jeff Van Raaphorst as the Sun Devils' starting quarterback this season, said he learned he has to have a better pass selection and a more efficient middle-range passing game to be successful.

Ford said he was upset with his middle-range passing game because he halted two Arizona State come-from-behind attempts by throwing interceptions.

With Arizona State trailing by the game's 35-28 outcome, Ford halted the Sun Devils' next-to-last drive when his pass was intercepted by Nebraska linebacker Steve Forch. Cornhusker strong safety Brian Washington then preserved the Nebraska victory when he intercepted Ford's final pass of the game at the Arizona State 44-yard line.

"I believe in myself, that's not the

problem," Ford said. "I see myself as I can get in there and get the job done. It's not a case I can't make the big plays."

Ford said he felt the Sun Devils would win the game until Washington intercepted his pass with :01 remaining. He said Arizona State is still as good as Nebraska.

"They're good. I expected them to be good and they were," Ford said. "They beat us; they got the happy rights for the day."

"But no one should beat us. We're as good as they come — we just do our jobs."

Arizona State cornerback Anthony Parker agreed.

"They're a good team," Parker said. "But we feel like we're just as good as they are."

Arizona State coach John Cooper said he was pleased with the effort the No. 12-ranked Sun Devils delivered. He said they showed they were capable of playing with any team in the country.

"I didn't think we could play like this," Cooper said. "The biggest thing I was concerned about was what kind of character they showed, because they could have taken a back seat."

Cooper said Ford will have to improve if the Sun Devils are to be successful in their game against University of Texas-El Paso Saturday. He said the junior from Tulsa, Okla., needs to be more consistent.

"He has to get to where he's in the middle of the road," Cooper said. "Unfortunately, he made some bad choices at bad times."

Parker said Arizona's 94-degree heat took its toll on both teams. He said Nebraska and Arizona State were playing tired by the fourth quarter.

"But I don't think it made a difference either way," Parker said.

## Osborne says Cornhusker injuries are minimal

By Mike Kluck  
Staff Reporter

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said Sunday the Cornhuskers emerged from their 35-28 victory over Arizona State with only one major injury.

Osborne said the injury that was of immediate concern was a shoulder separation suffered by defensive end Broderick Thomas. He said the separation wasn't normal because it appeared to be more of a bruise since Thomas's shoulder slipped back into place.

Osborne said other players who were injured in the game at Tempe, Ariz., included strong-side linebacker LeRoy Etienne and left tackle Neil Smith. Etienne and Smith both suffered sore knees.

### Coach: Husker freshmen ready despite three-week layoff

FarmAid III placed a damper on the Nebraska freshman football team, but Coach Shane Thorell said the Cornhuskers will still be ready for their 1 p.m. game against the Bethany (Kan.) Junior Varsity today at Memorial Stadium.

Thorell said the game against Bethany originally was scheduled for Sept. 21, but was pushed back

because Nebraska coaches were concerned that the stage used for FarmAid III wouldn't be taken down in time. FarmAid III was in Memorial Stadium on Sept. 19.

Thorell said the delay created a slight problem because the Huskers didn't want to have three weeks between their season-opening

game against the St. Thomas (Minn.) Junior Varsity and the Bethany game.

Nebraska defeated St. Thomas 62-0 on Sept. 7.

"Three weeks is a lot of time to prepare, so we would have liked to had two," Thorell said. "But there was nothing we could do about it."

game.

Osborne said Nebraska did several good things despite having to deal with adverse conditions that included 71,264 Sun Devil fans. He said the noise level created by the fans created problems for Nebraska quarterback Steve Taylor.

"There were two or three times we wanted the audible and didn't get the command," Osborne said.

Osborne called the game with Arizona State as one of the toughest road games he's ever coached. He said the circumstances of the game were the same as the Huskers' games against

South Carolina last season and Clemson in the 1982 Orange Bowl, when the fans were vocally present throughout the contest.

Osborne said Arizona's 94-degree heat (122 degrees on the playing surface) didn't bother Nebraska. He said the heat actually worked against the Sun Devils.

Osborne said the Nebraska defense played well even though it surrendered 28 points to the No. 12-ranked Sun Devils.

The Big Eight allowed Nebraska to take 70 players to Tempe rather than the usual 60 because of the heat.

"It is foolish for the Big Eight in a non-conference game not to take as many players as we want," Osborne said. "Why should we handicap ourselves?"