

Huskers lose bowl, not chance to return to Fiesta

By Jeff Apel
Senior Editor

TEMPE, Ariz. -- A blowout has not dimmed the chances of future Nebraska-Florida State matchups in the Fiesta Bowl.

Brent DeRaad, the Fiesta Bowl's assistant director of communications, said his organization would take Nebraska and Florida State every year if they were the two highest-rated teams. He said the Seminoles' 41-17 victory against Nebraska did not dim the Fiesta Bowl's attitude toward either squad.

"We wouldn't be at all hesitant to take them," DeRaad said. "In fact, we would be very excited to take Nebraska and Florida State again."

DeRaad said the Fiesta Bowl was surprised by the lopsided outcome of the contest. Nebraska held a 7-0 lead after the first quarter, but was shelled 41-3 in the second and third periods.

"It was a situation where Nebraska came out and looked strong early," DeRaad said. "Then they fumbled a couple times, and that hurt them pretty good."

Nebraska finished the contest with five fumbles, and lost three of them.

DeRaad said this year's contest was a success even though the Fiesta Bowl was operating with a lot of new faces. He said the bowl overcame its lack of experience by using careful

planning.

"A lot of times when you have a lot of new faces, there's a tendency to drop the ball on something and have a few foul ups," DeRaad said. "But we were very pleased with the way everything went."

DeRaad said the Fiesta Bowl's success was evident by the television ratings it received. He said the bowl received an overnight rating of an eight share, meaning 16,000,000 families watched the contest.

DeRaad said that figure is strong because the 30 cities that the share was derived from included Los Angeles and Detroit. He said those cities provided stiff competition because they were prime markets for the Rose Bowl, which staged a head-to-head competition with the Fiesta Bowl for viewers.

Southern Cal defeated Michigan 17-10 in the Rose Bowl, which was televised by ABC. The Fiesta Bowl was televised by NBC.

DeRaad said the Fiesta Bowl was not disappointed even though thousands of people in the Sun Devil Stadium crowd of 73,953 left before the game was over. He said the Fiesta Bowl has grown accustomed to early-leaving crowds.

"It's pretty common for people in Arizona," DeRaad said. "It's kind of like a California crowd. They arrive late and leave early."

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ceiver Terry Anthony and tight end Reggie Johnson before completing his scoring strike to Carter.

Florida State began the second half by increasing its lead to 27-10 when fullback Paul Moore scored on a 1-yard run. The extra point by kicker Richie Andrews was blocked.

The Seminoles then tallied their final two scores when Willis threw 8- and 24-yard touchdown passes to Johnson and Anthony, and Nebraska scored its final touchdown when backup quarterback Mickey Joseph scampered in from two yards out.

Bowden said he didn't know what to attribute the game's lopsided score to.

"They were either out of sync or we're awfully good," he said. "I ain't sure which."

Osborne said the Seminoles are good.

"Florida State may be the best team in America," Osborne said. "I can't argue with that after we were

beaten so badly.

"I think they're awfully good."

Osborne said he felt frustrated because the Nebraska team that showed up for the Sunkick-Fiesta Bowl was not the same one he saw all season.

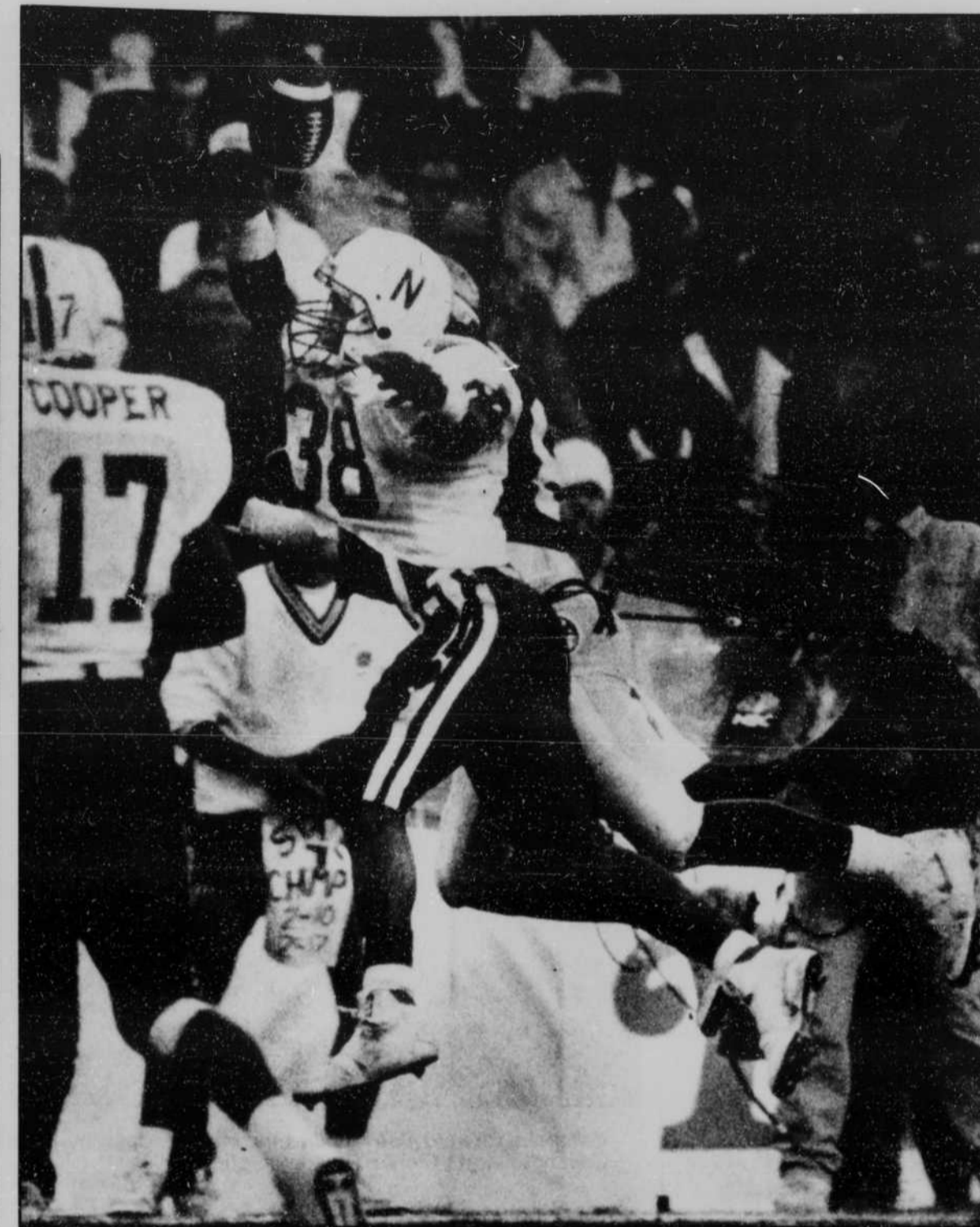
"We sure didn't appear to be the same football team," he said. "I don't know what to do."

Nebraska outside linebacker Jeff Mills said it was obvious that the Huskers were not prepared to face Florida State.

"We didn't get the job done," Mills said. "It was obvious."

Byrd said the lopsided score does not mean Nebraska would shy away from facing Florida State in a bowl matchup next season. He said the Huskers would love to face the Seminoles in a national championship contest on Jan. 1, 1991.

"Hopefully, we'll get another shot at Florida State in the Orange Bowl," Byrd said.



Clockwise from top left: Nebraska's Marvin Sanders (26) and Pat Tyrance (40) bring down Florida State's Amp Lee (42) early in the third quarter. Tyrance stripped the ball from Sanders seconds later.

Bruce Pickens (38) breaks up a pass from Seminoles' quarterback Peter Tom Willis intended for Terry Anthony (8) in the end zone during the third quarter.

Florida State team members gather around Reggie Johnson, celebrating his third quarter TD catch as Nebraska's Tahaun Lewis watches.

Nebraska's Kenny Walker (57) tackles Willis as he gets a pass off midway through the second quarter.

The fourth-quarter deficit leaves Nebraska's Joe Sims (56) on the bench with his own thoughts.

Photos by Al Schaben

