

Cornhuskers' bacon saved by strong defense

By Paul Domeier
Senior Reporter

Nebraska defeated Baylor 13-0 Saturday in the Cornhuskers' football season opener at Memorial Stadium.

That was no surprise. Nor was the play of the Nebraska defense, which held the Bears to 164 yards of total offense.

But the game wasn't a 70-0 rout to calm the Husker fans and guarantee another nine or 10 wins in 1990.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said the Huskers are better off this way.

"We gained more by playing this game than a game that had been really easy," Osborne said.

The team also gained questions: How good is the offense? Is the middle of the defense soft? Did the Huskers beat an average team or an underrated team?

The other Husker questions will have to be resolved in the rest of the season, but in asking "How good was the win?" the early answer is, "A lot better than a loss."

One missed tackle or tripping defender could have provided that loss, for the first 59 minutes 38 seconds Nebraska's offense threatened and sputtered and provided only six points.

Nebraska starting quarterback Mike Grant took a helmet to the left knee with 2:03 left in the first quarter and had to leave the game. Mickey Joseph, who was scheduled to play in the second quarter, made an early entry to replace Grant.

In the second quarter, Gregg Barrios kicked a 37-yard field goal. The key play in the drive was a 14-yard gain and 15-yard personal foul when Joseph sprinted to the left and was hit after running out of bounds.

Baylor's strongest challenge came at the start of the fourth-quarter. The

Bears marched from their 31-yard-line to the Nebraska 5, with many of the yards coming on draw plays up the middle. Running back Eldwin Raphael finished with 76 yards on 18 carries.

The game turned on a pair of plays, one from the defense and one from the offense.

On second-and-goal from the 5, Baylor's Frankie Smith took the ball up the middle and linebacker Pat Tyrance took the ball away. Travis Hill recovered the fumble caused by Tyrance's hit at the 3.

The Husker offense came in and gained three yards on two plays. Then came the second big play, a 23-yard pass from Grant to Jon Bostick for a first down at the 29.

Second-string I-back Scott Baldwin, who led the team with 92 yards on 14 carries, followed with a 53-yard run up the middle aided by fullback Lance Lewis, who blocked a Baylor defender downfield into a backward somersault.

Grant completed 5 of 6 passes for 86 yards in the game. Joseph threw one incompleteness and one interception. The Huskers didn't throw more, Osborne said, out of respect for Baylor's defensive backs.

Nebraska totaled 335 yards against the Baylor defense, which Osborne predicted would be as tough as the Huskers will face.

But the Nebraska defense was stronger. Baylor quarterback Steve Needham, playing in place of injured three-year starter Brad Goebel, completed two of eight passes for 28 yards and one interception.

"The defense has got to be the strong point of our football team, particularly early," Osborne said, "and they saved our bacon tonight."

Osborne attributes low score to Baylor's keep-away strategy

By Vicki Burge
Staff Reporter

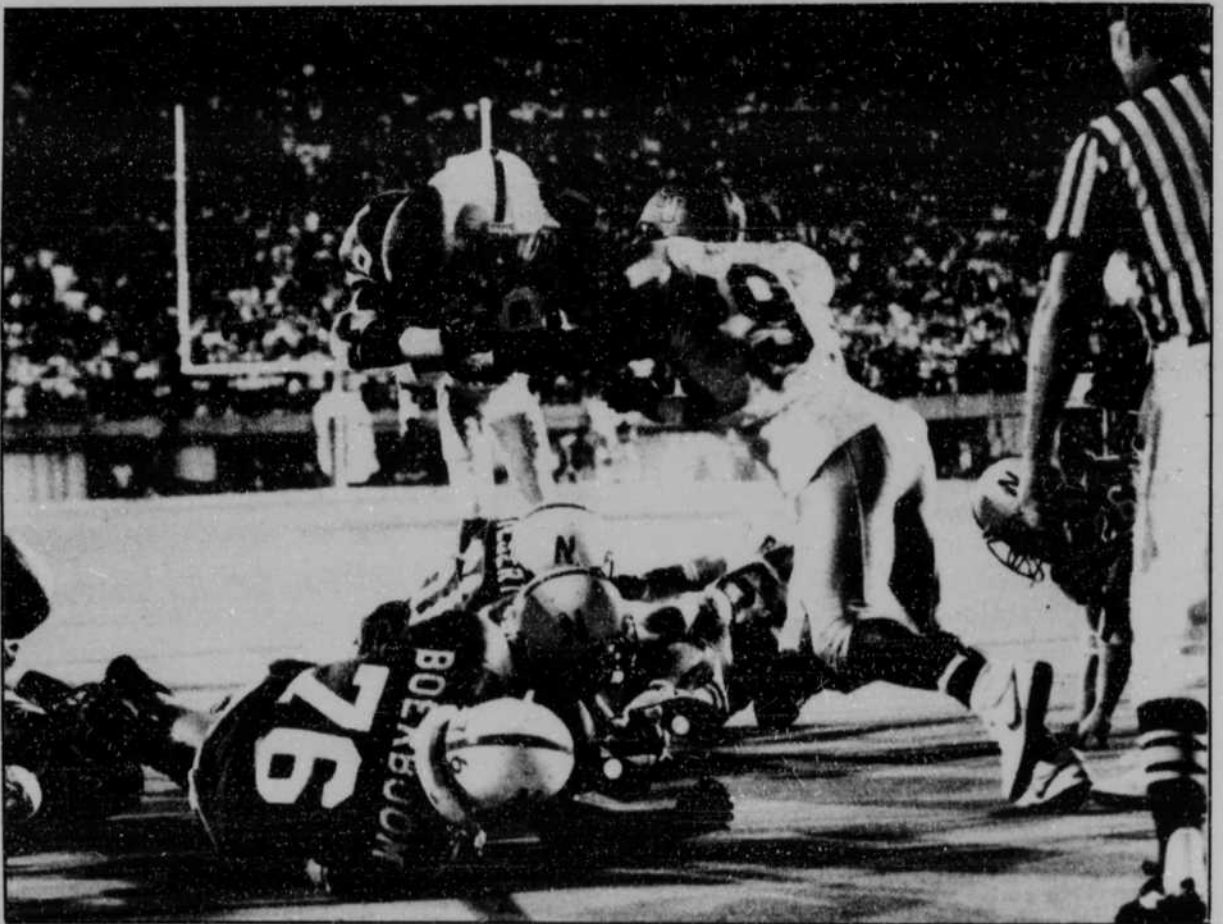
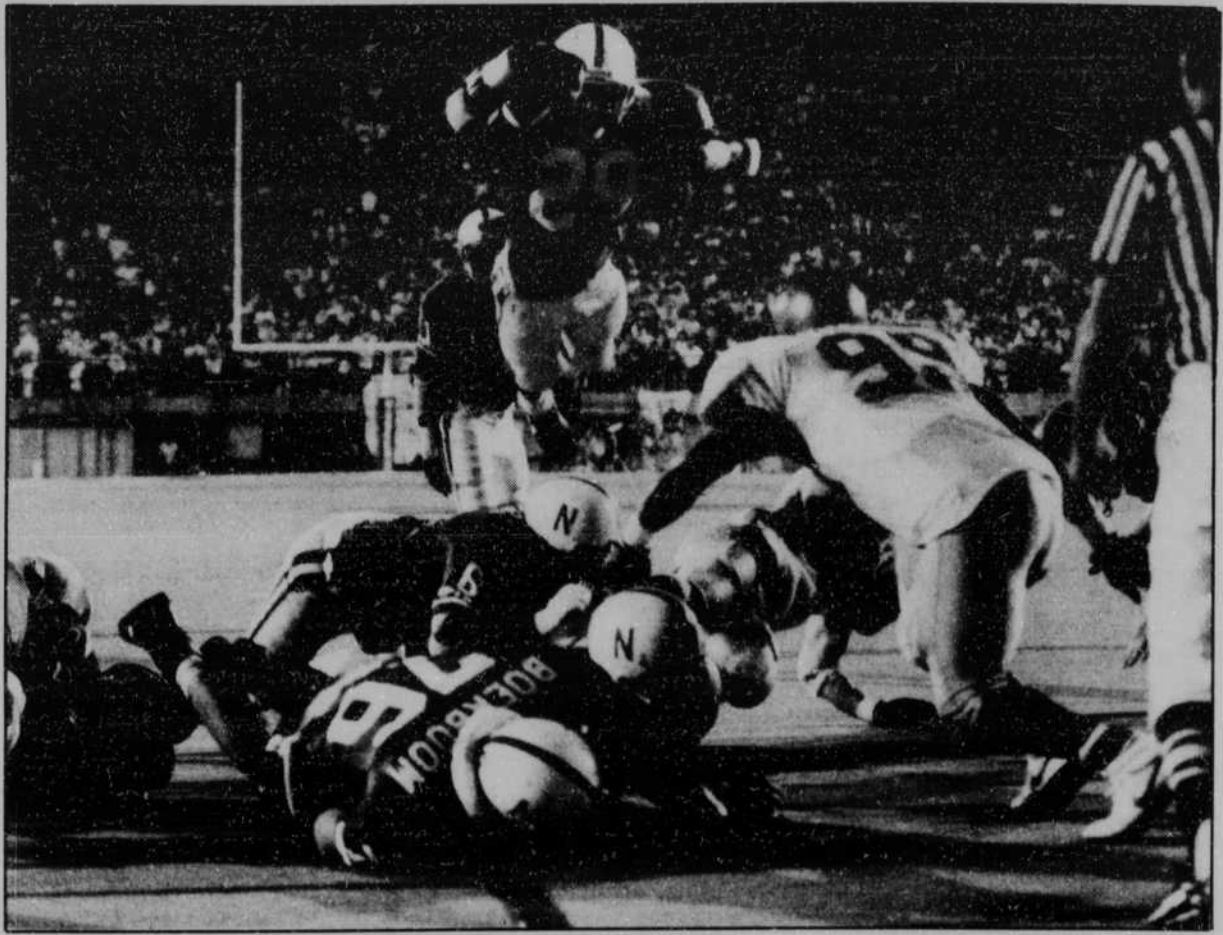
Not since the 1989 Orange Bowl against Miami had the Nebraska football team scored fewer than the 13 points the Cornhuskers managed Saturday against Baylor.

At his press conference Tuesday, Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said the Bears were playing keep-away.

"Most of our problems not scoring and not getting many yards were that we didn't have the ball that much," Osborne said.

Baylor had the ball 33 minutes, 3 seconds, compared to Nebraska's 26:57. The Bears ran 64 plays to the Huskers' 57 and held a 36-24 play advantage over Nebraska in the second half.

See OSBORNE on 12



Scott Baldwin leaps into the endzone to make Nebraska's only touchdown against Baylor. The ball was knocked loose, but officials ruled the ball had crossed the plane before it was fumbled. Al Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

Nebraska's depth chart

Offense				Defense			
SE	Jon Bostick	6-2	185 Jr.	LOLB	Travis Hill	6-2	225 So.
	Mark Dowse	6-0	180 Jr.		David White	6-2	225 So.
	Dan Pleasant	5-9	175 Jr.		Dan Svehla	6-0	230 Sr.
LT	Tom Punt	6-8	285 Sr.	LT	Joe Sims	6-3	280 Sr.
	Terry Eymann	6-6	265 Sr.		Le Andre Anderson	6-4	260 Sr.
	Brent Pick	6-5	265 Sr.		Paul Brungardt	6-7	270 Sr.
LG	Jim Wanek	6-1	245 Sr.	MG	Pat Engelbert	6-2	250 Jr.
	Jeff Chaney	6-2	250 Jr.		Greg Koellner	6-3	280 Jr.
	Scott Pedersen	6-4	245 So.		Mike Jefferson	6-2	280 Fr.
C	David Edeal	6-2	260 Sr.	RT	Kenny Walker	6-4	240 Sr.
	Bill Ziegelbaum	6-5	240 Jr.		Brian Brown	6-6	260 Jr.
	Terris Chorney	6-1	250 So.		David Noonan	6-3	265 Fr.
RG	Erik Wiegert	6-4	270 Jr.	ROLB	Mike Croel	6-3	225 Sr.
	Will Shields	6-2	260 So.		Dan Svehla	6-0	230 Sr.
	Chris Zyzda	6-2	255 So.		Rick Wendland	6-1	215 Sr.
RT	Brian Boerboom	6-7	285 Jr.	SLB	Mike Petko	6-2	230 Jr.
	Steve Engstrom	6-3	290 Sr.		Matt Penland	6-0	220 So.
	Ray Riefenrath	6-5	290 Jr.		Troy Branch	6-2	220 Fr.
TE	Chris Garrett	6-3	240 Jr.	WLB	Pat Tyrance	6-2	240 Sr.
	William Washington	6-2	245 So.		Mike Anderson	6-1	230 Fr.
	Daryl Leise	6-2	230 Jr.		Paul Wightman	6-1	220 So.
QB	Mike Grant	6-2	210 Jr.	LCB	Bruce Pickens	5-11	190 Sr.
	Mickey Joseph	5-11	180 Jr.		Jon Crippen	5-10	170 Sr.
	Tom Haase	6-0	180 Jr.		Robert Hicks	5-10	185 Sr.
FB	Omar Soto	5-11	220 Jr.	RCB	Tahaun Lewis	5-11	170 Sr.
	Lance Lewis	6-0	225 So.		Tyrone Legette	5-9	180 Jr.
	Tim Johnk	5-10	215 Jr.		Eric Anderson	5-8	175 Sr.
IB	Leodis Flowers	5-11	200 Jr.	SS	Reggie Cooper	6-3	210 Sr.
	Scott Baldwin	6-1	200 So.		Curtis Cotton	6-1	210 Jr.
	Derek Brown	5-10	175 Fr.		Brian Pollard	5-10	190 So.
WB	Tyrone Hughes	5-9	175 So.	FS	Tyrone Byrd	5-11	165 So.
	Brad Devall	5-9	180 Sr.		Steve Carmer	6-1	205 So.
	Kenny Wilhite	5-10	170 Jr.		Will Thomas	6-0	175 Jr.