

Offensive line receives credit for NU's win

By Paul Domeier
Senior Reporter

Somebody noticed the job done by the Nebraska offensive line in Saturday's 56-0 romp over Minnesota.

"A bunch of the backs came up and said, 'Great job,'" center David Edeal said. "That's nice when the people getting all the stats appreciate us."

The stats: 564 total yards, 433 yards rushing, 123 yards for George Achola, 120 yards for Derek Brown, 5.5 yards a carry.

At the post-game press conference Brown gave all the credit to the line. With 22 linemen playing, Nebraska sprang 15 rushes for 10 or more yards.

Once again, the Cornhuskers had to adjust to something other than the standard three-man lines of most college teams. This time, Nebraska faced a Minnesota defense that crammed six players tight to the line of scrimmage. Sometimes, the Gophers used a middle guard, sometimes they didn't. Edeal said Minnesota often would shift right before the snap.

"I think the line is pretty confident against any kind of defense," he said. "We're able to adjust."

The weather made it obvious that the Huskers' ability to block for the run would be tested. The wind was blowing from the north at 25 mph, with gusts of 35 mph.

Left guard Jim Wanek said he likes the wind.

"I like it for the main reason that it cools it down," Wanek said.

But, he said, he does look forward to another effect of a strong wind: a reliance on the running game.

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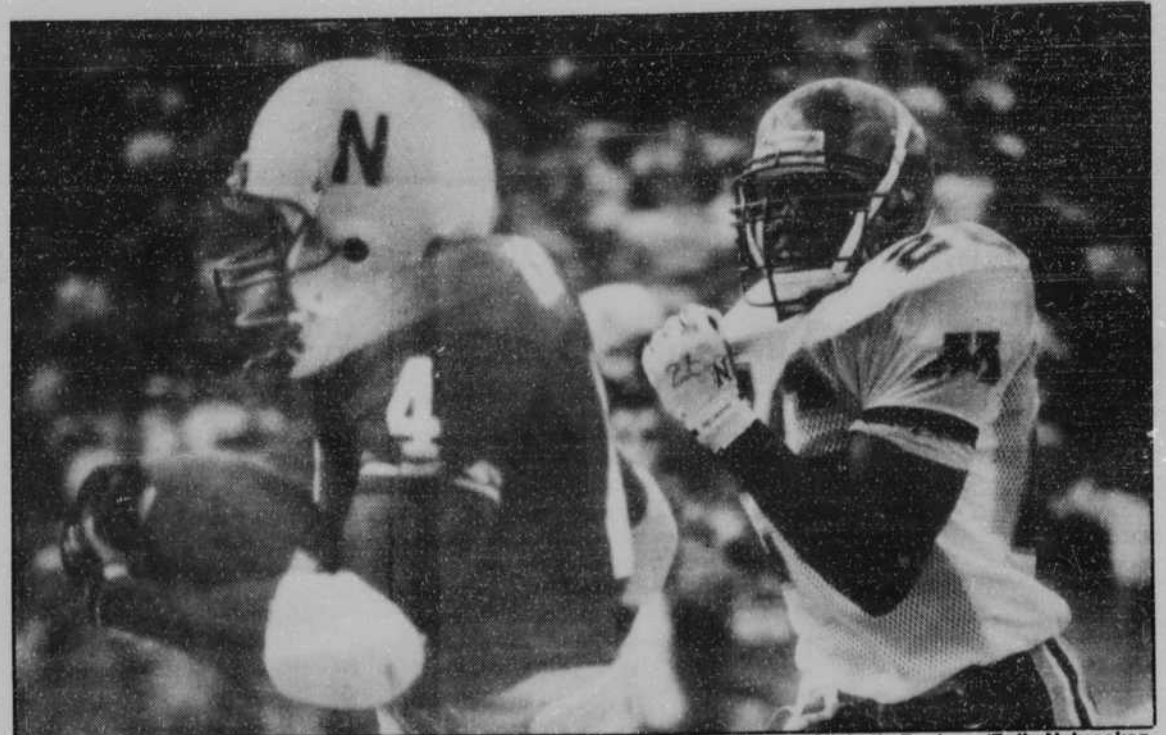
Jim Wanek
NU lineman

The top line came out and provided room for 367 total yards and 7.0 yards a carry in the first half.

Conventional wisdom said Nebraska's offensive linemen weren't supposed to be able to dominate the way they did against the Golden Gophers. With only two returning starters, the Huskers' line was thought a possible weakness.

Wanek, one of the returning starters, said he could understand the doubts because of inexperience and injuries in the line.

"I think any time you're labeled as a question mark it's sort of a rallying point," Wanek said. "That gave us something to prove."



Michelle Paulman/Daily Nebraskan

Several Minnesota defenders had trouble keeping up with Nebraska I-back George Achola, who rushed for 123 yards Saturday. Here strong safety Sean Lumpkin pursues Achola down the sideline.

Injuries give No. 4 I-back opportunity to shine, score

By Chris Hopfensperger
Senior Reporter

George Achola, the Cornhuskers' No. 4 I-back, had himself quite a day Saturday.

Achola was the game's leading rusher, gaining 123 yards on 16 carries. He scored his first career touchdown in Nebraska's 56-0 rout of Minnesota.

After the game, the junior out of Omaha Creighton Prep accepted congratulations, well-wishes and the fact that next weekend could be a whole different story. He enjoyed the moment.

"I just thank God for a day like this," Achola said. "That's what I did when I got to the locker room. I prayed and thanked God for a day like this."

"I may not have another one, so I'm going to cherish this one as much as I can."

Injuries to regular starter Leodis Flowers and backup Scott Baldwin pushed freshman Derek Brown and Achola into the forefront. Brown became the starter, Achola his backup.

That backup role, however, almost never happened.

"It was me, Baldwin, Flowers and Brown," Achola said. "I was going to be the fourth man. I came really close to hanging it up."

Achola, who redshirted one season, said it was difficult for someone who had been with the program as long as him to accept not making the traveling squad. The Huskers usually take three I-backs to away games.

"It gets really frustrating for a guy that is as old as me," Achola said. "By the time you're a junior you really have to think about things, about what you are going to do with your life."

Saturday, Achola stole a portion of the show by breaking a 45-yard run to the Minnesota one while being chased by Minnesota safety Sean Lumpkin.

"At first I was embarrassed that guy caught me, but I was happy to get down that far," he said.

Once Flowers and Baldwin are back to full speed, Achola again will find himself low man on the totem pole at I-back.

"The competition is amazing," Achola said. "You've got to learn a lot of things and adjust to the speed and size of the game. You feel lost in the shuffle. That's not to downgrade the program, but that's the kind of program it is. One guy goes down and you shuffle another one in there."

"You saw that today with Flowers and Baldwin out, Derek Brown and I came in and did a satisfactory job."

Joseph, Williams named Big Eight players of week

From Staff Reports

Nebraska junior quarterback Mickey Joseph, who completed 7 of 11 passes for 117 yards and three touchdowns Saturday against Minnesota, was selected the Big Eight's Offensive Player of the Week Tuesday.

Colorado senior outside linebacker Alfred Williams was named the league's defensive player of the week.

Joseph, in only his second career start, also rushed for 32 yards and two touchdowns as he accounted for five of the Cornhuskers' total touchdowns in their 56-0 victory. Nebraska's offense generated 564 yards, including 379 in the first half.

"Mickey played well and played smart," Husker coach Tom Osborne said. "He's a good option quarterback."

Williams recorded 10 tackles, including seven solo stops as Colorado beat No. 22 Texas at Austin on Saturday.

Williams also had two quarterback sacks, a tackle for a loss and was credited with two quarterback hurries. His sack of Texas quarterback Peter Gardere in the end zone for a safety sealed the win for the Buffaloes. It was the second consecutive weekly defensive honor for the Buffs as linebacker Greg Biekert took the honors last week.

Williams, a native of Houston, was the 1989 Big Eight defensive player of the year, and is among the 12 finalists for the Lombardi and Butkus awards.

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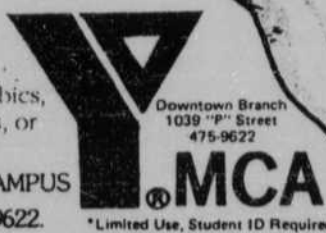


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